

York University

# **PLAN FOR THE INTENSIFICATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF RESEARCH (PIER)**

HIGHLIGHTS

York University's Plan for the Intensification and Enhancement of Research (PIER) offers recommendations to strengthen York University's research enterprise across five thematic areas, and is informed by the York University Strategic Research Plan (2013-2018).

The development of PIER occurred in conjunction with the Institutional Integrated Planning process and was guided by a Working Group representative of the broader York community, which met regularly, and input received through extensive consultations across the University, including faculty, staff, students and postdoctoral fellows, beginning in the fall 2015 and concluding in early 2016.

### **PIER Recommendations:**

#### **Growing a Culture of Scholarly Inquiry**

1. Create opportunities and spaces for interactive research engagement that foster collaboration and interdisciplinarity.
  - Review intra- and inter-Faculty research communications to increase exposure and promotion of research across units and Faculties;
  - Promote collegial discussions of research focused on enhancing research engagement, collaboration, within the University, regionally, nationally and internationally.
  - Faculties to review the spaces available for fostering research interactions within a community that is dedicated to growing a strong research culture.
2. Work Together to Build Research Engagement
  - Develop local initiatives to enhance research achievement and monitor their impact;
3. Incorporate research into all aspects of York's collective planning culture
  - Build an equal profile for research engagement, ambitions and support across Faculties, units and programs, alongside teaching program delivery and service through enhancing consideration of research in our academic planning culture.
4. Promote and capture a multiplicity of research outputs with an emphasis on impact.
  - Broaden recognition and encourage non-traditional research outputs;
  - Promote expansion of traditional outputs in ways that can enhance overall scholarly achievement;
  - Mentor and support researchers in aiming for high impact for their research outputs
5. Build research intensity into the hiring, tenure and promotion processes of regular full-time faculty.
  - Complement planning to include increased emphasis on alignment of hires with research objectives of the hiring units and Faculties
  - Hiring units to develop and refer to research achievement guides that summarize the historical average level of research, scholarship and associated creative activity achievement of the unit for new hires, and at the time of pre-candidacy review and tenure

#### **Investing In & Promoting People**

6. Improve the effectiveness of research time within workloads
  - Hold collegial academic discussion within units and programs to identify flexibilities to encourage equitable distribution of workloads;
  - Work to enhance contributions of part-time and active retired faculty to the overall academic success of the unit, program or area of focus;

- Faculties to review their collegial governance and service structures and practices to increase efficiency of service engagement and enhance the time available for faculty to engage in research.
7. Position faculty for research success
    - Clear identification of research expectations, infrastructure and supports available to new faculty hires; close mentorship of faculty at all career stages;
    - Enable, encourage, include and recognize the contributions of retired faculty who remain active researchers and mentors.
    - Overcome competitive historical tensions between ORUs and Faculties and Units.
  8. Invest in faculty through the development of research chairs and professorships.
    - Promote high visibility for research chair and professorship opportunities across the university in the upcoming fund-raising campaign;
    - Continue expansion of York Research Chairs program where finances warrant;
    - Increase emphasis on nomination of faculty for competitive research chairs and professorships offered through national and international funding organizations, including partnership opportunities such as the NSERC Industrial Research Chairs program.
  9. Increase and strengthen York's thesis-based graduate population and make York a destination of choice for postdoctoral training.
    - graduate programs to develop plans to collectively enable York to exceed domestic graduate student targets and grow its international cohort;
    - Increase outreach and efficiency of internal processes to ensure competitive student recruitment; simplify graduate student packages;
    - Promote and support external scholarships and awards for graduate students and post-doctoral fellows
    - enhance administrative and professional development supports for graduate students and post-doctoral fellows;
    - encourage maximum use of faculty external research grant/award funding to support graduate students and fellows;
    - Double the cohort of post-doctoral fellows within five years.
  10. Grow undergraduate participation in research
    - Make acquisition of research experience a component of all undergraduate programs; increase the number of research and research internship opportunities for undergraduates.
    - Develop a Dean's award for undergraduate research excellence

### **Supporting Research Growth & Development**

11. Develop and employ general and specific measures to monitor research progress.
  - Draw on a variety of classic and novel measures of knowledge production to fully capture and promote the scope of research, scholarship and associated creative activity occurring at York University.
12. Promote open access to Research
  - Develop transparent open access publishing and research data management policies that are inclusive and reflect core values of the University and promote best practices.
  - Continue to growth of open access publishing at York including the introduction of eBook publishing

- York to show leadership in the development of the Ontario academic publishing initiative with the goal of providing physical press access for York.
13. Strengthen support of research program development and implementation.
    - Invest in Institutional, Faculty-based and local research administrative supports to assist researchers in identifying research funding opportunities and develop applications, including strong budgets and compelling support materials.
    - Streamline research application development bureaucracy and monitor service level expectations
    - Faculties, units and programs to prioritize discussion of collegial enhancement of research application mentorship and internal peer review.
    - Emphasize the rewarding of research engagement and success in the development and provision of direct research support mechanisms such as internal research funds and research-related teaching releases.
    - Development of transparent guidelines and reporting for the institutional use for unrestricted indirect costs of research.
  14. Enhance post-award support of research
    - Improve research administrative transactional efficiency and support levels increasing researcher satisfaction and engagement in external research funding programs
    - Improve efficiency for the finalization of large research grants
    - Increase the capture of direct to researcher research funding and research-directed donations to the University.
    - Maintain strong record or research reporting compliance.
  15. Enhance the development and timely implementation of world class physical research infrastructure
    - Develop targets for the implementation of research infrastructure and report regularly on service level expectations and achievements.
  16. Develop York's Innovation Landscape, supporting partnerships and translating research into action
    - Innovation York (IY) to coordinate research innovation development at York and provide a first point of contact for external engagement with York with respect to external research application, commercialization and entrepreneurship.
    - Build internal and external engagement of IY
    - Incorporate the Knowledge Mobilization group of ORS into IY to enhance the crossover of knowledge mobilization into entrepreneurship and commercial application.
    - Build the IY brand and the recognition of York as a Canadian Leader in capturing the economic value of university research and providing a creative and innovative experience for student innovators.

### **Leadership in Research and Research Advocacy**

17. Promote and recognize external leadership by York faculty
  - Encourage and support support external research leadership by York faculty and leadership in research advocacy and policy development
  - Promote institutional leadership for Canada and Ontario in discussions of University research and innovation
18. Foster the internationalization of research
  - A feature on research within York's internationalization strategy

- Develop and support a concerted effort with respect to building international research partnerships, research funding relationships and international exchange programs for researchers and research trainees.
- Improve supports for applications to international research funding programs and enhance development and support of dual, double and similar degree programs with leading international institutions whose philosophies and expertise align well with our own.

19. Increase recognition through research awards for York faculty and trainees.

- Collegial discussion of the importance of awards is encouraged as is tracking and monitoring our success at all levels; Awards should be publicized and awardee's celebrated. In addition to the continued development of York's Annual public research awards celebrations, Faculties and units are encouraged to celebrate their award recipients and include awards in their measures of research achievement.

### **Building Research for the Future**

20. Develop Markham as a research intensive campus.

- Ensure that development of the research possibilities of the new campus is prioritized alongside the development of academic programming, including collaborative and interactive research spaces associated with networking and entrepreneurship spaces.
- Fully exploit the opportunity to re-imagine the relationship between campus, entrepreneurship and social and technological commercialization to maximize the potential for transferring ideas into action.
- Prioritize integration of and support for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows *in situ* at the new campus.

21. Research as a driver and enabler for future York initiatives.

- Support long-term ongoing development and growth of research activities and infrastructure at a level commensurate with other research intensive universities
- Continue to build support towards an eventual Medical School for York University.

### **Responding to PIER**

The PIER consultation process affirmed that our collective goals for research intensification require a strong, collegially driven response. Thus each academic unit, program or area of focus is challenged to integrate a response to the PIER recommendations into their collegial academic planning documents and planning submissions to their Deans, or in the case of ORUs, to their boards.

- Responses should include a description of initiatives planned and the processes employed to develop the initiatives, as well as the identification of measures to be used to track overall progress towards research intensification as well as specific initiatives. Similarly, administrative divisions and units within divisions, should look to relevant sections of PIER and provide focused responses.
- Deans should respond to the local initiatives proposed and roll them up into Faculty plans, including their integrated resource plans, academic plans, and financial plans, as well as in their annual reporting to the Provost and the Academic Policy, Planning and Research committee. This will embed PIER ambitions within the operational and academic fiber of the University.
- Central and service units are called upon to respond to PIER in areas where recommendations are relevant and roll up the responses into Divisional IRPs and other operational plans.
- PIER requires building support up from the level of the individual unit, program, area of focus and ORU; as such its success depends on appropriate investments in time and resources at all levels of the university.