TRENT UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF RESEARCH & INNOVATION

Distinguished Research Award - Terms of Reference

The Distinguished Research Award is the highest honour conferred by Trent University for research and scholarly activity.

Assessment Criteria:

An award will be made annually to a member of the Trent Faculty, including Professors Emeriti, in recognition of significant contributions to knowledge or artistic creativity. Up to two awards may be given annually.

Assessments will respect different knowledge traditions, including the traditions associated with conventional academic scholarship as well as traditional or Indigenous knowledge, and differences in the ways knowledge is acquired, generated, and transmitted. Nominators are strongly encouraged to consider equity, diversity, and inclusion when putting deserving colleagues forward for these awards.

Evaluations will consider:

- Substantive production of scholarly materials appropriate to the scholar's discipline;
- Significant contributions to research and scholarly activity as documented by organizations that advance research, professional technical committees, and/or professional, literary, and artistic associations;
- Significant direct contributions towards the training of high qualified personnel (HQP);
- Receipt of research funding, at levels appropriate to the scholar's discipline.

Eligibility:

All Trent University tenured faculty are eligible for the award. This includes tenured faculty from all programs, departments, and schools including professional schools and professors emeriti (within three years of retirement). Faculty must have been employed at least six (6) years at Trent to be eligible for nomination. (Note: Personal leave circumstances and sabbatical periods will be considered by the Selection Committee.)

Past recipients of the Award will not be eligible for further nomination.

Nominations:

The nomination submission will be in two stages.

1. Nominations of eligible candidates for consideration may be made to the Vice President, Research and Innovation by any member of the Trent community by **December 10, 2026** (name and a single paragraph outlining eligibility).
2. Nominators will be advised by the Vice-President, Research and Innovation if they should proceed to compile the full dossier for nomination.
   The deadline to submit the full nomination dossier to the Vice-President, Research and Innovation is **February 10, 2027**. Nominators are expected to prepare the documentation for those nominated by the submission deadline.

TRENT UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF RESEARCH & INNOVATION

Nomination Dossier:

Nomination dossiers shall include four documents and are to be submitted as a pdf file:

- A cover letter on behalf of the nominating department/program/school highlighting the nominee's major scholarly accomplishments.
- The nominee's current C.V.
- A Candidate's Statement of Impact
- Two supporting letters from colleagues who may be internal or external to Trent University.

The Selection Committee:

Nominations will be considered by a Research Award Selection Committee of eight persons, six voting and two non-voting.

The selection committee is comprised of the following people:

- Vice-President, Research and Innovation (Chair, non-voting);
- Provost and Vice President Academic;
- Chair of the Internal NSERC Committee on Research;
- Chair of the Internal SSHRC Committee on Research;
- Chair of the Internal Health Sciences/Studies Committee on Research;
- Graduate Student Association Representative (selected by TGSA);
- A faculty representative selected by the Deans;
- Senior Director, Office of Research and Innovation (Secretary, non-voting)

Process:

- The Committee will meet, as required, to review policy, short-list candidates, and to select a recipient. At the first meeting, committee members will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement.
- Committee members must attend all meetings in order to participate in the final adjudication meeting. The meeting(s) will occur in March.
- The Committee will reserve the right not to grant an award in any given year.
- The Award, which may be taken in the form of a research grant, is currently valued at $1,000.
- The Award recipient will be confidentially advised of the honour (to accept/decline).
- The Award will be announced to the Trent University Senate under embargo at the Spring meeting and presented at the Celebration of Excellence in Teaching and Research ceremony.
- Trent University's Communications department will develop, in conjunction with the recipient, an announcement of award story to be held under embargo and released at a future date.
- Award recipients will be asked to present a public lecture addressing some of their research within 12 months of receiving the award.

Components of the Nomination Package

Cover Letter and Appraisal
The cover letter should be submitted on behalf of the nominating department, program, or school. It should introduce the nomination, detail how the candidate meets the award criteria, and emphasize the candidate's career accomplishments. Additionally, the letter should list the names of those who have provided supporting letters included in the nomination package, along with a brief rationale for their selection.

Since the nomination package will be reviewed by individuals outside the candidate's direct field of study, it is beneficial for the cover letter to outline the typical level of publications and/or grants in the candidate's field.

The cover letter and appraisal should typically be one page in length.

Candidate's CV (10 Page Maximum)
The candidate's CV should be structured to reflect the entirety of the candidate's career.

Candidate's Statement of Impact (500 Word Maximum)
Candidates should articulate the impact of their research career, including within the communities where they conduct their research, their academic community, and any impact of their research on a local or global scale.

The Candidate Statement should address the substantive production of scholarly materials appropriate to their discipline and also detail the significant contributions to research and scholarly activity, as documented by organizations that advance research, professional technical committees, and professional, literary, and artistic associations. Furthermore, candidates should highlight their significant direct contributions towards the training of highly qualified personnel (HQP) and the receipt of research funding at levels appropriate to their discipline.

Two Supporting Letters (750 Word Maximum each)
The supporting letters of reference are submissions from colleagues, who may be internal or external to Trent University, which attest to the nominee's contributions as a major scholar to the respective field, the impact of the candidate's research career, and any other relevant information that supports the nomination of the candidate for the Distinguished Research Award.