



Cold Regions Research Centre Executive Council and Directorship

Terms of Reference

April 2021

CRRC: Cold Regions Research Centre

Wilfrid Laurier University

Waterloo, ON, N2L 3C5

1. BACKGROUND

The Cold Regions Research Centre (CRRC) was initiated in 1987 as one of Wilfrid Laurier University's first research centres. The goal of the Centre is to be a world leader in cold regions research – including both high altitude and high latitude landscapes. The core objectives of the CRRC are as follows:

1. Facilitate interdisciplinary research and research-related outputs about cold regions;
2. Facilitate academic and applied teaching (i.e. field training) of students in a range of cold regions disciplines and locations;
3. Provide a locus for interaction and meaningful engagement between faculty and students interested in cold regions research and problems;
4. Encourage cooperation and links with other cold regions research and training centres and organizations.

2. CRRC EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

2.1 Mandate

The CRRC EC is the Governing Body of the research centre, serving as the primary executive authority that oversees its activities, in accordance with Wilfrid Laurier University's *Policy 11.1 Establishment, Operations and Review of Research Centres*.

The CRRC Executive Council (EC) provides strategic direction for the centre as well as guidance and support to the CRRC director. It also creates opportunities for information sharing, network building, support for early-career researchers, and knowledge mobilization in support of the centre's research, training, and outreach activities. The EC approves the strategic plan, the annual budget, the annual report, and the appointment (or re-appointment) of the director

Laurier's Office of Research Services will ensure compliance with all university policies and regulations. They will review and approve the terms of reference, appointments, and the budget based on the recommendations of the EC.

Research

The EC provides input to the director for CRRC research directions and priorities related to its overall purpose. The EC participates in the development of innovative research models that allow for collaborative, multi-sectorial, and interdisciplinary approaches to cold regions research.

Network building

Through research and knowledge mobilization, the CRRC EC will help to build partnerships and to identify collaborative research projects and initiatives among EC members, affiliated members, external academic research partners, community partners, and staff.

Indigenous Peoples

The CRRC EC is committed to processes of reconciliation, both as broadly described in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 calls to action and as specifically embodied in research-relevant considerations such as OCAP principles. The EC acknowledges and respects that CRRC research and teaching activities often take place on the traditional territory of Indigenous Peoples and works to contribute to Laurier's efforts to indigenization of the university.

2.2 Membership

The CRRC EC is made up of primarily full-time faculty at Wilfrid Laurier University, with an aim towards broad representation of the diverse areas of study engaged in cold regions research, including but not limited to hydrology, ecology, glaciology, biology, geomatics, health sciences, social sciences, and Indigenous studies. When new board members are recruited, the director and the current board members will make a concerted effort to ensure that the diversity in backgrounds and perspectives of the board is maintained or expanded. EC is committed to principles of equity and diversity in its membership, and will seek to ensure that its composition is reflective of the community of researchers it serves. Normally, at least one member of the CRRC EC should be an external member (i.e., not a full-time faculty member). The EC should also include one student representative. The total size of the EC should normally be constituted of at least six and not more than ten people.

2.3 Functions

The CRRC EC has the authority to execute and monitor the affairs of CRRC, subject to all applicable policies, procedures and guidelines of Wilfrid Laurier University. This includes the ability to:

- Enact rules and regulations for membership of the CRRC Executive Council and the conduct of its affairs;
- Recommend appointment of the Director and other leaders to the vice-president, research;
- Appoint and remove Members, and establish categories of membership and associated fees;
- Plan and implement CRRC activities;
- Establish processes to manage and monitor CRRC financial affairs;
- Establish and enforce rules and regulations governing the research centre activities, provided such rules and regulations are consistent with policies, procedures and guidelines at Wilfrid Laurier University; and
- Establish such committees as it deems necessary to fulfil its mandate and discharge its responsibilities; this may include establishing advisory bodies or review committees comprised of internal and external members.

2.4 Roles and Responsibilities

CRRC Executive Council members are required to:

- Participate in at least one meeting per year,
- Provide advice and guidance to CRRC on an ongoing basis,
- Assist with knowledge mobilization,
- Provide input into funding opportunities and grant writing activities as needed,
- Participate in discussions in preparation for reporting as needed,
- Participate in strategic visioning on an ongoing basis.

2.5 Meetings

The CRRC EC is required to meet at least once per year and additionally as appropriate, with an aim to hold at least two meetings per year. One CRRC-EC meeting held in conjunction with CRRC Days annual student conference will be open to all members.

EC meeting dates normally will be set at least 4 weeks in advance and are by invitation. A meeting summary will be prepared by the Director after each meeting and sent to attendees for revisions. Meeting agendas and documents will be circulated in a timely fashion to ensure that members have sufficient time to review and comment on all relevant materials.

2.6 Quorum

A quorum comprises 70% of appointed members.

2.7 Tenure and Process of Resignation

CRRC EC members may serve on the Council for three consecutive terms. A term is three years.

EC members should provide 14 days' notice of their intent to resign. Resignation should be in writing and addressed to the Director.

CRRC EC Members that are unable to participate according to the Terms of Reference may be asked to step down from the EC by the Director.

2.8 Decision Making

Decisions will be made using consensus procedures. This will include exploring ideas in a broad discussion, seeking alternative points of view, forming and amending proposals, and ensuring that minority voices are consulted and not overruled. In situations where consensus cannot be reached, a majority vote will be held. Votes may be cast in person or via electronic votes.

2.9 Conflict of Interest

Members will avoid situations that could result in an inconsistency between the mandate of the EC and a personal or vested interest that arises in connection with their duties as a EC member. An actual or apparent conflict of interest arises when EC members are placed in a situation where their personal interest, financial or other, or that of an immediate Family member or of a person with whom there exists, or has recently existed an intimate, personal relationship, conflicts, or appears to conflict, with his or her responsibility to the CRRC. This includes situations which may arise where the members are in a position to influence directly or indirectly CRRC business or other decisions in ways that would lead to a gain/benefit for executive members or immediate family members.

Executive members have an obligation to provide full written disclosure of all relevant information, as soon as they are reasonably be aware that a conflict may exist, to the Director. The Director may seek to discuss the matter with other EC members in order to resolve the conflict.

Where regular members are voting on CRRC matters the same rules as outlined for EC members will apply to declaring and resolving conflicts of interest.

2.10 CRRC External Advisory group

The CRRC EC will seek out advisors external to the university for an external advisory group for periodic review on CRRC strategic and review documents.

3. DIRECTORSHIP

3.1 Roles and Responsibilities of the Director

The CRRC Director will be a member of the CRRC EC, a full-time faculty member at Wilfrid Laurier University and hold a renewable term of 3 years. The responsibilities of the Director are to:

- Coordinate meetings, set agendas, chair meetings, and ensure that meeting notes are disseminated in a timely fashion;
- Communicate CRRC EC recommendations to the CRRC membership;
- Report on CRRC activities and needs;
- Prepare an annual budget and coordinate funding related to activities;
- In consultation with the EC and membership, prepare a strategic plan every three years;
- Prepare for cyclical review by the Senate Committee on Research and Publications (SCRAP) every three years, for approval by Senate.

3.2 Appointment and Renewal Process

The CRRC Director will be appointed and renewed through the following processes.

1. The existing Director will announce their intention to seek reappointment or to step down at least three months prior to the end of their term.
2. The Director (if they are not putting their name forward for reappointment) or an EC member selected by the other members of the EC who is not seeking appointment as Director, will oversee a process leading to the appointment of a new Director by carrying out the following procedures:
 - a. Communicating an invitation to all CRRC members to put their names forward for the Director position, and collecting those self-nominations;
 - b. If needed, approaching individual members to encourage them to consider putting their names forward for the Director position;
 - c. Soliciting short bios and statements of interest from all nominees and circulating them at least a week before voting;
 - d. Holding a confidential e-vote, scrutinized by one other member of the EC not seeking appointment (or one other general member if all other EC members are seeking appointment);
 - e. Announcing the result and forwarding a recommendation to the Vice President, Research.
3. If the other members of the CRRC EC feel that a sitting Director is not fulfilling their duties, the EC may pass a motion for their removal and provide a detailed written request to the Vice President, Research, outlining reasons for removal. If the removal is approved, an election will ensue, as described in #2 above, or an interim Director may be appointed, as described in #4 below.
4. When regular appointment cycles are interrupted (e.g. by removal of a sitting Director as described in #3 above) or when a renewal process fails to generate a candidate for the Director position, an interim Director may be appointed by the CRRC EC in consultation with the Vice President, Research. An interim appointment may last for a period up to 1 year.

4. REVISIONS TO THIS DOCUMENT

The CRRC Director, with input from EC members, will review the mandate, activities, Terms of Reference, and relevance of the CRRC EC annually to ensure that it continues to meet ongoing needs. Recommendations for improvement will be considered on an ongoing basis. Changes must be approved by the members of the EC.