



Response of the Canada Research Chairs Steering Committee to the Third Year Review Report

This document outlines the decisions made by the Canada Research Chairs Steering Committee in response to the main recommendations contained in the Third Year Review Report.

Recommendation 1

Given the current profile of Chairs appointments, **that the Chairs Secretariat and the universities closely monitor issues related to filling Chair positions, including rate of recruitment, attraction and retention, and take-up by women and by men.**

Canada Research Chairs Steering Committee response

The Steering Committee, having been apprised of the fact that external nominations to the Canada Research Chairs Program had been rising significantly, concluded that this issue was being forcefully and effectively addressed by the universities. It nevertheless approved the recommendation that foreign recruitment and repatriation continue to be monitored and that the Steering Committee continue to be informed on a regular basis of progress made.

However, the Committee expressed its dissatisfaction with the progress to date regarding the nomination of women to Canada Research Chair positions. The Committee therefore decided the following:

- Aggregate statistical information on the nomination and take-up by women is to continue to be gathered by the Chairs Secretariat on an ongoing basis and will continue to be made public and accessible. In addition, statistical information on the representation of women and men as Canada Research Chair holders, **by university**, will also be made public, through the Chairs Program website.
- Each university will be required to submit an updated *Strategic Research Plan Summary*, to be posted on the Chairs website, in which it will identify how it proposes to address the issue of gender representation in relation to its Canada Research Chairs nominations, and how it proposes to monitor progress in addressing this issue. **This revised plan summary is due March 15, 2003.** Universities will also be required to report on progress made through their annual report to the Chairs Secretariat.
- All public documents produced by the Chairs Secretariat (forms, instructions, guides etc.) are being examined to ensure that there are no disincentives to the participation of women in the Chairs Program.

The intent is to allow the Steering Committee to review progress made towards a more equitable representation of women as nominees to the Chairs Program. Should the Committee deem that progress is too slow or insufficient, it will be in a position to take additional steps to ensure an appropriate gender distribution in the Chairs Program.

Recommendation 2

In recognition of the diversity in size, profile and needs of universities in Canada and the concomitant need for flexibility, **that the Chairs Program introduce an increased level of delegated authority to the universities in the allocations by tier, within an overall funding envelope, and that universities commit to filling their allocated Chairs within that envelope.**



Canada Research Chairs Steering Committee response

The Steering Committee recognized that some flexibility would provide institutions with tools to develop new areas or expand priority areas. The committee has decided to introduce a small “corridor of flexibility”, by discipline and by tier, proportional to the number of Chairs at the university (with the corridor being relatively larger for small and medium-sized universities).

The corridor will work as follows:

| Table 1–Corridor of flexibility (based on Year 4 allocation) | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Number of chairs per univ. | Number of universities in range | Proposed # of “flexible” chairs by university | Maximum budget of corridor per university (\$000) | Maximum # of chairs in corridor | Maximum amount in corridor |
| 5-19 | 26 | 2 | \$300 (based on 1 Tier 1 and 1 Tier 2) | 52 | 7800 |
| 20-70 | 16 | 7 | \$1000 (based on 3 Tier 1 and 4 Tier 2) | 112 | 16000 |
| >70 | 9 | 9 | \$1300 (based on 4 Tier 1 and 5 Tier 2) | 81 | 11700 |
| Total | 51 | | | 245 | 35500 |

This additional flexibility will be managed in the same way as the Special Chairs in the smaller universities. Institutions may, over the life of the program, use a specified number of unused chairs (as per the above table) for any combination of tier that respects the budget (as per the above table) and in any discipline group. Universities are required to indicate whether the Chair is a regular Chair or a “flexible” Chair to allow the Secretariat to keep track of these chairs.

The effectiveness of this corridor of flexibility will be reviewed during the course of the 5th Year Evaluation of the Chairs Program. The Steering Committee will then decide whether to maintain or modify the corridor of flexibility.

Implications for the CFI infrastructure component:

The CFI has confirmed that it has no additional funds in its budget at the present time to increase the funding envelope available to universities through the Canada Research Chairs Program. It is therefore important to note that the introduction of this corridor of flexibility will have no bearing on the basis of calculation currently used by the CFI for support to universities for infrastructure costs. Universities remain free to manage their overall CFI – Chairs budget envelope as they see fit.

Recommendation 3

In order to provide more transparency in the nomination process, **that universities be required to establish and make readily available to their faculty institutional policies and practices relating to their internal nomination process.**



Canada Research Chairs Steering Committee response

While the Steering Committee endorsed the spirit of this recommendation, it considered that it would be inappropriate for the Chairs Program to take any action in this regard.

Recommendation 4

In order to accelerate the appointment of Chairs, **that the Chairs Secretariat streamline the review and adjudication processes, where possible, with special consideration for processes involving nominees from other countries.**

Canada Research Chairs Steering Committee response

The Steering Committee agreed to this recommendation. The authority to approve the nominations of **foreign recruits** (foreign nationals living abroad or Canadian citizens living abroad) where peer review is unanimously favourable has been delegated to the Executive Director. There will be full accountability and reporting on such decisions at each meeting of the Steering Committee. The Chairs Secretariat estimates potential savings in processing time of 4-6 weeks. Although, the CFI Board of Directors does not have the same ability to delegate the authority to staff to approve awards, it will endeavor to have a quick response time in order to minimize delays.

Recommendation 5

Given the depletion in the size of the reserve and the increasing number of small institutions becoming eligible for a Chair allocation, **that the plan for an open competition for small universities in the fourth and fifth years of the program be re-examined by the Canada Research Chairs Steering Committee.**

Canada Research Chairs Steering Committee response

The Steering Committee has decided that an open competition for 10 Canada Research Chairs will be held. The submission date for nominations will be September 15 2003. The competition will be open only to those universities **that have not received any chair allocation by the competition deadline.** Chairs Secretariat staff is currently drafting the plan and guidelines for the competition and this information will be made publicly available in February 2003.

The CFI will support requests of infrastructure for successful nominees, subject to a favorable review of the infrastructure.

Clarifications:

A number of clarifications are required regarding some of the assertions in the text of the Third Year Review Report:

1. The statistical data referred to in the report is out of date. All readers are requested to refer to the Chairs website for up-to-date statistical information.
2. At various points in the report, the new policy regarding the eligibility of Tier 2 nominees according to the number of years since their PhD is inaccurately presented. For the purposes of clarification, the new policy states that universities must provide a special justification for all Tier 2 nominees who are more than ten years past their Ph.D. This justification will be evaluated by the members of the College of Reviewers selected to review the nomination as well as the members of the Interdisciplinary Adjudication Committee.



3. Under Recommendation 1, the suggestion is made that “The Chairs Secretariat and the CFI (...) jointly explore the possibility of allowing Chair nominees who are first time faculty appointees to draw on CFI allocations under both the Chairs Program and CFI’s New Opportunities Fund. This is a decision which the CFI must make.
4. In its examination of increased flexibility to universities to deploy chair funds, it is suggested that an introduction of a margin of flexibility would require a change to the current allocation method. In fact this has proven to not be the case. Additional information on the Steering Committee’ decision regarding the corridor of flexibility can be found in the Steering Committee’s response to Recommendation 2 above.
5. While the original Canada Research Chairs Program material referred to a possible competition among small universities in year 4 for the reserve of chairs, it is important to note that the Steering Committee has decided to limit the participation in the competition to those small universities **that have not received any chair allocation by the competition deadline**. Additional information on the Steering Committee’s decision regarding the competition in Year 4 can be found in the Steering Committee’s response to Recommendation 5 above.