Terms of Reference
Faculty of Medicine Awards in Education and Research Committee

Purpose:
The University of Ottawa’s Faculty of Medicine Awards in Education and Research Committee is an initiative that was agreed upon by the leadership of the Faculty of Medicine. The purpose of the Committee is to provide advice and feedback regarding potential nominations for various external and internal awards and prizes, as well as to review and select the recipients of the annual Faculty of Medicine Awards of Excellence. The goal of this committee is to provide an open and transparent mechanism regarding nomination decision-making and procedures within the Faculty.

The Committee will serve as a formal mechanism to promote excellence in existing research programs and to actively aid the strategic and concerted effort of the University of Ottawa to enhance global recognition of our research and educational excellence. In line with the University of Ottawa’s Office of the Vice-President, Research (OVPR) policies, the Faculty of Medicine is committed to fostering an equitable research, education and learning environment that provides equal opportunities for everyone and that respects and values diversity.

Mandate:
1. The Committee will provide recommendations of potential candidates for University-level and external award nominations to the Faculty of Medicine Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and the OVPR, when applicable;
2. The Committee will review nominations and select laureates for the annual Faculty of Medicine Awards of Excellence.

Membership:
The Committee will reflect the diversity of the University of Ottawa and Faculty of Medicine community with respect to the four diversity categories identified in the Canada Equity Act (gender, minority status, indigenous status, disability status). It will be comprised of:
   a) FoM Director of Prizes and Awards for Excellence in Education and Research (Chair);
   b) Representatives from the basic sciences departments (as elected by the basic sciences departments Chairs),
   c) Representatives from the clinical departments (as elected by the clinical departments Chairs),
   d) Learner representative(s) from the basic sciences departments,
   e) Learner representative(s) from the clinical departments,
   f) One representative from the FoM Faculty Experience Team
   g) One representative from Affaires Francophones.

Ad hoc reviewers:
In order to assist the Committee in its review of nominations for the Faculty of Medicine Awards of Excellence, the Chair of the Committee may invite ad hoc reviewers to provide additional recommendations to the committee. Reviewers may include previous recipients of the Awards of
Excellence, or other reviewers deemed to have expertise in a field relevant to the award category or nominee’s area of interest.

**Staff/Non-voting members:**

The Director of Prizes and Awards will be the main liaison and Chair for this committee, with assistance from a Research Advisor of the Faculty of Medicine.

**Term:**

The Committee will be active indefinitely. The committee’s structure and processes will be reviewed every 5 years to ensure alignment with the Faculty of Medicine’s strategic mandate. Elected members will serve for a period of 2-3 years, renewable once.

**Meetings:**

The Committee is expected to meet four (4) times annually, or at the discretion of the Chair.

**Responsibilities of the Committee Chair:**

The Committee Chair must be knowledgeable about the Faculty of Medicine research, education and training community and is responsible for the following:

a. Chairing all Committee meetings;
b. Establishing consensus among Committee members;
c. Adhering to the responsibilities of Committee members noted below.

**Expectations and responsibilities of Committee members:**

Leading up to each committee meeting, a list of awards to be discussed will be circulated electronically to all members. Members are expected to come to meetings prepared, by consulting appropriate members of their Department/Service to determine if there are any appropriate and competitive nominees for each award. In addition, all members of the Committee must agree to the obligations outlined below:

1. Attend and contribute to Committee meetings, so that consensus can be reached efficiently.
2. Act fairly, in good faith and in the best interests of the Faculty of Medicine.
3. Be independent and impartial.
4. Complete mandatory unconscious bias training provided by the Faculty of Medicine (details below).
5. Maintain a level of knowledge required to honor their obligations and duties.
6. Enable communication with University of Ottawa administration and compliance with University of Ottawa policies and procedures.

If unable to meet the proposed commitments, the member shall communicate this to the Committee and an alternate with similar expertise will be selected. Members are responsible for responding to the requests from the Committee Chair in a timely manner, and for alerting them to any likely delay in response.

**Conflict of Interest policy (aligned with Tri-Council and Canada Research Chair programs):**
The Committee aims to meet the highest ethical and integrity standards in all that it does in order to continue to merit the trust and confidence of the research community, the Faculty of Medicine and the University of Ottawa. As such, any committee member who becomes aware of a conflict of interest must promptly disclose the conflict to the committee Chair. No peer reviewer or observer may participate in the review process of an application with which they are in conflict of interest. Such disclosures and compliance measures shall be documented and retained for the record.

A Conflict of Interest is a conflict between a person’s duties and responsibilities with regard to the review process, and that person’s private, professional, business or public interests. A conflict of interest may be deemed to exist or perceived as such when committee members, external reviewers, or observers:

- are nominees within the competition and have the ability to bias or influence the process to the benefit of their application.
- are a relative or close friend, or have a personal relationship with the nominee;
- are in a position to gain or lose financially/materially from the selection of the nominee;
- have had long-standing scientific or personal differences with a nominee;
- are closely professionally affiliated with the nominee, as a result of having in the last six years:
  - frequent and regular interactions with the nominee in the course of their duties at their department, institution, organization or company;
  - been a supervisor or a trainee of the nominee;
  - collaborated, published or shared funding with the nominee, or have plans to do so in the immediate future; and/or
- feel for any reason unable to provide an impartial review of the nomination.

The Chair of the Committee reserves the right to resolve areas of uncertainty and to determine if a conflict exists. Any committee members who are nominated for the Faculty of Medicine Awards of Excellence in a given year will be excused from the review and selection process for that year.

**Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policy:**

All committee members are required to complete unconscious bias training in order to participate in committee activities. On a three year cycle, aligning with projected committee turnover, a live training session will be completed with a representative of the Faculty of Medicine EDI Office. Additionally, on an annual basis, committee members will be required to complete the CIHR online module of unconscious bias: [https://www.chairs-chaires.gc.ca/program-programme/equity-equite/bias/module-eng.aspx](https://www.chairs-chaires.gc.ca/program-programme/equity-equite/bias/module-eng.aspx). Certificates of completion are to be submitted to the Chair of the Committee each year on or before the submission deadline for the Faculty of Medicine Awards of Excellence.

The Research Advisor (staff, non-voting member of the committee) will act as an EDI champion on behalf of the committee. In this role, the EDI champion will receive data on self-identification and representation of award nominees in the Faculty of Medicine, including nominees for the Awards of Excellence. This data will be anonymized and aggregated in order to inform the committee, ELT and the OVPR on the diversity of nominees and identify gaps and future goals and strategies to fill those gaps.

During the review process of the Faculty of Medicine Awards of Excellence, the committee will include EDI considerations in their evaluation of nominations. For example, in a case where applications of two nominees are deemed equal in terms of merit as per the evaluation criteria, the award should be
granted to a nominee from a historically underrepresented group, where applicable. This process will reflect a concrete step in support of the Faculty of Medicine’s and the University of Ottawa’s commitment to recognizing the excellence of our diverse Faculty.

**Quorum:**

A quorum of the Committee is a majority of its members.