Letters of Institutional Support

Some research funding programs require that letters of institutional support be included with the application describing any financial or other commitments by the lead institution and possibly the partner institutions in support of the proposed research. Sponsors usually permit only one letter of support per institution that documents specific commitments to the research initiative, and includes institutional endorsement of the application. Therefore, at the University of Toronto the letter is normally signed by the Vice-President, Research & Innovation.

Under the University of Toronto’s budget model, the commitment of financial or other resources (space, release time, access to specialized facilities, etc.) is made at the divisional level. Therefore, documented approval of the appropriate division head must be obtained in order for those commitments to be incorporated into the institutional letter.

The Principal Investigator, working with co-investigators in other units/divisions as appropriate, is responsible for initiating the process to obtain a letter of institutional support, as follows:

How to obtain a letter of institutional support:

1. The Principal Investigator, or designate, should work with their academic unit head and divisional leadership (and, through co-investigators, with heads of other participating units and divisions) at the earliest possible opportunity when requesting financial or other commitments in support of the application.

2. The PI is best positioned to identify the key elements to be incorporated in a draft of the letter. This often includes the commitments being made as well as other elements pertinent to the application (e.g. the potential impact of the proposed research.)

3. To ensure the required content is included, please contact the RSO/IPO staff member who leads the relevant application process at the earliest opportunity prior to the internal (UofT) application deadline or the final application deadline (when no internal deadline exists).

4. Submit the draft letter and documented approval of all divisional commitments to the RSO/IPO staff member who leads the relevant application process:

   - two weeks prior to the internal deadline for the full application where applicable; or
   - two weeks prior to final deadline when no internal deadline exists.