The primary academic activities of the University are conducted by departments, schools, and colleges. Research centers and institutes should be created only when there is a strong case to be made for why the academic mission of the University cannot be achieved within existing structures, including existing departments, schools and colleges, as well as existing centers and institutes. The creation and naming of a new research center or institute may have implications for other units, budgets, and those outside the University of Washington. For this reason, the Office of the Provost must approve the name of any new research center or institute. For centers or institutes being proposed within the College of Arts & Sciences, the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences and the Divisional Dean(s) for the relevant department(s) must approve the name of any new research center or institute before this request is submitted to the Office of the Provost.

College of Arts and Sciences faculty who are interested in creating a new research center must meet with their department Chair(s) and their appropriate Divisional Dean(s) at the beginning stages of the planning process to determine if the proposed Center aligns with department(s) and College priorities. If the proposed Center involves collaboration with departments outside of the College of Arts and Sciences, then Chairs and relevant Deans from those units must also be consulted. If the proposed Center will require significant donor funding, then relevant College Advancement personnel must be consulted to assess whether or not such financial support is likely to materialize.

If there is agreement that the Center aligns with the department(s) and College priorities, then the faculty shall develop a proposal addressing the information listed below. Once completed, the proposal must be submitted to the relevant Divisional Dean(s) and the Associate Dean of Research Administration and Infrastructure who will review the proposal and then, if appropriate, submit the proposal to the Office of Research for review and approval. A link to the proposal form can be found at this Office of Research webpage:
http://www.washington.edu/research/centers/establish/ [1]

- Name of the new center or institute
- Mission statement
- List of the principal faculty members involved, including director(s) and participating researchers
- Short summary of the preliminary research agenda
- Description of organizational structure
- Budget: Five-year funding plan that includes the initial funding sources from all internal and external sources (federal, state, private) including other Colleges and Schools as appropriate.
- Detailed description of any funds requested centrally from the College of Arts &
- Sciences and a summary of the internal sources of support and space, with confirmation as appropriate.
- If applicable, a list of potential donors who will be solicited for support. The College of Arts & Sciences requires a significant endowed gift (in excess of $5 million) to name a Center. All naming requests must follow the institutional naming policy. Gift requirements to name a center is based upon the research scope and required operational expenses. These gifts will sustain excellence and provide a secure source of support for operations of the Center.

If a new research center (technically called an organized research unit or ORU) is approved by the Office of Research, within the first quarter of the establishment of the ORU, the ORU's staff is responsible for creating and maintaining an ORU website, and for making sure the site is added to the "Research Centers and Institute" page:
http://www.washington.edu/research/centers/ [2]. The ORU is required to update the information on the UW center website by October first of an annual basis.

**Faculty Appointments**

All faculty appointments associated with a center or institute, regardless of the source of support, require a primary departmental appointment.

**Financial Resources and Budgets**

Centers and institutes are expected to be self-supporting. A center may have one or more budgets to support its operation. The establishment of a budget other than a state budget in support of a center requires the approval of the relevant Divisional Dean. Budgets involving state or other centrally allocated resources require the approval of the Provost.

**Reviews**

The initial review of a center or institute will occur five years after the center/institute has been formed. Subsequent reviews will occur every ten years. The continuation of the center or institute should be addressed in every review. Centers or institutes should be discontinued when they no longer serve the purpose for which they were created, or that purpose is no longer deemed significant. Director terms are typically for a five-year period. A director selection process will occur prior to the expiration of the term of the current director. Although such reviews (analogous to the process of selection of a new department chair) will touch on center/institute affairs, the focus of this process is an assessment of the director's contributions and the desirable qualities in a new director. For centers or institutes whose mission addresses extra-departmental purposes, the selection of the Director is determined by the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, or, for centers that involve multiple colleges, by the Deans of each College. For centers or institutes whose mission is primarily intra-departmental, the selection of the Director is determined by the Chair of the Department. For centers that involve multiple departments within the College of Arts & Sciences, the selection of the Director is determined collectively by the Chairs of each academic unit.

**Source URL:** [https://admin.artsci.washington.edu/research-center-formation-policy](https://admin.artsci.washington.edu/research-center-formation-policy)

**Links:**