

Title: **Centers Establishment and Reauthorization Process and Procedures at the University of Colorado Boulder**

Prepared by: **Office of the Provost
Research & Innovation Office**

Approved by: **Russell Moore, Provost
Terri Fiez, Vice Chancellor for Research & Innovation**

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A. Introduction

Centers are single or multi-disciplinary units organized around a theme that generally combine research, scholarship and creative work with education, leadership and/or service activities. This document sets forth the process for establishment, reauthorization and discontinuance of University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) campus centers. The processes and procedures outlined in this document do not apply to campus administrative units that provide support services to staff, faculty and students (e.g., Writing Center, Women's Resource Center). Campus units that do not adhere to the processes and procedures outlined below are not officially recognized university centers.

B. Definitions

- (1) Center:** A single or multidisciplinary unit organized to conduct research, scholarship and creative work, education and/or leadership and service activities. Centers are typically organized around the investigation of a specific theme, issue, project or policy topic, but often encompass interdisciplinary work spanning a number of academic fields. Centers generally have collaborative intent, and an annual operating budget that is, in part, fiscally independent of academic units. The lifetime of a center may be limited by time and financial commitments to completing a particular project. Relative to CU Boulder institutes, centers are characterized by less programmatic autonomy and less independence.
- (2) Sponsored Research Center:** A center established by and receiving continuing operational support through external funding or awards (e.g., NSF Science and Technology Centers; DOE Energy Frontier Research Centers; etc.). These centers must comply with all funding and operational requirements imposed by the sponsoring agency. Sponsored research centers are exempt from C(1) and C(2) of these procedures.
- (3) Parent Unit:** The unit (College, School, Institute, etc.) responsible for oversight of a center and its fiscal and administrative operations. The parent unit is typically the unit in which the center director's tenure home department is housed.

C. Process and Procedures Statement

(1) Establishment of New Centers

- a. Proposals for new centers must include the following materials. Note: templates are available on the Research & Innovation Office [webpage](#).

- i. Program plan
 - ii. Bylaws
 - iii. Five-year revenue and expenditure budget (projected)
 - iv. External membership agreement (e.g., with industry), if applicable
 - v. Statement of support from the dean or director of the proposed center's parent unit
- b. Proposals for new centers must be submitted to the dean or director of the parent unit (or their designee – typically the Associate Dean for Research) for approval. The parent unit dean or director (or their designee) will make a recommendation to the Vice Chancellor for Research & Innovation regarding the establishment of the proposed center. The Research & Innovation Office will ensure that all proposals for new centers are accompanied by an assessment from (1) University Counsel describing any potential legal liabilities, and (2) the Office of Budget & Fiscal Planning to ensure fiscal solvency.
 - c. The Vice Chancellor for Research & Innovation will approve or deny the center proposal.
 - d. New centers will be conditionally authorized for an initial period of time (1-6 years) until the subsequent [Academic Review and Planning Advisory Committee \(ARPAC\)](#) review of the center's parent unit. At the end of the initial authorization period, centers will be subject to review for reauthorization by the parent unit and the Vice Chancellor for Research & Innovation.

(2) Reauthorization of Existing Centers

- a. Center reauthorization requests will be evaluated, in part, on the basis of the center's ability to: achieve success in fulfilling its mission, contribute to the missions of its parent unit and the university, engage faculty and students across disciplines, attract and generate external resources, provide outward facing activities and evolve and change over time.
- b. Requests for reauthorization should occur concurrently with the parent unit's ARPAC review process (every seven years). Parent units should conduct a mid-cycle review of each center in the time period between each reauthorization request.
- c. Requests for reauthorization which run concurrently with the parent unit's ARPAC cycle should be submitted to the Vice Chancellor for Research & Innovation, and should include the following materials:
 - i. Updated versions of the materials required for new center establishment (i.e., program plan, bylaws, projected five-year revenue and expenditure budget, parent unit statement of support). Materials should be submitted in track changes mode to allow for easy identification of updates.
 - ii. A 1-2 page (1,000 words maximum) statement which describes (a) the center's success in accomplishing its goals, supporting the missions of the parent unit and the University, and maintaining fiscal solvency, (b) the benefit of the center's work to the research, education and/or service programs of CU Boulder and (c) the justice, equity, diversity or inclusion efforts your center has undertaken, is involved in and/or is planning for in the next 7 years.
- d. The Vice Chancellor for Research & Innovation will approve or deny the center reauthorization.

(3) Sponsored Research Centers

- a. Prior to the addition of external members or performance of research, all sponsored research centers must obtain from University Counsel a review of bylaws, membership agreements and other operational documents for legal sufficiency and risk assessment.

- b. University Counsel will submit any perceived legal compliance issues to the Vice Chancellor for Research & Innovation and the Provost for consideration prior to the operation of the sponsored research center.
- c. The unit responsible for the sponsored research center must approve the operation of the sponsored research center and report it to the Vice Chancellor for Research & Innovation for inventory purposes upon a determination of legal sufficiency.

(4) Oversight, Management and Financial Integrity

- a. Each center must have a director. The director is responsible for the day-to-day programmatic, fiscal, and personnel decisions associated with the center.
- b. The dean or director of the center's parent unit will be responsible for continued center oversight.
- c. The center's parent unit should elect to perform more frequent center reviews to ensure continued fiscal solvency, compliance and progress toward center goals.
- d. Centers must consult with the parent unit regarding all changes in bylaws, leadership or advisory board members.
- e. The parent unit has ultimate responsibility for the financial integrity of the center.
- f. All center name changes must be approved by the parent unit and/or housing college/school. Centers must inform the Research & Innovation Office of any name changes.

(5) Discontinuance

- a. Centers may be discontinued at any time at the discretion of the Vice Chancellor for Research & Innovation.
- b. The parent unit must notify and secure approval from the Vice Chancellor for Research & Innovation of any decision to discontinue a center by emailing centers@colorado.edu with the proposed end date of the Center. RIO will provide an MOU for the Discontinuance in consultation with the Center Director, Department Chair (or Institute Director) and appropriate Associate Dean for Research.

(6) Exceptions to the Center Establishment Process

- a. The Provost and the Vice Chancellor for Research & Innovation may agree to grant a waiver of the proposal process for a center. However, such a waiver must be signed by the Chancellor after University Counsel approves the center's proposed bylaws and membership agreement (if applicable) for legal sufficiency.

(7) Inventory

- a. An inventory of all campus research centers will be maintained by the Research & Innovation Office.