



Title: The University of Colorado Boulder’s Institute Process and Procedures

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A. Introduction

As required by University of Colorado [Administrative Policy Statement \(APS\) 1008](#), this document sets forth the process for approval, review, and discontinuance of University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) Institutes.

Per the University of Colorado’s [Administrative Policy Statement 1008, Procedures for the Establishment of Institutes](#), an Institute is defined as:

“a single or multi-disciplinary unit that is organized for the primary purpose of research and creative work. The mentoring of students within the research and creative work is an important goal of institutes. Likewise, providing public and professional leadership and service related to the fields of the institute is expected. Institutes are characterized by organizational permanency, programmatic autonomy, a broad program of study, and an annual operating budget that is fiscally independent of other academic units. They are expected to have substantial external funding (typically over \$1 million/year), commitments for associated faculty lines, evidence of long-term sustainability, a program of research training, and substantial infrastructure. Faculty and research/teaching staff in institutes usually participate in interdisciplinary graduate/undergraduate education programs. Institutes report to the campus chief academic officer or their designee and go through rigorous program review similar to that for academic departments.”

B. Authority

- (1) For all instances of Chancellor authority: the authority lies with the Chancellor or their designee.
- (2) For all instances of Dean of the Institutes authority: the authority lies with the Dean of the Institutes or their designee.
- (3) “The University of Colorado Boulder’s Institute Process and Procedures” supersedes any conflicting provisions within the bylaws of an Institute.

C. Process and Procedures

(1) Approval of New Institutes

- a. Any proposal to establish a new research Institute must be submitted by a current CU Boulder faculty member who demonstrates the capacity to effectively guide and lead the research agenda of the proposed Institute.
- b. Concept Paper: Before a prospective institute may seek approval, a concept paper must be submitted to the Dean of the Institutes (rio@colorado.edu). The Dean of the Institutes will review concept papers and respond to each submission within a reasonable time, generally within 30 days of receipt, with guidance on next steps regarding recommended approval track. Concept papers should include the following elements:
 - i. Name of proposed Institute.
 - ii. Rationale: Explanation regarding why existing CU Boulder units (departments, colleges/schools, centers, Institutes, offices, etc.) cannot accommodate the Institute's objectives (1 page maximum).
 - iii. Description of the proposed Institute, its research and/or creative work focus, education priorities, primary goals, value added to the institution, and involved departments/colleges/schools/centers (1 page maximum).
 - iv. Explanation of resource needs and plans, including an estimate of how the Institute will be sustained financially.
 - v. List of core faculty members (and respective institute roles) who have agreed to be active participants (signature required from each).
 - vi. Statement(s) of support from (a) the Deans of each involved college or school, and (b) the Directors of each involved Institute, if applicable (2 pages maximum each).
- c. After reviewing the concept paper, the Dean of the Institutes will offer a recommendation to the Provost, who will subsequently advise the Chancellor and the proposing parties on the recommended course of action. If deemed ready to pursue new Institute approval, one of two approval tracks will be recommended:
 - i. Track I: Typically, the Dean of the Institutes requires those seeking to establish a new Institute to hold provisional status as a center for a three-to-five-year period before being formally approved as an Institute. See [CU Boulder's Centers Establishment and Reauthorization Process and Procedures](#). Provisional status as a center provides the new entity time and flexibility in developing and formalizing important aspects of the forthcoming Institute (e.g., mission, organizational structure, faculty engagement and funding strategies).
 - ii. Track II: Immediate Institute status approval is restricted to prospective Institutes that have secured stable funding and a long-term vision and plan. The Dean of the Institutes rarely recommends Track II approval.

If the Dean of the Institutes does not recommend approval for a new Institute (whether via Track I or Track II), the proposers may appeal the decision with to the Provost, and subsequently, to the Chancellor.

- d. Proposals for new Institute approval (Track I and Track II) must include the following:
- i. Program Plan (10 pages maximum). The Program Plan should provide more details than the initial Concept Paper including:
 - 1) Name of proposed Institute.
 - 2) Updated Rationale: Explanation regarding why existing CU Boulder units (departments, colleges/schools, centers, Institutes, offices, etc.) cannot accommodate the Institute's objectives.
 - 3) Detailed strategic plan, outlining the Institute's purpose, mission and research, education, service, and diversity, equity, and inclusion objectives.
 - 4) Synergy: Explanation regarding how synergy among Institute participants will be greater than individual efforts, and how the Institute will enable inter-, multi- and/or transdisciplinary collaboration.
 - 5) Institutional Value Added and Fit: Explanation regarding the value added to the CU Boulder and its research and creative enterprise and how the proposed Institute is aligned with the values and goals of CU Boulder.
 - 6) Governance Structure: Director (and Co-Director, Associate Director, if applicable).
 - 7) Participation of faculty, students, staff, including an updated list of faculty members (and respective institute roles) who have agreed to be active participants.
 - 8) Criteria for measuring and evaluating the success of the Institute.
 - 9) Timeline for the Institute development and objectives for first five years. The objectives should ensure alignment with evaluation criteria. Key actions/activities in support of the objectives should be clearly articulated as appropriate.
 - 10) Explanation of resource needs and plans, including an estimate of how the Institute will be sustained financially.
 - 11) Attachments:
 - a. Statement from each participating faculty member (1 page maximum)
 - b. Written confirmation of allocated space
 - ii. Bylaws (see [Institute Bylaws Template](#) for required elements)
 - iii. Five-year revenue and expenditure budget (see [Institute Budget Template](#) for required elements)
 - iv. Updated statement(s) of support from (a) the Deans of each involved college or school (as well as primary rostering department(s) when appropriate), and (b) the Directors of each involved institute, if applicable (2 pages maximum each).
 - v. Statement(s) demonstrating a financial commitment to support salary and benefits for faculty lines allocated to the Institute, including the amount of funding to be allocated and a description of the source(s) of such funding (1 page maximum).
- e. Per [APS 1008](#), the Dean of the Institutes will ensure that all proposals for new

Institutes are accompanied by an assessment, based on the information provided, from (1) University Counsel describing any potential legal liabilities, and (2) the Office of Budget & Fiscal Planning to ensure fiscal solvency and adequate fiscal controls.

- f. The Dean of the Institutes will make a recommendation to the Provost, who in turn makes a recommendation to the Chancellor regarding the approval of the proposed Institute.
- g. The Chancellor has the sole authority to approve the Institute proposal.
- h. The Chancellor will notify the Board of Regents when a new Institute is approved.
- i. New Institutes approved with Track I status will be authorized for three to five years. At the end of the designated period, provisional Institutes will be encouraged or discouraged to submit a Track II (permanent Institute) proposal using the process described above (C1d – C1f) to be reviewed by the Dean of the Institutes, the Provost, and the Chancellor.

(2) Reporting

- a. Institutes are reviewed through the [Academic Review and Planning \(ARPAC\)](#) process (every seven years). Institutes may be reviewed more frequently at the discretion of the Dean of Institutes.
- b. Institute directors are reviewed annually by the Dean of the Institutes.
- c. Provisional centers (Track I) must submit an annual report to the Dean of the Institutes for review and feedback. The report should assess the provisional center's ability to: achieve success in fulfilling its mission and objectives as outlined in its strategic or program plan; contribute to the mission of, and add value to, the university; engage faculty and students across disciplines; attract and generate external resources; maintain fiscal solvency; and evolve and change over time (5 pages maximum).

(3) Oversight, Management and Financial Integrity

- a. The Institute director is responsible for the day-to-day programmatic, fiscal and personnel decisions associated with the institute as well as ensuring continued fiscal solvency, compliance and progress toward institute and institutional goals.
- b. Institutes must obtain approval from the Dean of the Institutes regarding any changes in bylaws or leadership that affect the governance of the Institute.
- c. Per [APS 1008](#), the Chancellor must approve any appointment of Institute directors and other chief administrative officers.
- d. The Institute has responsibility for its own financial compliance, solvency and integrity. Non-compliance with financial regulations may result in the closure of the Institute.

(4) Discontinuance

- a. Institutes may be discontinued at any time at the discretion of the Chancellor. The Chancellor will notify the Board of Regents of any such decision.

- b. The Dean of the Institutes may recommend discontinuance of an Institute to the Provost, who may in turn recommend discontinuance to the Chancellor. The final decision on discontinuance rests with the Chancellor.
- c. An Institute seeking discontinuance must notify and secure approval from the Dean of the Institutes, the Provost, and the Chancellor by emailing rio@colorado.edu with the proposed end date of the Institute.
- d. An MOU will be drafted for any Discontinuance outlining how the Institute will resolve all outstanding matters, including remaining financial obligations, contractual compliance, and asset evaluation, in consultation with Dean of the Institutes.
- e. After 5 years of provisional status as a center (via Track I) without submitting a proposal to achieve Institute status (via Track II), an entity shall not be recommended for Institute establishment.

(5) Institute Director: Appointment

- a. The appointment of an Institute Director is made by the Dean of the Institutes, following approval by the Chancellor in accordance with APS 1008. In the event of a vacancy or the need for a new Director, the Dean of the Institutes may convene a search committee to offer guidance. The search committee is appointed by the Dean of the Institutes and typically chaired by another Institute Director. It can include representatives from the Institute's faculty, affiliates, staff, students, and external members. The role of the search committee is advisory to the Dean of the Institutes. To ensure a comprehensive and inclusive process, the Dean of the Institutes will actively seek input from the Institute's broader community.

(6) Institute Director: Term, Acting, and Interim Institute Directors

- a. The term of appointment for an Institute Director is four years and is renewable. Renewal to a full term requires the completion of a comprehensive review of the Institute Director. The review process is overseen by the Dean of the Institutes, who will appoint a review committee to serve in an advisory capacity. Extensions of appointments for one year can be granted at the discretion of the Dean of the Institutes.
- b. Acting Institute Director. In the event of an extended absence of an Institute Director, typically not exceeding 2 months, the incumbent Institute Director will recommend an Acting Director to the Dean of the Institutes. The Dean of the Institutes retains authority to either accept the recommendation provided or designate an alternative Acting Director. The appointment of an Acting Director is temporary and will last until the Institute Director returns.
- c. Interim Director. In the event of an Institute Director vacancy, the Dean of the Institutes, will designate an Interim Director. The appointment of an Interim Director is temporary and will terminate upon the appointment of a permanent Director.

(7) Voting Rights

- a. Consistent with [Regent policy \(Article 5.A.1\(B\)\)](#), tenured and tenure-track faculty may vote on matters pertaining to faculty hiring, appointment, re-appointment, or promotion within the Institute.

- b. Emeritus and other retired faculty do not possess voting rights within the Institute, unless they are currently employed by CU Boulder in a position that grants such rights.

(8) Exceptions to the Institute Establishment Process

- a. The Chancellor may agree to grant a waiver of the proposal process for an Institute. However, such a waiver must be signed by the Chancellor after University Counsel approves, based on the information available, the Institute's proposed bylaws and any membership agreements for legal sufficiency and the Office of Budget & Fiscal Planning approves the Institute's five-year revenue and expenditure budget for fiscal solvency.

(9) Inventory

- a. An inventory of all CU Boulder Institutes will be maintained by the Dean of the Institutes.

(10) Name Changes

- a. Per [APS 1008](#), the Chancellor must approve any Institute name changes.