Memo

Date: October 30, 2017
To: Academic faculty
From: Dr. David Evans, Vice-Dean, Research
Re: Call for Canada Research Chair nominations (Tier 1 and Tier 2)

Dear colleagues,

The next University of Alberta internal deadline for Canada Research Chair (CRC) nominations is February 1, 2018 for the April 25, 2018 CRC deadline. All nominations are subject to approval by the UA President’s Advisory Committee for Senior Academic Appointments (PACSA). Prior to this, FoMD must approve the nomination via the call for nominations as described below.

CRCs are one of the most prestigious research awards in Canada. There are two types of CRCs:

**Tier 1 CRCs** are for **outstanding** researchers acknowledged by their peers as **world leaders** in their fields. Nominees must be full professors or associate professors who are expected to be promoted to the full professor level within one or two years of the nomination (i.e. as of April 2018).

**Tier 2 CRCs** are to be **emerging scholars** who are no more than 10 years past their highest degree at time of nomination (i.e. April 2018; extensions are possible due to career interruptions – see the CRC guidelines for additional information).

The list of FoMD CRCs is on the Office of Research [website](#). Three FoMD Tier 1 CRCs will be completing their current term before July 1, 2018. Four Tier 2 CRCs are currently open or will be available as of April 1, 2018. Two of these Tier 2 CRCs are allocated to the Departments of Psychiatry and Cell Biology for incoming new recruits. **The objective of this call is to identify candidates to fill up to three Tier 1 CRC and up to two Tier 2 CRC positions.** There is also one Tier 2 CRC who is eligible to apply for renewal for a second five-year term. This will also be considered as part of this call but using different criteria from the new applications.

The CRC Program is subject to both the Canadian Human Rights Act and the federal Employment Equity Act. The Employment Equity Act mandates proactive practices to increase the representation of four designated groups: women, people with disabilities, Aboriginal peoples and visible minorities. The Act requires the removal of barriers that disadvantage members of the four designated groups.
Earlier this year, in keeping with its obligations under the Employment Equity Act and in response to a human rights complaint, which alleged that the CRC Program discriminated against individuals from the four designated groups, the Canada Research Chairs secretariat released a new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. As part of this plan, universities must post their own action plan on their website by December 15, 2017. Action plans must include a description of the institution’s equity targets and gaps for each of the four designated groups and set out indicators and actions that will enable swift progress towards meeting the institution’s equity targets and goals by December 2019.

Targets are set using an availability approach. Availability is determined by estimating the representation of a designated group within the pool of potential nominees. The most recent data indicates that, for women, representation within the pool of nominees for CIHR is 35%. Using this data, the FoMD must set an equity target of increasing the number of female CRCs to nine as of December 2019. Currently, women hold only three of the FoMD’s 23 CRCs. As such, the FoMD must increase its representation of women as CRC chairholders by six by December 2019.

The CRC Program has advised that if a university fails to meet its equity targets by December, 2019, it will withhold peer review and payments for nominations submitted to the fall 2017 intake cycle, and to future cycles as necessary, until the requirements are fulfilled and that if progressive improvements are not made between December 2017 and December 2019, additional measures may be taken.

The University has also been advised by the CRC Program that it will be monitoring all nominations between now and December 2019 and that it would not hesitate to take action if it appeared that a university was not making sufficient improvement towards achieving its equity target. Within the UA, faculties that do not meet their diversity target may have CRC positions reallocated to another faculty that has a plan in place to help the university meet the overall institute target.

In order to achieve the equity targets for female representation within the CRC Chairs held by the FoMD, the FoMD has determined that the current call for CRCs will be limited only to female candidates. FoMD will attend to the other three groups (Indigenous people, persons with disabilities, and visible minorities) through these calls although gaps here are less dramatic at UofA.

I recognize that this gender limitation is not the norm for FoMD and the CRC program. However, it is important to recognize that the CRC Action Plan is a program designed to eliminate systemic discrimination and achieve or attempt to achieve equal opportunity for underrepresented target groups. The laudable aims of the CRC Action Plan are to identify and eliminate barriers to CRC Chairship for members from the designated groups; to put into place positive policies and practices to ensure the effects of systemic barriers are eliminated; and to ensure appropriate representation of designated group across CRC chairs. Generally speaking, special programs which are designed to eliminate systemic discrimination and increase underrepresentation of target groups are viewed as being consistent with human rights legislation.

In the past, department chairs were asked to nominate CRC candidates. In order to ensure a fully open and transparent process, we are now sending this call for nominations to all full-time FoMD faculty members so that they can self-nominate. If you know of a well-qualified individual who might not ordinarily consider themselves as a CRC candidate, please encourage them to apply.
Please provide the following by **Friday, November 24** in electronic format (PDF preferred) to Mark Taylor (mtaylor4@ualberta.ca) if you wish to be considered for a CRC:

1. Your CV in Common CV format (preferably using the CIHR Academic format).

2. A personal statement (two pages maximum) of why you feel that you that you meet the expectations of a CRC. Please address the specific Tier 1 and Tier 2 requirements and do not simply repeat what is in your CV.

Please also copy your submission to your department chair.

A subcommittee of the Faculty Research Committee will review these submissions. This committee will include additional faculty members from FoMD as well as from other faculties and potentially other universities. The committee will submit its nomination recommendations to the dean and vice dean, research with the dean making the final decision as to which nominations will be approved for submission to PACSAA for final UA approval.

FoMD has outstanding female faculty members and we look forward to receiving their applications for a CRC Chair. Please do not hesitate to contact Mark Taylor or me if you have any questions regarding the CRC program or this call for nominations.

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**Additional Information**

1. **CRC website.** There is a significant amount of information on the [CRC website](http://crc.ualberta.ca). I strongly encourage you to visit it to learn more about the CRC program if you are considering submitting an application.

2. **Tier 1 renewals.** There is currently no limit on the number of times that a Tier 1 CRC can be renewed. However, a recent evaluation of the CRC program has recommended that a Tier 1 CRC be limited to two seven-year terms. FoMD agrees with this position and thus our Tier 1 CRCs will now be held for a maximum of two terms (with a competitive renewal required after the first term). This applies to all current and new CRCs.

3. **Timing of the Tier 1 application.** Nominees must be full professors or associate professors who are expected to be promoted to the full professor level within one or two years of the nomination (i.e. as of April 2018).

4. **Timing of the Tier 2 application.** Tier 2 CRCs are required to submit a renewal application during their fourth year of the chair. This requires approval by both FoMD and the UA PACSAA committee prior to submission to the CRC secretariat. Thus, if the term of the Tier 2 starts very close to the start of their first academic appointment, he/she may be challenged to demonstrate adequate progress as an independent investigator by the fourth year. This would include such milestones as high-quality original research publications as senior author, holding significant peer reviewed research funding as a principal investigator (typically CIHR or other major granting agency, etc.), a demonstrated record in training high-quality personnel, etc. Thus, consideration should be given as to whether you wish to apply for a CRC immediately upon starting in FoMD or whether you wish to wait a year or two. Please keep in mind other CRC regulations that may affect your decision in this regard (e.g. number of years post-PhD that you are eligible).
5. **Holding a concurrent research chair, professorship, new investigator or other salary award.** FoMD faculty members who currently hold an endowed or other research chair or professorship (or who will hold one as of April 1, 2018) are not eligible to also hold a CRC. As well, individuals who hold a new investigator award or equivalent are often not eligible to hold a CRC concurrently. Please contact Mark Taylor or me if you wish to discuss any potential exceptions to this.

6. **CFI JELF applications.** It is current policy of FoMD to not link a CFI JELF application to a CRC submission. JELF applications are considered via a separate process (see the [FoMD website](#) for additional information).