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APPLICATION

1. What length should the proposal be?

Please keep it to 5-10 pages. Please feel free to use the application template, if you find it helpful. The template is meant to serve as a guide.

2. What is the deadline for the application?

We typically have 4 intakes in a year (Feb 15, May 15, Sept 15 and Dec 15). That said, we are open to reviewing applications outside of these deadlines on a case-by-case basis.

3. Can we make changes to our application after submitting it?

Yes, you can. But we would like to receive any updates immediately and before they head for final review. We will also do an initial review before it heads for final review by the leadership from the School of Graduate Studies and OVPI. After this initial review, we may share any suggestions for any changes we think might be required/helpful.

4. When will we hear back on the status of our application?

It could take up to 8 weeks from the time of submitting the application to hearing about the outcome.

5. Who should submit the application?

We expect the lead IDC PI from U of T to submit the application.

6. What happens if our application is approved?

The next step will be to sign a funds transfer & expenditure agreement involving the relevant U of T stakeholders which include

- Lead U of T PI
- OVPI
- SGS
- Funding divisions/EDUs/Dept.
- Signing authority on expenses-typically a chair/head of an EDU/Vice-Dean (if they are not part of the IDC research team)
- Other U of T IDC PIs if we remit funds to multiple PI associated CFC/CC accounts



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Office of the Vice-President, International (OVPI)

This is intended to ensure all parties understand the terms of the commitments and transfer & expenditure of IDC funds and annual reporting requirements.

Once this document is signed, OVPI, SGS and supporting divisions/EDUs/Depts./PIs will transfer funds to the CFC/CC account (1 single account is preferred) associated with the IDC.

The lead U of T IDC PI will be required to provide an annual report at the end of each U of T fiscal. A reporting template will be provided to the lead PI in advance of the annual reporting deadline.

FUNDING

7. What are the eligible expenses?

The IDC funds (OVPI, SGS, Division/Dept./EDU, PI/external) can only be used for the purpose of

- U of T PI, PDF and graduate student travel to IDC partners and workshops/symposia.
- Cover the costs of novel virtual approaches to global collaborations

i.e. commitments & matching funding can only be invested for these purposes.

Please contact OVPI for more information/questions concerning this. Please review the application template to learn more about this.

8. Is there a ceiling on a proposed IDC budget?

No. Typically, most IDC budgets concerning eligible expenses do not exceed 100,000 CAD/year for 3-5 years. OVPI and SGS will provide funding of 1/3rd capped at 33,000CAD/year.

PIs proposing 5 year budgets, will need to demonstrate a strong rationale for funding beyond the preferred initial 3 year period.

Please note, PIs are welcome to propose 2-4 year budgets as well, if they feel they could find sustainable external sources of funding to support the collaboration by that time.

9. If 1/3rd of the funding comes from OVPI and SGS, how is the remainder of the 2/3rds shared among the stakeholders?

We expect another 1/3rd of the funding will come from divisions, departments and EDUs. The remainder of the funds can come from PIs and external funding sources. If PIs are able to secure external funding for the remaining 2/3rd, that is even better.



10. This is not enough funding to support other expenses. How can we have such a large-scope partnership on this budget?

IDC funding is intended to cover a good share of the direct (travel, workshops & symposia) costs associated with face-to-face & virtual collaborations by supplementing graduate student and academic research base funding.

We encourage PIs to consider engaging their divisional/dept./EDU leadership to see if there are ways to support other expenses associated with the collaboration. We also encourage PIs to leverage these seed funds to secure external funding to cover any IDC-related expenses.

11. Can IDC funding support travel expenses for partner IDC PIs/PDF/graduate students?

U of T IDC funding is intended for the use of the U of T community engaged in the IDC. Hence, it cannot be used to cover travel expenses to U of T for partner IDC collaborators.

If IDC partners have offered U of T PIs/graduate students/PDFs with travel support (accommodation etc.), we might be open to making an exemption.

Prior to commencing on an IDC application, we highly recommend exploring funding options (institutional & national) for collaborators overseas. OVPI will be happy to engage with our counterparts at the collaborating IDC institution(s) to explore ways to help PIs there secure the resources required to participate in the IDC.

Through U of T's partnerships with Mitacs Canada, there is some matching funding from Mitacs Canada to bring students from select countries to U of T to engage in short-term research. Please visit the following [link](#) for more information on this. Please note, Mitacs Canada provides funding for U of T students to travel to select countries for short-term research as well. Students awarded Mitacs Globalink Research Awards cannot re-apply for Mitacs GRA.

12. Whom should we contact within our division for funding support?

After consulting with the interested IDC PIs at U of T, please connect with the relevant Chair(s) and heads of EDUs for support with a summary of the proposed IDC.

After receiving feedback from them, please contact Vice-Dean/Associate Dean, Graduate to have a conversation with them about your proposed plan to submit an IDC application and desire for divisional IDC funding support.



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Office of the Vice-President, International (OVPI)

OVPI would be happy to assist the lead U of T PI in engaging relevant stakeholders at U of T to explore internal funding opportunities to help develop the IDC proposal.

13. Can we rollover IDC funds to the next fiscal?

Yes, IDC funds can be carried over to the next fiscal for the use of planned IDC activities.

During the course of the 3 to 5 year IDC program, we will remit IDC funds for years 2-5 after reviewing funds carried over and past & planned IDC activities as provided in the annual IDC report submitted by the lead PI.

COLLABORATION

14. Is prior demonstrated collaboration (through co-publications or co-application to external funding or exchange of graduate students) with my collaborative counterpart necessary?

Having some established working relationship with your collaborative counterparts is considered desirable, but is not necessary. It would be highly unlikely that all PIs have a demonstrated track record of collaboration. Hence, we highly recommend that the lead IDC PI consider applying for workshop funding from OVPI before applying for IDC. The workshop is intended to help cultivate ties between U of T and partner PIs who have not collaborated before and help PIs from both institution develop an IDC proposal.

More information on pre-IDC workshop funding can be found [here](#). Some divisions, departments and EDUs have provided matching support for pre-IDC workshops.

15. How many PIs and partner institutions are required to be part of the IDC?

We require at least 3 U of T PIs and at least 3 collaborating PIs from overseas be part of the IDC.

There is no maximum number of PIs and partner institutions that can be part of the IDC. However, we encourage the lead PI to keep the IDC network as manageable as possible and scale it up (especially, if it is a new collaboration) gradually.

The IDC programs aims to bring a cluster of PIs from U of T and overseas to develop a research and training network to tackle research issues that exceed the capacity and expertise of a single PI or individual PI to PI collaborations.



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When putting forward a proposal, consider a problem space within your domain that can be subdivided into several smaller collaborative efforts, but which, when taken together, represent the potential for transformative impact in the field.

16. Can the primary collaborating institution be an industry/NGO or other non-academic partner?

Yes, they can be. We would be happy to discuss this further.

17. Besides in-person interactions, what other kinds of collaborations does the IDC program encourage?

Taking into account the changing ways in which collaborative research is being conducted, the IDC program will give strong consideration to proposals that aim to develop robust international research and training opportunities and networks through a combination of in-person and virtual and other novel approaches to global collaborations. Virtual approaches to global collaborations may include online communication platforms, virtual workshops and lab group meetings, virtual journal clubs, and online open access lab notebooks.

TRAINING

18. What are the mechanisms for training graduate students?

- a. Exchange:** Under this arrangement, students earn a U of T degree, but engage in research that advances the collaboration and their education by visiting the partner (s) for a short period or short periods. This is a common form of training. Please see question #22 for further information.

SGS can provide documentation to visiting graduate students confirming participation in research activities at U of T under certain circumstances. Please see question 22 for further information.

b. Full-degree co-supervision

- i. **Joint Education Placement PhD:** Under this arrangement a student is formally co-supervised under the rules of U of T and partner academic institution towards their PhD. Students earn a single degree, but are eligible for parchments from U of T and partner institution. Tuition is paid at the lead institution. Please see question #23 for further information.
- ii. **Other:** In consultation with the relevant stakeholders at U of T and the U of T PhD student, a PI from a partner institution could be granted SGS Graduate Faculty Membership Status to co-supervise a U of T PhD student towards a U of



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T doctoral degree with a U of T PI. Please contact SGS for this at
sgs.international@utoronto.ca

PIs are welcome to choose one or more models based on what works best for them, their students and collaborators.

19. How many students and PDFs do we need to train each year?

We expect at least 1 U of T graduate student/PDF per each participating U of T IDC PI engage in an overseas research stay of at least 3 weeks each year. We expect the graduate students and PDF training plan to be built into the collaborative projects between the PIs at both institutions.

20. Some of our interested U of T PIs do not have a suitable graduate student yet to participate in the IDC. Can they still be part of the application?

Yes, they can be part of the application. We will expect that the U of T PIs who do not have a suitable graduate student to have plans to recruit a suitable graduate student in the immediate future.

21. Can you please share the link for Safety Abroad training for our students?

U of T PIs MUST direct their students to register with Safety Abroad before they travel overseas. Please share this [link](#) with your students. U of T Safety Abroad supports the University community in managing risks pertaining to student travel internationally and offers supports to students while they are abroad.

22. Our graduate student/PDF would like to speak to someone who has lived in/travelled to the IDC partner country. Is there someone who can assist our student/PDF with this?

Please get in touch with OVPI, we would be happy to look into connecting the graduate student/PDF with relevant people/resources on or off campus.

AGREEMENTS/SUPPORT LETTERS/OTHER SUPPORT

23. Do we need to sign any agreements?

Besides the internal funds transfer and expenditure agreement, there is no requirement for any other agreements to be signed internally.



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Externally, there is no requirement to sign an institution to institution level agreement unless

- Both institutions do so for reasons of protocol/good will (General MOU) and there is no such active agreement in place between both institutions.

OR

- One or both institutions see a need for an exchange agreement

OR

- PIs decide to co-supervise PhD students through Joint Education Placement

OR

- Both institutions determine they would like to sign an agreement committing resources to the IDC (i.e. an MOU tailored for the purpose of an IDC or many IDCs)

However, there are some individual-level agreements that might need to be signed (International Visiting Graduate Student Agreement, Visiting Scientist Agreement etc.).

Below is a list of agreement types that are relevant to the IDC program. U of T has templates for all of the below. For any institutional-level agreements, we prefer to share our template and work off these pre-approved templates.

International Visiting Graduate Student (IVGS) Agreement: This is typically required to host graduate students from overseas partners for short-term research at U of T that is typically more than a month. Please contact SGS International Studies at sgs.international@utoronto.ca when you have identified a student and ready to host the partner graduate student for short-term research at U of T. This is an individual student focused agreement. Visiting students do not pay any tuition fees at U of T, but do pay mandatory incidental fees.

For IVGS students, SGS can provide documentation confirming their participation in this program at the end of the IVGS student's visit.

If your graduate students are expected to sign any agreements by the overseas partner when they travel there, please do get in touch with SGS for guidance on signing any such agreements.



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Graduate Student Exchange Agreement (institutional-level agreement): These are agreements signed to facilitate the flow of students between U of T and partner institutions.

These agreements are signed at the University-wide/divisional/dept.-level, assign quotas for the number of spots annually open to students at each other's institutions for mostly course-work and waive fees (tuition & non-academic compulsory fees).

If there is a prior exchange agreement between U of T and the IDC partner that is either university-wide or a relevant division-wide and includes graduate student mobility, the IDC partner could choose to nominate its IVGS student under the agreement's quota of spots allocated for it at U of T. This decision is at the sole discretion of the exchange/international mobility office of the IVGS student's home institution.

If the IDC partner chooses to do this, the IVGS student will not have to pay non-academic compulsory fees for the relevant semester(s) they spend at U of T engaging in research. If there is no exchange agreement in place, and we plan to host IVGS from the IDC partner on a regular basis, a case could be made for a tailored exchange agreement with the IDC partner for the purpose of the IDC.

Regardless of an exchange agreement, if a graduate student is visiting U of T for a month or more for research, an IVGS agreement will need to be signed. IVGS students will still be required to pay for University Health Insurance Plan. The University Health Insurance Plan is a mandatory health insurance plan for all international and exchange students enrolled in an Ontario university.

In our experience, we have not seen a need for having an exchange agreement in place to send U of T graduate students on short-term research to partner institutions. However, if the partner insists on one, we will consider an exchange agreement and have graduate-research focused exchange agreement templates to share with the partner.

Please feel to inquire about any exchange agreements that might be relevant to your IVGS students when you contact SGS about the IVGS agreement.

Before you contact SGS about IVGS & inquire about relevant exchange agreements, during the IDC proposal planning stage

- Please find out from collaborating PIs whether the partner institution requires any agreements (institution/individual) to be in place before they host U of T graduate students.
- Ascertain how many visiting graduate students U of T PIs will be hosting in a year and the desired earliest start dates to start hosting students



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The above information would be helpful in ascertaining how SGS might be able to facilitate short-term graduate student mobility for research with an IDC partner.

Joint Education Placement Agreement for PhD (institutional & individual PI-student level agreements): This is signed at the institutional level to agree on common terms of co-supervision in alignment with the rules & procedures for awarding a PhD at both institutions. The collaborating PIs (U of T & partner) and PhD student sign a complementary agreement relevant to the co-supervision plans for that PhD student. Students pay tuition at the lead institution and pay non-academic compulsory fees based on where they are residing during any given semester (i.e. U of T or partner). Please contact SGS International Studies at sgs.international@utoronto.ca for more information and agreement templates.

Visiting Scientist Agreement: This is for hosting PDFs and PIs from overseas at a U of T lab. If a U of T PI is hosting a graduate student for less than month, and the student has not signed an IVGS agreement, it might be worth considering having the visiting graduate student sign this agreement. Please contact Tina Coccia (tina.coccia@utoronto.ca) at IPO for more information on this after you have identified a PI/PDF to host at your lab.

General MOUs (institutional-level agreement): These are non-binding agreements signed at the University/division/dept./EDU-level in support of broad or focused collaborative interests with a partner institution.

We have signed General MOUs in support of an IDC to draw the attention of the leadership at the IDC partner institution to the IDC collaboration. In this scenario, the General MOU is intended to encourage the leadership at the IDC partner institution to support their research community engage in the IDC with U of T.

However, we have not had to sign this agreement for majority of the IDCs.

Regardless of an MOU, OVPI would be happy to flag our support for the IDC to our counterparts at the IDC partner institution.

24. What other forms of support can we receive from your office?

We would be happy to consider providing letters of support in preparation for applications to external funding programs. We would be open to providing such letters of support even if you have not already applied to the IDC program, but plan to do so. We will consider this request in consultation with divisional and OVPRI stakeholders.



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IDC PIs have also reached out to our office to help secure the participation of Canadian government representatives and overseas academic partner's leadership in the launch of their IDC overseas.

We would also be happy to feature stories about your IDC through our website and social media accounts. We also welcome ideas for story pitches to media overseas.