

# **Terms of Reference for the Equine Guelph Research Committee**

## **Sections of the document:**

1. Preamble
2. Purposes and functions of the Committee
3. Membership
4. Functions and responsibilities of members
5. Processes undertaken by the Committee
  - 5.1. Description of Research Proposal
  - 5.2. Normal Cycle for Research Proposals
  - 5.3. Description of Events in Normal Cycle
  - 5.4. Fast Track for new Proposals on emergent issues
  - 5.5. Final reports
  - 5.6. Annual Reports
  - 5.7. Midstream changes in research projects
6. Other points
7. Appendices

## **1. Preamble**

- 1.1. The Equine Guelph Research Committee is hereafter termed ‘the Committee’ and the Equine Guelph Advisory Council is hereafter termed ‘the Advisory Council’.
- 1.2. The University of Guelph is hereafter termed ‘the University’ or is abbreviated as ‘UG’.
- 1.3. Agencies and organizations within the equine industry that contribute funding for research through the auspices of Equine Guelph are hereafter termed ‘Funding Agencies’.
- 1.4. A ‘Research proposal’ or ‘Proposal’ is a document submitted by a researcher or team of researchers requesting funding for a specific project or program of research. It documents the need for the research, the methods to be employed, the milestones of activity, and the budget. The Committee makes recommendations for funding on the basis of Proposals and reviews of them provided by expert peers. (See section 5.3 for details on how the recommendations are made.)
- 1.5. The term ‘researcher’ is used to designate the primary investigator or investigators self-identified on a Research Proposal. It does not include others listed as collaborators, technicians or graduate assistants.
- 1.6. An ‘Annual Report’ is a document provided to the Committee by funded researchers at yearly intervals to document progress in regard to the milestones described in the

Proposal. Continuation of funding is subject to a satisfactory report, as judged by majority vote of the Voting members of the Committee. (See section 3.1 for a definition of Voting members.)

- 1.7. A 'Final Report' is a document provided by funded researchers at the completion of the project which documents its outcomes. The Voting members of the Committee determine the acceptability of such reports by majority vote.
- 1.8. These Terms of Reference may be modified at the request of the Committee, any Funding Agency, or the University, subject to a majority vote of the representatives of the Funding Agencies on the Advisory Council.
- 1.9. Modifications to the Appendices of this document may be made as necessary, with notification to the Advisory Council or at its request, with no formal vote.

## **2. Purpose and functions of the Committee**

- 2.1. The primary purpose of the Committee is to make recommendations on the allocation of funds provided by the Funding Agencies to support equine research through the auspices of Equine Guelph.
- 2.2. Members of the committee who are appointed by a specific Funding Agency are responsible to that Agency for recommending allocations of the funding it provides and communicating any achievements or issues arising in respect to that funding.
- 2.3. The Committee as a whole communicates with the Advisory Council, *via* the co-Chairs, because research funding is incorporated in the budget of Equine Guelph, once released by each Funding Agency.
- 2.4. All requests for funding or solicitations of research to be undertaken under the auspices of Equine Guelph are to be coordinated by this Committee. This is to ensure that such research is subjected to peer review and the reporting procedures administered by the Committee, Equine Guelph and the University.

### **2.5. Summary of the responsibilities and functions of the Committee**

- a. Communicating research priorities of the Funding Agencies to the researchers.
- b. Requesting and evaluating Research proposals and making recommendations on funding to the Funding Agencies
- c. Report to the Funding Agencies on evaluations of Annual and Final reports
- d. Providing evaluation of Proposals submitted in relation to emergent issues outside of the normal funding cycle
- e. Communicating to the Funding Agencies the outcomes of the Committee's activities
- f. Communicating to the Advisory Council on all activities of the Committee
- g. Monitoring research projects and reporting irregularities to the Advisory Council or Funding Agencies as is appropriate.
- h. Ensuring that issues arising that are beyond the Committee's mandate to resolve are referred to the Advisory Council and to the Funding Agencies.

- 2.6. It is not the responsibility of the Committee to communicate results or outcomes of research to the equine community at large, to resolve issues arising from research projects judged by the Committee to be incomplete or inadequate, or to resolve issues arising from the actions of the University or Funding Agencies.
- 2.7. It is not the responsibility of the Committee to ensure responsible expenditure and accounting of research funds. That responsibility falls to the University and to Equine Guelph.
- 2.8. An appeal process is necessary for decisions by the committee on Annual and Final reports. Appeals are to be directed to the co-Chairs of the Advisory Council or appropriate delegates for consideration. *[NOTE: The working group has not discussed the details of an appeals process. This clause flags the need for one, but the Advisory Council, University and Funding Agencies should discuss and establish an appropriate mechanism for appeal.]*

### **3. Membership**

- 3.1. Membership of the Committee includes voting and non-Voting members. The distinction is as follows:
  - Voting members are nominated by each Funding Agency in proportion to the funding provided. As prescribed in the Memoranda of Agreement between Equine Guelph and the Funding Agencies, each Agency is entitled to one Voting member on the Committee for each contribution of \$50,000 towards research. The number of Voting members and Funding Agencies represented by them is determined by this formula, and changes in either does not need ratification by the Advisory Council. Changes should be recorded in *Appendix 1*. Voting members have the primary responsibility for recommending allocations of funding.
  - Non-Voting members include the co-Chairs, Resource members and Temporary members. They participate in discussions and provide information, but have no direct influence on any decision made by the Voting members.
- 3.2. The categories of membership on the Committee is as follows:
  - a. An Industry co-Chair, appointed by the Funding Agencies, non-voting
  - b. A University co-Chair, appointed by the University (usually the equine species coordinator), non-voting
  - c. Voting members appointed by each Funding Agency who have the primary responsibility for recommending allocations of funding

- d. Two Resource members (non-voting) appointed as resource personnel to the Committee by a majority vote of the representatives of the Funding Agencies on the Advisory Council.
    - The Administrative Resource member will provide a link to the research administration of the University, and a means to obviate situations of conflict of interest that arise when members representing the University are active researchers. The appointment will be made at the discretion of the University.
    - The Equine Guelph Resource member will provide a link to the other Committees of Equine Guelph.
  - e. Temporary members appointed as needed at the request of the Committee, any Funding Agency, or the University, with the prior approval of the representatives of the Funding Agencies on the Advisory Council. They will perform only the specific functions that are the reasons for their appointment, and will leave without further approval once those functions are no longer necessary. They do not have a vote.
- 3.3. The list of the current membership, including incumbents, is in *Appendix 1*. This Appendix may be updated as necessary, without formal re-approval by the representatives of the Funding Agencies on the Advisory Council of these Terms of Reference. Updates may include changes in incumbent, changes in membership eligibility with changes in funding levels from any Funding Agencies, or changes in Funding Agencies.
- 3.4. Each co-Chair and Voting member will appointed for a 3-year term at the discretion of the appointing body. Terms will be staggered for continuity within the Committee. Resource members have no predefined term, and may be replaced by personnel bringing the requisite skill sets at the discretion of the University or Equine Guelph. Temporary members only participate in the Committee's activities as long as the function they perform is necessary.
- 3.5. All members will be bound by a signed declaration of confidentiality concerning the contents of Research Proposals under review, to protect the intellectual property contained therein. The declaration template is in *Appendix 2*.
- 3.6. Some of the activities of the Committee do not need a meeting of the full Committee. For these activities an Executive Committee may meet, or interact by email or telephone, as is expedient. The Executive Committee will consist of the two co-Chairs, and one Voting member to represent each Funding Agency (and designated by the respective Agency). Resource members may be invited by the Executive to participate in each activity, but Temporary members normally will not, unless their functions are relevant to a specific activity of the Executive. Activities delegated to the Executive Committee are identified in points 5.3.4, 5.4.2, 5.5.5, and 5.7.1.

## 4. Functions and responsibilities of members

### 4.1. Industry Co-Chair. The incumbent will:

- a. Act on behalf of the Funding Agencies and Equine Guelph in all administrative matters of the Committee
- b. Ensure adherence of all parties to these terms of reference
- c. Assist in promoting research activities *via* the Equine Guelph Communications Committee
- d. Interact with the University co-chair as necessary
- e. Co-chair meetings of the Committee, and of the Executive when formal meetings are required
- f. Assist the Funding Agencies in developing research priorities annually.
- g. Co-sign letters to researchers to notify them of awards of funding, and of all decisions regarding Annual and Final Reports

### 4.2. University Co-Chair. The incumbent will:

- a. Act on behalf of the University and Equine Guelph in all administrative matters of the Committee
- b. Coordinate logistical management of all Annual and Final reports and Research proposals
- c. Communicate to each Funding Agency the disbursement and use of funds provided, in the manner requested by that Agency
- d. Coordinate use of research horses with manager of the Arkell Research station
- e. Assist in promoting research activities *via* the Equine Guelph Communications Committee
- f. Interact with the Industry co-chair as necessary
- g. Co-chair meetings of the Committee, and of the Executive when formal meeting are required.
- h. Co-sign all letters to researchers concerning the decisions of Voting members on awards and Annual and Final Reports.
- i. Develop and maintain a list of external peer reviewers

### 4.3. Voting members.

The primary function of the Voting members is to make decisions concerning the allocation of funding to new Research proposals and to ongoing projects based on Annual Reports of activity in those projects. A list of the tasks to be performed by Voting members includes:

- a. Reviewing new Research proposals and make recommendations on the allocation of funding
- b. Reviewing Annual Reports on research projects and make recommendations on the continuation of funding
- c. Reviewing Final Reports on research projects and make recommendations on their acceptability
- d. Communicating the recommendations to the respective Funding Agency for approval

- e. Consulting with their respective Funding Agencies to update priorities annually for each agency
- f. Bringing the priorities to the Committee prior to the call for research proposals
- g. Reporting issues to their respective Funding Agencies.

#### 4.4. Resource Members.

The Administrative Resource member has the following functions:

- a. To bring information on the policies and protocols of the University as they relate to the funding, execution, and accounting of research activity
- b. To represent the University at any meeting while the University co-Chair is out of the room (for example, in situations of conflict of interest).
- c. To provide a conduit for complaints by researchers that are not formal appeals.

The Equine Guelph Resource member has the following functions:

- d. To communicate information to the Committee as necessary of the non-research activities of Equine Guelph.
- e. To facilitate the transfer of research information to the equine industry through the Equine Guelph Communications Committee and other appropriate means.
- f. To facilitate the transfer of information from the Committee to researchers, including, for example, business minutes of the Committee's meetings, but excluding discussions and formal decisions concerning Reports and Proposals.

#### 4.5. Temporary members. Their functions will depend on a need perceived by the Committee, any of the Funding Agencies, or the University.

## **5. Processes undertaken by the Committee**

The Committee will collate research priorities from the Funding Agencies, and will review Research Proposals, Final Reports and Annual Reports in an annual cycle. An Executive of the Committee will review Research Proposals submitted out of that cycle, and requests for changes in objectives or milestones of currently funded projects. These activities are detailed below.

### **5.1. Description of Research Proposal**

A full description is provided separately with the application form, and only a summary is provided here. Each Proposal should include:

- a. A description of the need, the relevance to the industry, and previously published research,
- b. The hypothesis to be tested and/or objectives of the proposed research.
- c. The milestones and timeline
- d. A justified budget.
- e. Previous awards via Equine Guelph, and the outcomes of the funded projects, and current funding from other sources.

- f. The need for access to horses at Arkell or on the University campus (if any).

## 5.2. Normal Cycle for Research Proposals

Most Proposals will be handled in an annual cycle as described in this section and the next. Dates for the cycle are determined with reference to the meeting at which Proposals and Annual and Final Reports are reviewed. If this date is changed, all others will be moved accordingly. The timing of this meeting is predicated on the need to release funds as early in the year as possible, so that meaningful milestones can be met in the first year of work before the deadline for Annual Reports.

The events in the cycle are listed in sequence first, followed by details of each activity. *Appendix 3* contains a dated list, enabling the dates to be modified as necessary in future years without formal re-approval of these Terms of Reference.

- a. Coordination of Research priorities
- b. Call for Research Proposals
- c. **Deadline for submission of Proposals** on the correct forms by 5 p.m. on the date specified in *Appendix 3*.
- d. Soliciting peer reviews begins and Proposals are sent to consenting reviewers.
- e. Soliciting peer reviewers completed and Proposals all sent to reviewers.
- f. First deadline for reviews to be returned.
- g. Final deadline for reviews to be returned.
- h. **Deadline for submission of Annual Reports, and Final Reports** to be considered in this round, on the date specified in *Appendix 3*. (Final Reports may be submitted after this deadline, but must be received within one calendar year of the ending date specified on the original proposal.)
- i. Proposals and reviews collated and sent to chairs and Voting members of Committee, together with Final and Annual Reports of previously funded projects.
- j. **Review Meeting of Committee to review Proposals, Final and Annual Reports and make recommendations**
- k. Voting members receive preliminary budget take recommendation for funding back to Funding Agencies for approval.
- l. All approvals are returned, and process begins of transferring funds to University and setting up accounting.
- m. Successful and unsuccessful researchers are informed.
- n. **Funds are released** on or before date specified in *Appendix 3*.
- o. Annual Reports are due for multiyear projects funded in this round.

## 5.3. Description of Events in Normal Cycle

- 5.3.1. Coordination of Research Priorities from all Funding Agencies. Funding Agencies may have priorities for research which change from year to year. It is the responsibility of Voting members, assisted by the Industry co-Chair, to bring forward annual priorities from Funding Agencies, and coordinate them

with the ongoing priorities established for OMAFRA research. This may be achieved by meeting, by phone, or by email

5.3.2. Call for Research Proposals. A general announcement is made of the availability of funding, the annual priorities, and the mechanism for preparing and submitting proposals. This is the responsibility of University co-chair, assisted by staff of the Associate Dean of Research, OVC.

5.3.3. Deadline for submission of proposals. Submitted Proposals will be collated by University co-chair, assisted by staff of the Associate Dean of Research, OVC or of Equine Guelph. If the use of research horses at Arkell is requested, the proposal is also submitted to the OMAFRA contract coordinator in the Office of Research.

5.3.4. Peer review. All Research Proposals will be sent for external peer review. Two reviews are optimal.

An *external peer reviewer* is defined as an expert in the field relevant to the Proposal who is not at the University of Guelph, nor has been an academic supervisor or recent collaborator of the primary investigators on the proposal.

Peer reviewers are suggested for each Proposal by the researchers or by the University members of the Committee. The process is for peer reviewers to be contacted by email with a request to perform the review. Once the request is accepted, the full proposal is emailed with a template for the review and a score sheet. A turn around time of 3 weeks or less is requested, to get reviews back by the first deadline.

In the case when no external peer reviews are received by the first deadline, alternate reviewers will be contacted. At the discretion of the Executive committee, peer reviewers at the University of Guelph may be contacted at this time, in addition to external reviewers.

Attempts will be made to obtain reviews until the Final deadline, after which no new solicitations will be made, but late reviews will still be accepted. If no reviews are received for any project, the Committee will evaluate it without the benefit of peer review.

5.3.5. Deadline for submission of proposals. Final and Annual reports must be submitted to the University co-Chair by the designated deadline.

5.3.6. Proposals and reviews are collated and sent, together with Final and Annual Reports, to co-Chairs and Voting members of Committee. On receipt of this package, all members independently review the Proposals, reviews and Reports in preparation for the meeting to evaluate them and make recommendations. The responsibility for sending out the packages belongs to the University co-chair, assisted by staff of the Administrative Resource member.

5.3.7. Review Meeting of whole Committee to review new Proposals, Final and Annual Reports and make recommendations. This is a meeting of the whole Committee including Resource and Temporary members. The review processes are as follows:

- Final Reports are evaluated for completeness, and whether the outcomes stated in the Proposal have been met. All Voting members vote, with a majority necessary for approval.
- Annual Reports are evaluated on the achievement of milestones stated in the Proposal. All Voting members vote, with a majority necessary for approval. Approved Reports receive funding for the next year.
- Research Proposals are evaluated by the Voting members. There are three criteria for assessing each Proposal:
  - (1) its relevance to the priorities identified by each industry and OMAFRA, or to the current state of the equine industry,
  - (2) the quality of the science as evaluated by the external peer reviewers, and
  - (3) that the researcher and research team have appropriate qualifications, expertise to conduct the research, and have been productive under prior funding, as documented in a resume submitted with the Proposal.

All Voting members score all Proposals on these criteria and a ranking is generated from the combined scores. Recommendations for funding are made based on the ranking of each Proposal and its relevance to each Funding Agency's interests and priorities. There is no voting in this procedure.

The final recommendation for funding by any given Funding Agency is at the discretion of the representatives of that Agency.

A preliminary budget of the distribution of funding among continuing projects and successful Proposals is determined during the course of the meeting, and checked after the meeting.

5.3.8. Approval of recommendations by Funding Agencies. Within 1 week of the meeting, the preliminary budget for the distribution of funding is communicated to the Industry co-Chair, Voting and Administrative resource members. This is the responsibility of University co-chair, assisted by staff of the Administrative resource member. The Voting members have the responsibility of taking the preliminary budget to their respective Agencies for approval. Approval of the Funding Agencies is reported back to the University co-Chair, who initiates the process for transfer and releasing funds.

Funding Agencies may reject the recommendations for funding specific projects. In this case the amounts recommended for allocation are not included in the research budget of Equine Guelph, and are not transferred to Equine Guelph or to the relevant projects.

- 5.3.9. Notification to researchers. Successful and unsuccessful researchers will be notified as soon as all funding is approved. This is the responsibility of University co-chair, assisted by staff of Administrative Resource member.
- 5.3.10. Release of funding. It is hope that this occurs as early in the year as possible, to allow for a complete season of research before the next reporting deadline. This is the responsibility of University co-chair, assisted by staff at Equine Guelph, in the offices of the Associate Dean of Research, OVC, and the Office of Research at the University of Guelph.
- 5.3.11. Appeals. Decisions of the Committee on Proposals may not be appealed, because there is not enough time in one cycle to conclude this process. Instead, each unsuccessful researcher will be given a written statement of which criteria caused their Proposal to be ranked low, and copies of the peer reviews. This will enable them to revise and resubmit the proposal in the next cycle.
- 5.4.12. Reporting. Reporting on the progress or completion of projects is described under the sections on Annual and Final Reports, respectively.

#### **5.4. Fast Track for new Proposals on emergent issues**

- 5.4.1. This track is to accommodate two possibilities:
- a. The need to respond to rapidly emerging issues by the industry. In this case, the Funding Agency may approach Equine Guelph or the researcher directly.
  - b. A request for funding by a researcher who recognizes an emergent issue. The researcher may approach Equine Guelph or a Funding Agency directly.
- 5.4.2. The process to be followed is the same in both cases, and will be completed as rapidly as possible, within 30 days of presentation to the Committee if at all possible:
- a. The request is forwarded to the University co-chair for processing.
  - b. The researcher submits a brief proposal, in the same format as for normal proposals, including a budget, milestones, and needs for research horses. Such proposals will normally be for 1 year only.
  - c. The proposal is immediately sent to 3 peer reviewers, to be returned within 2 weeks.
  - d. The Executive committee reviews the proposal and reviews and make a recommendation on funding.
  - e. At this point the Normal cycle of events is resumed, beginning at point 5.3.8 Approval of recommendations by Funding Agencies.

## 5.5. Final reports

- 5.5.1. The purposes of a Final Report are to
  - a. Demonstrate that the objectives and milestones of the original proposal were completed, or that full documentation and justification is provided as to why they were not
  - b. Provide highlights of the results that can be used to communicate achievements of the project and of the EG research effort as a whole to the Funding Agencies and the equine industry
  - c. Provide information on the true cost of the research (by including information on in-kind contributions)
  - d. Provide information on the leverage generated by the EG funding. For example, the contribution of this project to a larger program should be described, and the funds awarded to that project be reported.
- 5.5.2. Each Final Report should be accompanied by any manuscripts or published papers resulting from the research. The report will not be considered complete without evidence that the results are to be (or have been) published.
- 5.5.3. A Final Report will normally be submitted on the first reporting deadline following completion of the project. If a publication is imminent, that deadline may be extended to the reporting deadline in the next cycle, and the researcher should inform the University co-Chair that this option is being exercised.
- 5.5.4. The committee will review Final Reports at the Review meeting (see *Appendix 3* for the date). Each Final Report will be first evaluated for completeness, then whether it is Satisfactory.
- 5.5.5. Incomplete Reports. A Final Report will be considered Incomplete if it contains insufficient information for the Committee to determine whether the stated objectives and milestones have been reached, or that there is no evidence of academic publication of the results. In such cases, the Committee will request further information within 90 days.

The Committee may elect for all Voting members and the co-Chairs to receive and assess updated Incomplete Final Reports, or allow the Executive to make a final decision.

Final Reports still delinquent at the reporting deadline in the next cycle will be considered Unsatisfactory, and appropriate action taken (point 5.5.7).
- 5.5.6. Satisfactory Reports. Complete Final Reports may be deemed Satisfactory by a majority of the Voting members, based on two criteria.
  - The first criterion is that the objectives were met, either for the original Proposal or of an approved modified Proposal (see section 5.7), or that there are acceptable extenuating circumstances which are justified in the

Report (for example, the experiment may fail for reasons beyond the researcher's control).

- The second criterion is that there is evidence of academic publication of the results.
- (It is also expected that the researcher will cooperate with the Equine Guelph Communications Committee in their efforts to disseminate the results to the industry, but this is not a criterion for a Satisfactory Final Report.)

5.5.7. Unsatisfactory Reports. Final Reports that do not achieve a majority vote and delinquent Final Reports will be considered Unsatisfactory. In the case of an Unsatisfactory Final Report, the researcher is sanctioned from applying for new funding in 2 funding cycles, beginning from the moment that the decision is reached. This will impact new Proposals from the same researcher under consideration at the same Review meeting.

The co-Chairs will send a letter to the researcher informing of the decision and its consequences. Other letters, informing of the decision and reasons for it, will be sent to the co-Chairs of the Advisory Council and to the Funding Agency.

It is not the responsibility of the Committee to take any further action. Any further action or appeal by the researcher should be directed through the co-Chairs of the Advisory Council or appropriate delegates.

If a researcher has a concurrent project for which a Satisfactory Annual Report has been submitted, funding for that project will be released. Once that project is complete, no further funds will be awarded to that researcher until a successful proposal is submitted after the sanction period.

5.5.8. In cases where a delay gives justification for submitting a Final Report beyond the second reporting deadline after the original ending date of the project, the researcher may request a no-cost extension in writing for the second reporting deadline, giving reasons to be assessed by the Executive.

## **5.6. Annual Reports**

5.6.1. The purpose of an Annual Report is to demonstrate that the milestones of the original proposal that were intended to be complete by the reporting date were indeed completed, or that full documentation and justification is provided as to why they were not.

5.6.2. An Annual Report will be submitted at each reporting deadline until the project is complete, after which time a Final Report will be submitted.

5.6.3. The committee will review Annual Reports at their Review meeting. Each Report will be first evaluated for completeness, then whether it is satisfactory.

5.6.4. Incomplete Reports. An Annual Report will be considered Incomplete if it contains insufficient information for the Committee to determine whether the stated milestones in the reporting period have been reached. In such cases, the Committee will request further information at the researcher's convenience. A new instalment of funding will not be released until an Incomplete Report is voted to be Satisfactory. The Committee may elect for all Voting members and the co-Chairs to receive and assess the updated Annual Report or allow the Executive to make a final decision. Annual Reports still delinquent by the next reporting deadline will be considered Unsatisfactory, and appropriate action taken (point 5.6.6).

5.6.5. Satisfactory Reports. Complete Annual Reports may be deemed Satisfactory, by a majority of the Voting members. The criterion is that the milestones occurring before the reporting deadline have been reached, or that failure to reach them is justified.

In cases where a project has failed before its final year of funding for reasons beyond the researcher's control, and modification in milestones or objectives is either unfeasible or has not been submitted and approved, the researcher should make this clear in the Annual Report. Under these circumstances, the Report will be accepted as Satisfactory and designated as a Final Report. The project will be terminated. No further instalments of funding will be released, and unspent funding in the trust account will be returned to Equine Guelph to be reapplied to the research contribution of the relevant Funding Agencies, or returned to the Funding Agencies, at their discretion.

5.6.6. Unsatisfactory Reports. Annual Reports that do not achieve a majority vote and delinquent Annual Reports will be considered Unsatisfactory.

In the case of an Unsatisfactory Annual Report, funding for that project will be immediately withheld, including any balance on the trust accounts in the Office of Research. The researcher is also sanctioned from applying for new funding until the decision has been successfully appealed or resolved to the satisfaction of the co-Chairs of the Advisory Council or appropriate delegates.

The co-Chairs will send a letter to the researcher informing of the decision and its consequences. Other letters, informing of the decision and reasons for it, will be sent to the co-Chairs of the Advisory Council and to the Funding Agency. The University co-Chair will arrange with the Office of Research for the withholding of funds for the relevant project.

It is not the responsibility of the Committee to take any further action. Any further action or appeal by the researcher should be directed through the co-Chairs of the Advisory Council or appropriate delegates.

If a researcher has a concurrent project for which a Satisfactory Annual Report has been submitted, funding for that project will be released. Once that project is complete, no further funds will be awarded to that researcher until a successful proposal is submitted after the sanction period.

## **5.7. Midstream changes in research projects**

Circumstances may arise that necessitate a change in direction of an approved and funded research project once it has started. If the changes do not result in changes in the objectives or in the description or timing of milestones, they need not be reported until the Annual or Final Report is due.

5.7.1. If the objectives or milestones are changed, then the researcher should immediately inform the University co-Chair and submit a request for amendment, describing and justifying the changes. The form will be reviewed by the Executive committee (at a meeting or *via* phone or email), who will approve or deny the change. Approval will allow the revised project to continue.

5.7.2. If the change is denied, the project will be considered as terminated and a Final Report will be due at the next reporting point in the cycle. A new Proposal incorporating the change may be submitted in the next cycle.

## **5.8. Communicating with Equine Guelph and the Funding Agencies**

An important function of the committee is to communicate with the researchers, Equine Guelph and the Funding Agencies. This function is subdivided as follows:

5.8.1. The co-Chairs and Voting members are jointly responsible for communicating results of review and allocation processes to the Funding Agencies.

5.8.2. The co-Chairs are responsible for communicating this information to the Advisory Council.

5.8.3. The co-Chairs are responsible for communicating issues to the Advisory Council.

5.8.4. The co-Chairs form the primary communication link with the researchers for all actions under the mandate of this Committee, except for appeals on decisions which should be sent by the researcher to the Co-Chairs of the Advisory Council.

5.8.5. The University co-Chair is responsible for communicating outcomes of individual projects and of the overall research effort to the Funding Agencies and Advisory Council.

5.8.6. Voting members bring research priorities from their respective Funding Agency.

5.8.7. Co-Chairs and Voting members are responsible for communicating issues to the Funding Agencies.

## **6. Other points**

### **6.1. Researchers on the Committee**

The circumstance is likely to arise that the University co-Chair and/or Voting member on the Committee will submit Research proposals, thus creating a situation of conflict of interest.

- 6.1.1. This situation will be resolved by the researcher in question leaving the room during any discussion and voting on any Final and Annual Reports and new Proposals submitted for which the researcher is a principal investigator or collaborator.
- 6.1.2. In the case of a Voting member being a principal investigator or collaborator on a new Proposal, that member will not score that Proposal during the ranking process.

### **6.2. Issues arising**

Any other issues that may arise that are out of the jurisdiction of the Committee, or which are not explicitly described in the preceding sections must immediately be referred to the co-Chairs of the Advisory Council and/or Funding Agency, as appropriate.

- 6.2.1 It is the responsibility of the co-Chairs of the Committee to convey any information relevant to a specific issue, and their interpretation of its importance and significance.
- 6.2.2. Voting members may also report such issues to their respective Funding Agency if they deem it appropriate. It is not the responsibility of this Committee to deal with any such issue other than reporting it.
- 6.2.3 In the event that researchers find cause for complaint about perceived irregularities in the processes administered by the Committee, other than appeals on Unsatisfactory Reports, such complaints should be directed to the Administrative Resource member.

End of Terms of Reference

*Appendices to the Terms of Reference of the Equine Guelph Research Committee:*

Modifications to the Appendices of this document may be made as necessary, with notification to the Advisory Council or at its request, with no formal vote.

There are 3 Appendices:

- 1: Membership and incumbents on the Equine Guelph Research Committee as of the specified date
  
- 2: Template of the Declaration of Confidentiality to be completed and signed by all members of the Committee
  
- 3: Dates of events in Normal cycle for reviewing Proposals

*Appendix 1 to the Terms of Reference of the Equine Guelph Research Committee:*

**Membership and incumbents on the Equine Guelph Research Committee as of  
22<sup>nd</sup> January 2010**

**Co-Chairs**

Industry co-Chair

Dr. Mark Desjardins  
(ratification pending)

University co-Chair:

Dr. Jeff Thomason

**Voting members**

At present funding levels, the Voting members include representatives from the:

Ontario Racing Commission (general member)  
Horse Improvement Program (Thoroughbred)  
Horse Improvement Program (Standardbred)  
Horse Improvement Program (Quarterhorse)

Dr. Bruce Duncan  
Dr. Dan Duncan  
Dr. John Hayes  
Dr. Gail Sommer

Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association (2 members)

Dr. Darryl Bonder and Ms.  
Susan Leslie (or delegate)

E.P. Taylor Foundation (2 members)

suspended for 2009

UG/OMAFRA (1 member)

To be appointed

(Note that members representing the Horse Improvement Program are appointed by the Ontario Racing Commission, which administers the Program.)

**Resource members**

Administrative Resource member:

Associate Dean of Research and Innovation, Ontario Veterinary College

Dr. Gordon Kirby

Equine Guelph Resource member: Senior Manager, Equine Guelph

Ms. Gayle Ecker,

**Temporary members**

To be appointed as necessary

*Appendix 2 to the Terms of Reference of the Equine Guelph Research Committee:*  
**DECLARATION of CONFIDENTIALITY and NON-DISCLOSURE**

by members of the Equine Guelph Research Committee

Documentation is provided to members of the Equine Guelph Research Committee (henceforth termed the 'Research Committee') during the review process. The documentation includes proposals for original research, and reviews by external expert peers. Such documents may contain personal and confidential technical information. They are subject therefore to the *Access to Information Act*, the *Privacy Act*, the *Tri-Council Policy or Integrity in Research and Scholarship*, and other federal information policies and regulations. (Information on these policies and regulations is provided in the Peer Review in the Peer Review Manual, the *NSERC Researcher's Guide* and is available upon request.) For the purposes of the Research Committee's activities (as described in the Terms of Reference of the Equine Guelph Research Committee), documentation must be treated as strictly confidential. As a member of the Research Committee, you are asked to read the following statements and instructions and to sign below to attest that you are aware of the importance of confidentiality and that you agree to comply.

- 1) Documentation provided to appointed Research Committee members must be used only for the purpose for which it was originally collected, i.e. making funding decisions. It must not be used for any other purpose or discussed with or disclosed to non-committee members.
- 2) Research Committee members must ensure that project documents in their possession are stored in a secure manner to prevent unauthorized access. The documents must be transmitted using secure techniques. When they are no longer required they must be destroyed in a secure manner, e.g. by deleting electronic data files, or by shredding or burning paper or arranging for its return to the University co-Chair of the Research Committee.
- 3) Deliberations of the Research Committee are confidential. Business minutes may be taken and disclosed. But comments made by individual committee members during the meeting and during the ranking of applications must never be discussed or disclosed. Until research competition results are announced officially, they must remain confidential. The names of applicants whose proposals were not recommended for support or who were declared ineligible are never made public by the University of Guelph and must not be divulged by committee members.
- 4) Enquiries received by Research Committee members from applicants about the review of their proposals must be referred to the University co-Chair of the Equine Guelph Research Committee or to the Associate Dean of Research and innovation, Ontario Veterinary College. There must be no direct communication between applicants and Research Committee members on matters arising out of the review process.
- 5) Research may have commercial applicability. If any member of the Research Committee recognizes a conflict of interest between the contents of a research proposal and their own commercial interests, they must keep the information confidential, and declare the conflict of interest to the co-Chairs of the Research Committee.

I have read the above instruction on the need for confidentiality with respect to University of Guelph information and committee deliberations and the requirement for secure management of all information entrusted to be by the University of Guelph. I understand that breaches of confidentiality are subject to investigation, and to the imposition of sanctions by the University of Guelph and that the person about whom the information relates may seek civil remedy against me for breach of confidentiality. I agree to take personal responsibility for complying with these requirements.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Please print your name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**Equine Guelph Research Committee**

*Appendix 3 to the Terms of Reference of the Equine Guelph Research Committee:*

**Dates of events in Normal cycle for reviewing Proposals**

*If any dates fall on a weekend or holiday, they are moved to the next business day.*

June 10 <sup>th</sup>	Coordination of Research priorities
June 15 <sup>th</sup>	Call for Research Proposals
<b>September 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Deadline for submission of Proposals</b> on the correct forms by 5pm.
September 16 <sup>th</sup>	Soliciting peer reviews begins and Proposals are sent to consenting reviewers
October 15 <sup>th</sup>	Soliciting peer reviewers completed and Proposals all sent to reviewers
November 7 <sup>th</sup>	First deadline for reviews to be returned
December 7 <sup>th</sup>	Final deadline for reviews to be returned
December 15 <sup>th</sup>	Deadline for submission of Annual Reports, and Final Reports from Proposals funded in previous cycles.
December 20 <sup>th</sup>	Proposals and reviews collated and sent to chairs and Voting members of Committee, together with Final and Annual Reports of previously funded projects
<b>January 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Review Meeting of Committee to review new Proposals (and Final and Annual Reports from previous cycles) and make recommendations.</b> The meeting is to be held on or before this date
January 20 <sup>th</sup>	Voting members receive preliminary budget take recommendation for funding back to Funding Agencies for approval
March 1 <sup>st</sup>	All approvals are returned, and process begins of transferring funds to University and setting up accounting
March 7 <sup>th</sup>	Successful and unsuccessful researchers are informed
<b>March 30<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Funds are released on or before this date</b> , assuming necessary approved protocols have been submitted by the researchers to the Office of Research.
December 15 <sup>th</sup>	Annual Reports are due for multiyear projects funded in this cycle. Final Reports for 1-year projects may be submitted by this date or by the next reporting date in a year's time.