

**University of Windsor
Senate**

5.10: **Report of the Vice-President, Research and Innovation**

Item for: **Information**

Forwarded by: **Shanthi Johnson**

Research, scholarship, creative activity, and innovation play a pivotal role in shaping the University's local and global influence, reputation, and impact. The research and innovation eco-system directly impacts our ability to recruit and retain undergraduate and graduate students and build a robust education and training capacity pipeline. The Office of the Vice-President, Research and Innovation (OVPRI) is committed to inspiring and advancing inclusive research, scholarship, creative activity, and innovation in alignment with the University's institutional strategic plan - *Aspire: Together for Tomorrow*. Our goal is to engage our community, creating strong, meaningful collaborations, actively involving both our internal and external stakeholders. The following provides a comprehensive overview of the recent activities and initiatives undertaken by the OVPRI.

Shedding Light on our Senate-Approved Research Institutes

The University of Windsor has six Senate-approved research institutes, including the Black Scholars Institute (BSI), the Cross-Border Institute (CBI), the Fluid Dynamics Research Institute (FDRI), the Great Lakes Institute for Environmental Research (GLIER), the Institute for Diagnostic Imaging Research (IDIR), and the WE-Spark Health Institute (WE-Spark). These six institutes are governed by the [Senate Policy on the Establishment, Management, and Renewal of University Research Centres and Institutes](#), adopted in 1981 and last amended in 2014.

Black Scholars Institute (BSI)

BSI was established in 2022 as the Black Studies Institute. It was originally envisioned as a multi-disciplinary hub to enhance research, creative activity, scholarly work, and community collaboration in the Windsor-Essex-Erie-St. Clair region and establish the University as a centre of excellence in a region with great historic importance for Black Canadians with a significant role in joining the Canadian Black diaspora to that of the Caribbean, the United States, and Latin America. Earlier this year, its name was formally changed to the Black Scholars Institute to promote inclusivity and better reflect its purpose as a home to Black scholars and knowledge producers, irrespective of their field of study. The University is home to a growing internal community of nearly 30 Black scholars who are establishing themselves as a cohesive entity under BSI. To support this development, BSI has created a mentorship program for new hires and are hosting a retreat to continue strategic planning for BSI. BSI has also partnered with the inaugural Windsor International Black Film Festival and is planning many exciting events and activities that will take place in the space recently dedicated for BSI use. BSI will officially launch this fall. Festivities are planned for September 26, 2024. For more information, visit the [BSI website](#). Dr. Camisha Sibblis has served as the Director of BSI since 2023. A review of BSI has yet to be scheduled.

Cross-Border Institute (CBI)

CBI was established in 2013. CBI is dedicated to research, education, and public outreach related to the movement of people, goods, and funds across borders. Its mission is to leverage expertise to provide private- and public-sector decision makers with access to innovative and pragmatic solutions to cross-border issues. Two recent studies undertaken by CBI, the *Scotiabank Global Financial Transactions Initiative* and *Towards Performance Measurement of Transborder Trucking Corridors: The Case of Automotive Supply Chains* for Transport Canada, highlight how CBI advances its mission. For the Scotiabank initiative, which focused on small and medium-sized enterprises that concentrate on the role transaction banking plays in advancing Canada's trade agenda, CBI studied emerging technologies; political and policy impacts on global business; and supply chain finance and the international policy environment. The Transport Canada study looked at how transborder Canada-US highway corridors are performing in support of automotive supply chains and what might be expected in the future in a period of dynamic change as electrification increasingly takes hold. Dr. Bill Anderson served as Director of CBI from 2013-2023. A search for the next Director will begin in the coming months. A review of CBI was initiated in March 2024 with the establishment of

a review committee comprising Dr. Christopher Waters (Chair), Dr. Tanya Basok, and Dr. Ram Balachandar with support provided by the OVPRI.

Fluid Dynamics Research Institute (FDRI)

FDRI was established in 1983 to provide an inter-departmental and inter-faculty home for researchers engaged in theoretical, experimental, and computational fluid dynamics. In addition to promoting inter-departmental and faculty collaboration, the institute aims to provide broader training opportunities for graduate students in the field. Recently, FDRI has recruited four new members from Engineering and is garnering interest from faculty members in Physics. Going forward, FDRI aims to increase visibility and impact within our research community, regionally, nationally, and internationally. Dr. Gary Rankin is currently serving as Interim Director of FDRI. A review of FDRI was initiated in March 2024 with the establishment of a review committee comprising Dr. Mehrdad Saif (Chair), Dr. Mike McKay, and Dr. Arezoo Emadi with support provided by the OVPRI.

Great Lakes Institute for Environmental Research (GLIER)

GLIER was established in 1981 to provide dedicated research and training to protect and conserve the Great Lakes while generating knowledge and data to help manage these unique and diverse ecosystems. Since its inception, GLIER scientists have helped to shape federal and binational policy aimed at restoring, protecting and managing our Great Lakes. Current high-profile federal grants are promoting the development of SMART Great Lakes (Real-time Aquatic Ecosystem Observation Network), positioning Canada as a global leader in fisheries conservation and management through application of genomics (GEN-FISH), supporting graduate training and amplifying Indigenous perspectives in fisheries science (FISH-CAST) and emphasizing the University's commitment to environmental stewardship, reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, and inclusive community engagement (NUPH: National Urban Park Hub). Partnering with colleagues across Science, Engineering, and Business along with WE-Spark and the Cross-Border Institute, GLIER is excited to announce the creation of INSPIRE, a newly announced Canada Biomedical Research Fund-supported program that will integrate biomanufacturing and health sector supply chains, cross-border trade and mobility, and robust and timely cross-border pathogen surveillance to instill resilience and build capacity in the biomanufacturing sector in Canada. Dr. Mike McKay as served as Director of GLIER since 2019. A review of GLIER is scheduled for Fall 2024.

Institute for Diagnostic Imaging Research (IDIR)

IDIR was established in 2008 as a regional research centre to develop and commercialize innovative diagnostic imaging technologies for industrial, biomedical, and biometrics applications. Its mission is to conduct novel imaging research and innovation projects that encompass all elements of the innovation value chain, from fundamental discovery to the commercialization of globally competitive products and services; foster the growth of collaborative partnerships and commercialization opportunities locally, nationally, and globally; and provide enhanced learning opportunities that will assist with developing highly qualified personnel (HQP) who will nurture the institute's legacy while continuing its journey of discovery. Dr. Roman Maev has served as Director of IDIR since 2008. A review of IDIR completed in March 2024. The review committee was comprised Dr. Marcello Guarini (Chair), Dr. Narayan Kar, and Dr. Kathy Pfaff with support from the VPRI. Forthcoming recommendations are currently under consideration.

WE-Spark Health Institute (WE-Spark)

WE-Spark was established in 2019 as a network of five partners – University of Windsor, Windsor Regional Hospital, Hotel Dieu Grace Healthcare, Erie Shore HealthCare, and St. Clair College with the mission of enhancing health, well-being, and care of people through transformative research, evidence-based interventions, and knowledge translation. It is a central hub for research and innovation in Windsor-Essex that supports researchers by bringing together health research strengths across the region. Since its inception, WE-Spark Core Principal Members have secured more than \$47,500,000 in research funding. WE-Spark has established a seed grant program to stimulate development of early-stage, novel, and innovative health research and education project that has awarded \$1,400,000, leveraged to secure \$5,000,000 in additional funding, increase research collaboration, deliver unique training opportunities, and build strong community relationships. Further information is available on the [WE-Spark website](#). Dr. Lisa Porter served as Director of We-Spark from 2019-2024. Dr. Dora Cavallo-Medved, Interim Dean of Science, is currently providing oversight for WE-spark. A review of WE-Spark is scheduled for Fall 2024.

In summary, our office remains dedicated to advancing research, scholarship, creative activity, and innovation at the University. We look forward to continued collaboration and success in these endeavours.