



# University of Toronto

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT AND PROVOST

APPENDIX "D" TO REPORT NUMBER 149  
OF THE ACADEMIC BOARD, April 5, 2007

TO: Planning and Budget Committee

SPONSOR: Vivek Goel, Vice-President and Provost

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DATE: February 26, 2007

AGENDA ITEM: 4

## ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Stepping *UP* - Academic Initiative Fund Fourth Round allocations

## JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

Excerpt from the terms of reference for the Planning and Budget Committee:

*4.3.3 Designated funds: The Committee is responsible for recommending to the Academic Board for consideration the creation and allocation of general University Funds established in the Operating Budget, Capital Renewal Fund or elsewhere.*

## PREVIOUS ACTION:

April 29, 2004 - Governing Council approved the Academic Program Planning fund (\$5 million in base) as part of the approval of both the *Long Range Budget Framework* and the *Budget Report 2004-05*

February 10, 2005 - Governing Council approved the first round of Academic Initiative Fund allocations.

June 29, 2005 - Governing Council approved the second round of Academic Initiative Fund allocations.

May 1, 2006 - Governing Council approved the third round of Academic Initiative Fund allocations.

## HIGHLIGHTS:

The *Stepping UP – Synthesis*, identifying the major themes that emerged from the consultations and Divisional plans through the *Stepping UP* exercise, focused on those initiatives upon which we can work together. Within the *Synthesis*, five priority objectives were identified for the University, each of these building on one or more of our unique characteristics. Consistent with our vision and mission, we set up a fund to assist in the implementation of initiatives arising from the academic planning process. This Academic Initiative Fund (AIF) consists of \$5 million in each year. Funds can be used for a broad range of purposes including capital, operating or development initiatives. Of importance is the support of existing

initiatives that further build and/or consolidate current programs or that indicate the potential to significantly leverage other resources.

This year we had our fourth call for Submissions to the AIF with proposals due December 14, 2006. Proposals were submitted to the Vice-President and Provost's office by Principals and Deans, not from individual faculty, departments or units. Proposals were required to include information outlined in a standard AIF Proposal Submission Guidelines format. Initiatives arising from the planning process that were to be considered for funding from the AIF were those that are consistent with the mission and values of *Stepping UP* and identified in the *Synthesis*. The criteria that were indicated that would be used to assess initiatives included:

- Enhancing the student experience at the University.
- Enhancing interdisciplinary, interdepartmental, interdivisional and cross campus collaborations.
- Bringing together undergraduate and graduate activities with research opportunities.
- Connecting the University with the broader community (locally, nationally or internationally) through terms of public policy and outreach.
- Improving equity and diversity.

Initiatives that were able to address multiple criteria were encouraged. We also believe in the importance of supporting existing initiatives that are consistent with the criteria and further enhance or consolidate current programs or that indicate the potential to capitalize on other resources. Priority was given to initiatives that improve efficiency by generating new revenues or reducing program delivery costs.

In response to our fourth round call for AIF proposals, we received 32 proposals. The total requests were for \$22 million. The Vice-President and Provost's allocation decisions were based on advice from a committee, chaired by the Vice-President and Provost and including representation from Principals and Deans and the Provost's Office (Appendix 1).

The Planning and Budget Committee is being asked to recommend to the Academic Board the allocations for this fourth round of AIF (Appendix 2). It is important to note that approval of the allocations of these funds does not represent governance approval for any new programs, centres or institutes. Proposed new academic programs and units will still follow the divisional submission process through governance in order for them to be established. Proposals involving capital expenditures are approved in principle, subject to development of budget plans and discussion with the Assistant Vice-President, Space and Facilities Planning. Approvals will then be sought through AFD or governance, as appropriate. Summaries of AIF for Rounds 1, 2, 3 and proposed Round 4 are included in Appendix 3.

As we move forward to the new budget model the concept of "base" funding for new initiatives has been eliminated. Multi-year commitments from the AIF are possible, but the proposals must contain multi-year operational plans that

demonstrate that divisional funding will ultimately be able to support them. Thus, the AIF essentially serves either to support OTO projects or as bridge funding.

The Vice-President and Provost's Office will review and monitor detailed budgets, deliverables and benchmarks according to which each project will be accountable. Within multi-year projects, the annual benchmarks and deliverables will be used to monitor funding for subsequent years.

**FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:**

The recommendations are consistent with the approved budget for 2004-05 of both the *Long Range Budget Framework* and the *Budget Report 2004-05*.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that Planning and Budget Committee recommend to the Academic Board for approval:

THAT the Fourth Round of the Academic Initiative Fund be allocated as per the attached table (Appendices 2 & 3).