

By way of this certification, authorization is granted to form **Multidisciplinary and Multi-campus Research Institutes**. This document provides a general overview of this policy to familiarize the reader with it. However, this document does not include all the details found in the original document, which should be read in order to attain full understanding. To see the original circular, visit the following link:

**A. Reasons and Purpose for Forming these Institutes**

1. To foment multidisciplinary research collaboration to make significant contributions to the development of research in Puerto Rico.
2. To establish new alliances with both the industrial sector and other universities to promote internationally competitive research projects capable of contributing to the development of intellectual product in the global economy and to the quality of life in Puerto Rico.

**B. Formation**

1. The president will submit an incorporation charter for the formation of any multidisciplinary and multi-campus research institutes to the Board of Trustees for approval. The incorporation charter must include the proposed institute's mission, strategic plan, and financing plan. The president is also to report the closing or termination of any such institute.
2. The incorporation title of such an institute will be valid for a maximum of five years and may be renewed upon undergoing an exhaustive evaluation at the end of those five years.
3. Institutes of this nature will be responsible for financing 50% of their budgets through outside funding. The campus's financial contribution to these institutes will be provided through matching funds.

**C. Institute Administration**

1. Nature and Scope

- Although such institutes are to be established with the foremost aim of conducting competitive research, each institute will be required to have a valid and effective program for training undergraduate and graduate students, and moreover, the capacity and commitment to supervise graduate and undergraduate students' theses.
- The institutes are to be established in areas where they are truly and genuinely needed for Puerto Rico.
- The institutes will be quasi-self-sufficient, for which they will be required to provide 50% of their annual budgets through outside funding during the first five years of their existence. Once the first five-year period has concluded, they will be required to provide a minimum of 75% of the budget for the rest of their existence.
- The proposal submitted to the president must include specific guidelines for terminating the institute once it has fulfilled its objectives, as determined by the presidentially-appointed external consultative board.

2. Source

- A research institute can be initiated by any group of professors, by departments, campuses, or by the university president, based on the recommendation of a presidentially-appointed advisory board.
- The proposers will submit a proposal to the president describing the nature and scope of the institute.
- The presidentially-appointed external advisory board for each institute will include representatives of both the academic community and the industry experienced in the area of research proposed for the institute. This board will evaluate the proposal for establishing the institute and will offer recommendations to the president, including whether or not the institute should be established. The final decision on whether or not to establish the institute is to be made by the president, in consultation with the chancellors and with the approval of the Board of Trustees.
- If the formation of the institute is approved, the proposers will receive an incorporation permit granting them the authority to operate the institute.

3. Institute Evaluation and Continuation

- The presidentially-appointed external advisory board will evaluate the institutes periodically, and will perform an exhaustive evaluation of the institute every five years to determine whether to award a new permit or to recommend the institute's termination for having failed to meet its objectives. The recommendations will be submitted to the president, who is to make the final decision on the matter.

4. Institute Responsibility and Authority

The following are included among the most important responsibilities of the institutes:

- Each institute will have the responsibility and authority to obtain outside funding from the government of Puerto Rico, the federal government, and other private sources consistent with its aim.
- Institutes will have the ability to negotiate with the system campuses for the space and infrastructure necessary for their operation.
- Institutes will be free to hire all the administrative personnel and researchers that they need, but these personnel will not be eligible for permanency within the university system. However, these personnel will be eligible to receive benefits corresponding to regular personnel of the university, as set forth in the General Regulations.
- Institutes will develop an organizational structure that expedites the implementation of research activities. These activities must be equipped with accountability mechanisms and auditory procedures for resources and funds.
- All proposed organizational and administrative structures require the approval of the President of the University of Puerto Rico.

5. Infrastructure and Financing

- Institutes must finance 50% their budget through outside funding. One exception to this policy is the existence of a special provision allowing an institute to receive more than 50% of its budget from university funding. These funds, known as “seed money” (*“fondos germinales,”* in Spanish), will aid in establishing the institute.
- Institute facilities may be located on several campuses and must optimize the use of existing resources.
- When necessary, the director of the institute may raise outside funds or request university funds for constructing and developing the physical infrastructure needed for the institute to operate.

6. Evaluation and Accountability

- Prior to receiving the incorporation permit, each institute must have an evaluation and accountability plan for the use of its funds.
- Institutes will report to a presidentially-appointed governing board comprising representatives of the chancellors of the participating units and two representatives of the Office of the President. Institutes will be required to submit annual reports to demonstrate their progress.
- The board may recommend to the president that an institute be terminated for failing to comply with its mission, for not making satisfactory progress, or due to evidence of mismanagement or misconduct incompatible with the general regulations of the university.

7. Organization and Governance

- Upon receiving general authorization to operate, the proposers of the institute are to submit an organizational plan identifying, among other items, the internal administrative structure of the institute. Once the organizational plan has been approved, the institute will receive the incorporation permit.
- The president will name a governing board that will evaluate the progress and development of the institute. The president will also appoint an external advisory board to evaluate the institute periodically and to perform an exhaustive evaluation every five (5) years.

- In addition to the external advisory board for each individual institute, the president will appoint a General External Advisory Board, whose purpose will be to serve as a liaison among all the institutes, evaluate their progress, and provide the president with recommendations on general policy changes as appropriate, along with strategies for improving institute productivity.

8. Procedure for Institute Termination

- The final decision to terminate an institute rests solely upon the university president. This decision will be reported to the director and the participating chancellors, and a termination plan will be requested in which the institute is to be dissolved within a period of no longer than twelve (12) months.
- Insofar as possible and provided that it is in the best interest of the university, an attempt will be made to relocate personnel from the dissolved institute to other institutes within the university system.