Guidelines for Early Researcher Award – Round 12 – 2016

Letters of Reference

The Government of Ontario’s Ministry of Research and Innovation has announced Round 12 of the Early Researcher Award (ERA) program. The program aims to attract and retain the best and brightest innovators and researchers from around the world, keep home-grown talent here and seize opportunities for global leadership. It assists them in building their research teams of graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, research assistants, associates and technicians.

As per the program guidelines, we request that the Letters of Reference address the evaluation criteria. (For additional details, please see below.)

Each applicant is required to submit three original Letters of Reference with their application. The Letters of Reference play a critical role in the evaluation process. As such, we would like to thank you for considering this request.

Additional Considerations:

- To be competitive, the Letters of Reference must be exemplary.
- Please feel free to contact the applicant and request a copy of their bio, CV, description of major awards/accomplishments, or other documents that may assist you in preparing your letter.
- The letters should address the proposed research; as such, it is recommended that applicants provide a summary of the proposed research to their referees.
- Letters of Reference that convey enthusiasm and excitement for the applicant and their research and its impact tend to have the greatest impact.
- The Province will only accept original letters in a signed and sealed envelope (please see below) via the institution. We ask that original letters arrive at the address as shown below on the sample envelope on or before Monday, August 15, 2016.
- General program information is available via the following link: https://www.ontario.ca/page/early-researcher-awards

Please forward a short biography (no more than 100 words) to the applicant so that it may be included on the application form.

In order to keep the letters sealed and confidential, it is recommended that referees send their letter in a sealed and signed envelope clearly marked with “ERA reference for (insert applicant’s name on envelope)” within another envelope addressed to the research office (David Tweddell).

If you have any questions or concerns about the program or the request for reference, please feel free to contact the applicant, or the university as follows:

Antoinette Martin: E-mail: amartin3@uwo.ca
Phone: 519 661-2111 Ext. 84620

We greatly appreciate any assistance you may be able to provide. Thank you for your time, and for your kind support for our applicant.

June 2016
Sample envelope

(Inside) Envelope Front:

Dr. Tom Baker
John Hopkins University
Baltimore
Maryland 6000-3850

ERA Letter of reference for Prof. (Insert applicant’s name)

David Tweddell
Director, Research Development
The University of Western Ontario
1393 Western Road
Support Services Building, Room 5150
London ON N6G 1G9
Canada

Telephone (for courier): (519) 661-2111 ext. 84620

Envelope back:

June 2016
**Evaluation Criteria:** Early Researcher Awards applications will be evaluated based on four weighted criteria; Excellence of the Researcher, Quality of the Research, Development of Research Talent, and Strategic Value to Ontario. The applications will be ranked as exceptional, excellent, very strong, strong, moderate, or insufficient on these four weighted criteria.

Below is a summary of the Round 11 ERA Evaluation Criteria. We kindly request that the letters of reference address each of these criteria.

**Excellence of the Researcher (40%)**
- Academic and employment record
- Research grants and awards received
- Publication record
- Other areas of research productivity
- Researcher current and potential standing for excellence in the research field based on research plans and letters of reference
- Independence from previous supervisor regarding publication record
- Independent peer-reviewed funding

**Quality of Research (30%)**
- Excellence of proposed research
- Originality of proposed research
- Clarity of research proposal
- Relevance of methodology

**Development of Research Talent (20%)**
- Development of research knowledge of members of research team
- Skills development of team
- Training is unique and leading edge
- Past experience in HQP training

**Strategic Value for Ontario (10%)**
- Economic benefits
- Knowledge transfer
- Ability to enhance the province’s profile in the global academic community
- Social and/or cultural benefits
- Anticipated impact on the Ontario Innovation Agenda’s focus areas:
  - bio-economy, clean technologies
  - advanced health technologies
  - digital media and information and communication technologies

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