

**Terms of Reference  
Rural Research Centre  
Nova Scotia Agricultural College**

**THE MISSION OF THE RURAL RESEARCH CENTRE:**

The mission of the Rural Research Centre (RRC), is to advocate for, and engage in, rurally-focused research and related activities. Its research programme supports multi-, trans- and inter-disciplinary research perspectives; the valuable perspectives of rurally-situated people as they seek to understand and improve their lives and their communities; and the perspectives found in humanities, social sciences, engineering, business, economics, and agricultural, environmental, animal/soil/plant/horticultural/ food and other sciences. To fulfill its mission the RRC's chief goal is one of elaborating rurally-oriented connections between and among agriculture and practitioners of agriculture, rural communities, and researchers in "academia" and the numerous and diverse actors who make up rural communities, institutions, organizations, and governing bodies.

Through its mission, the RRC supports a variety of intellectual endeavours rooted in "the rural" - whether that rural reality is in Atlantic Canada, or elsewhere in the world. As part of its research programme's dissemination and outreach activities, the RRC organizes, supports, or co-hosts events/activities/conferences/workshops at NSAC and in Atlantic rural communities. Research and these related outreach and extension activities are viewed as a means to foster dialogue on rural issues, and to engage individual citizens, key sectoral constituencies, civil society in general, and policymakers.

**THE PEOPLE OF THE RURAL RESEARCH CENTRE:**

**The RRC consists of a Team, made up of a Director and Associate Director, and Research Associates. In addition, the RRC has a number of Research Partners, with whom the Centre collaborates and cooperates in the context of its research programme.**

**RRC Team**

The RRC Team is responsible for the governance of the RRC. The RRC Team is comprised of Research Associates, an Associate Director, and Director. Through the Director or designate the Team annually reports to the V-P Academic of NSAC and the V.P. Research, Extension, and Outreach.

The Director and Associate Director provide day to day management and leadership of the RRC. The duties of the Director and Associate Director include establishing priorities around research, training, service, networking, and capacity building; monitoring and evaluating progress towards the meeting of the RRC's strategic goals; fiscal oversight; coordination of Team responsibilities.

The RRC Team provides strategic guidance to the Director and Associate Director in fulfilling the mission of the RRC.

The RRC Team, in addition to the Director and Associate Director, is made up of Research Associates and two to three additional persons who are invited to sit on the Team by the Director, and represent vital constituencies (Atlantic rural community organizations; the agricultural industry; government; etc.). These additional Team members provide outside perspectives and facilitate the strategic guidance role of the Team as a whole. These persons serve as a member of the Team for a period of three years, with the opportunity of one renewal of term.

To accomplish its work the RRC Team meets two to three times per year.

The Director and Associate Director serve for five years, May 1 to May 1. There will be no consecutive terms. It is expected that the positions of Director and Associate Director will normally be filled through nomination by the Team, of members of the Team, and present or former Research Associates within NSAC. If nomination does not result in the selection of the Director and Associate Director, then the RRC Team will consult the V.P. Academic and V.P. Research, Extension and Outreach, who will choose the Director and Associate Director.

The specific duties and responsibilities of Director, Associate Director, Research Associates and Research Partners are found below.

### **Director**

The RRC Director:

1. promotes scholarly activity on rural issues;
2. provides leadership in RRC activities and undertakings;
3. reports to RRC Team at its meetings;
4. represents the RRC to the public as well as to the NSAC and Dalhousie community;
5. develops, in consultation with the Team, joint programs, visiting scholar initiatives, institutional partnerships, and the like;
6. develops, in consultation with the Team, grant funding proposals to finance core activities;
7. is the signing authority for RRC accounts that are 'trust' accounts or grant fund-generated accounts undertaken on behalf of the RRC, and that are utilized to finance core research capacity-building activities, within the context of the RRC's identified research direction(s);
8. facilitates and supports the rurally-focused research activity of the RRC;
9. is responsible, along with the Associate Director, for administrative duties or the supervision of administrative staff attending to administrative duties connected to RRC research activity and accounts;
10. proposes to the Team the organization of events/outreach activities/research projects/research dissemination/ research direction activities, in accordance with the strategic direction of the RRC;
11. maintains or builds modestly the original RRC 'trust fund' account (cost centre 440-334).

### **Associate Director**

The Associate Director:

1. supports scholarly activity on rural issues;
2. is the signing authority, in the absence of the Director, for all those RRC accounts outlined in Director's responsibilities as being the responsibility of the Director;
3. is responsible, in consultation with other members of the Team and the Director, for the hiring and supervising of student assistants and research assistants;
4. assists the Director and Team with the organization of events/outreach activities/research projects/research dissemination/ research direction activities, in accordance with the strategic direction of the RRC;
5. is responsible for seeing that at least monthly updates to RRC webpages are done and that records are maintained;
6. is the first point of contact for RRC Partners;
7. represents the RRC at functions when the Director is unavailable;
8. chairs meetings of the Team in the Director's absence;
9. oversees day to day operations of the Centre, in terms of physical facilities issues and the like, delegating responsibilities in this regard as needed to members of the Team.

### **Research Associates**

Research Associates are faculty at NSAC who are involved in rurally-oriented research that is attuned to the human dimensions of rural and agricultural Atlantic Canada. They, along with the Director and Associate Director, comprise the Team at the RRC.

Functioning as a member of the Team, Research Associates will:

1. engage in an active, rurally-focused research programme that involves rurally-focused scholarly activity and peer-reviewed research;
2. attend the meetings of the RRC Team and provide direction to the Director and Associate Director and Team as a whole, in terms of the management of the Centre;
3. propose, and take leadership roles as part of the Team in, the organization of events/outreach activities/research projects/research dissemination/ research direction activities, in accordance with the strategic direction of the RRC;
4. participate in the development of research grant applications sponsored by the RRC.

### **Research Partners**

The RRC is enriched by its work and associations with Research Partners, who are representatives of rural community groups, farmers, undergraduate or graduate students, NSAC faculty, rural policymakers, academics, and/or community members. These are individuals, or individuals generally representing a group or groups, and engaged in work of concern to rural peoples or rurally-focused research in the social sciences, humanities or any inter- or multi-disciplinary research that touches on aspects of rural life. Research partners may be locally, nationally, or internationally based.

To achieve a Research Partner designation, candidates (individuals or organizations) apply to the Rural Research Centre by submitting a letter and CV or appropriate documentation to the Director. The letter will request Research Partner affiliation and indicate how he/she or group wishes to engage with the RRC. The Director will circulate the application to the Team who will make the decision of affiliation at the meeting following receipt of the application letter. If accepted he/she/the organization will provide on an annual basis an up-to-date CV or a letter stating his/her/group's wish to continue affiliation, except where they have been identified as part of a multi-year RRC research initiative/grant/project; in the latter case, the Research Partner affiliation will conclude when the research initiative is concluded, or will be up for renewal at that point in time.

Research Partners primarily participate in the RRC through the programs and/or projects by which they have become affiliated with the RRC. Research Partners do not formally participate in RRC Team meetings. Research Partners and Research Associates, either together or independently, may formulate, implement or account for specific projects and programmes in association with the RRC; in addition, where possible and appropriate, the RRC will provide office space, computer access, and RRC library resources to Research Partners.

The RRC Team as a whole have the right at any time to conclude an individual's position as a Research Partner; a Research Partner may also write a letter at any time indicating the wish to discontinue his/her/group's affiliation with the RRC, although this would not preclude completion of assigned duties/responsibilities undertaken as part of a grant that has been received. Research Partners shall acknowledge the support/affiliation of the RRC, where appropriate.

Responsibilities of a Research Partner to the RRC:

1. to fulfill obligations outlined in the context of research direction/programme/grant opportunities engaged in by the RRC and Research Partner.

Responsibilities of the RRC to Research Partners:

1. to fulfill obligations outlined in the context of research direction/programme/grant opportunities; to provide a venue, where possible and appropriate, for the distribution of research reports, texts, and the like via the RRC website

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