



Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Innovation Building

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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FAQs about the new Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Innovation (ICI) Building:

Q: What is the ICI?

A: The ICI is UBC Okanagan's newest building, scheduled to open in December 2025. The building is designed to be a place where researchers, experts, scholars, students and the community converge to explore solutions to complex societal problems.

The ICI reinforces UBC Okanagan's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, and will be built to LEED Gold certification.

Q: How does the ICI reinforce UBC Okanagan's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation?

A: Indigeneity has been a guiding principle for this building at every stage of planning and design. The planning for the ICI involved a respectful, collaborative partnership with the Okanagan Nation Alliance. The design of the building integrates the natural landscape, and the circular gathering space on the second level was inspired by and designed in collaboration with the En'owkin Centre. The circular room will support a space for dialogue and conversation, while honouring and strengthening the foundational partnership between the campus and the Okanagan Nation Alliance, enabling respectful and reciprocal collaborations with the community.

The ICI will be home to UBC Okanagan's Interior Salish language fluency programs and the Centre for Contemporary Interior Salishan Studies. The vision is to incorporate Syilx knowledge and values, as appropriate, across research and learning programs in the ICI.

Q: What will the ICI look like?

A: The ICI will be a four-story building next to the EME building. At 14,185 square metres, it's roughly twice the size of Fipke and the Commons buildings, and slightly smaller than the EME building. You can take a virtual tour and explore the floorplans on the [ICI website](#).

Q: Why move to the ICI?

A: The ICI is a dedicated building for interdisciplinary collaboration – a key strategic goal of UBC Okanagan. Not only will it be the ideal space on campus to investigate unexplored opportunities in new ways, but it will also have state-of-the-art technology and spaces.



Q: How many openings will there be in the ICI?

A: The ICI will have 68 offices for faculty researchers, visiting scholars and Elders and 366 open workstations for graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, research trainees and staff.

Q: Why is there so much floor space dedicated to wet labs?

A: Only one third of the building's occupants will utilize wet labs for their work (there are ~23 wet labs); however, this type of research space requires more square footage per person to facilitate the safe handling of chemicals and biological matter. The remaining two-thirds of researcher openings will be available for those who do not require wet labs.

Q: What equipment is in the wet labs?

A: On day 1, the wet labs will have shared access to fume hoods, tissue culture rooms with biological safety cabinets and a number of refrigerators and -20° and -80° freezers. It is anticipated that specialized equipment, such as centrifuges, microscopes, etc., and additional fridges/freezers, will be moved in from existing research spaces of the successful applicants following the EOI and space allocation process.

Q: What equipment is in the dry labs?

A: The ICI's dry labs are open-concept, flexible research spaces. Some dry labs are equipped with a sink. Examples of uses for these flexible research spaces include interview rooms, art studios, performance spaces, computer simulation spaces, data acquisition/visualization spaces, etc. Specific needs can be outlined in your EOI proposal.

Q: Will space be allocated to shared research facilities for the UBC Okanagan campus?

A: The ICI will house two shared research facilities: Imaging and Metabolomics. These facilities will be available to all researchers on campus.

Q: How does the ICI fit into other space opportunities, like UBCO Downtown and Landmark?

A: The ICI is a separate capital project dedicated to collaborative opportunities – we are looking for interdisciplinary research champions, and those who are ambassadors of community engagement, to fill the building. Anyone whose work fits this mandate is welcome to submit an EOI. We encourage you to discuss your space needs with your Head/Director and Dean to find the best fit.

Q: Will space in ICI be allocated for permanent residency?

A: Those assigned spaces in the ICI are expected to be engaged in interdisciplinary research; all spaces at UBCO Okanagan are subject to review on a periodic basis to ensure that they are being used optimally.

Q: Will the ICI be full when it opens?

A: Given the space demands on campus and the desire to ensure the building is vibrant and active, the intention is to identify interdisciplinary faculty through the EOI and fill the building as quickly as possible. However, there may still be space available in the ICI building when it opens in December 2025, to leave room for strategic hires whose work will be centered on interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation. Applicants are encouraged to work with their Heads/Directors and Deans to request space for strategic hires, as appropriate.



Q: Will the ICI be fully accessible?

A: Yes, the ICI building adheres to all accessibility requirements under the British Columbia Building Code.

Q: Will ICI construction disrupt traffic along Alumni Avenue?

A: Alumni Avenue will be closed from Feb 13-May 22, 2023, during the current phase of construction. Updates to construction impacts can be found on the UBCO Transportation website. See <https://transportation.ok.ubc.ca/construction-updates/> for general construction updates and <https://transportation.ok.ubc.ca/transit/> for transit information, including construction impacts to transit.

FAQs about the Expression of Interest (EOI) Process:

Q: How do I share my interest in moving into the ICI building?

A: Start by talking with your Head/Director and Dean, and any colleagues with whom you may apply. Then, respond to the EOI by sending an application package to vprawards.ubco@ubc.ca by May 15, 2023.

A complete application package includes the following items as a single PDF: cover page, two-page proposal and individual/team capabilities document. Full details on the EOI process, including applicant eligibility and selection criteria, are available in the [EOI Terms & Conditions document](#).

Q: Where can I find the templates that are required for the application?

A: Templates for the cover page and the individual/team capabilities document are available on the [ICI website](#).

Q: Who can apply?

A: UBC Okanagan faculty from all disciplines and research and teaching streams are encouraged to apply as an individual or part of a team. Proposals may include team members external to UBC Okanagan (e.g., faculty from the Vancouver campus, community organizations, visiting scholars, etc.), but UBC Okanagan faculty must be the Academic Leads.

Q: What research topics are you looking for?

A: No interdisciplinary topic is out of bounds. The ICI is the perfect home for interdisciplinary projects focused on complex societal problems. Both new and existing projects are welcome.

Q: What counts as interdisciplinary? Can a project be centered on collaboration in one department and/or Faculty?

A: The ICI is meant to create space for teams to work across disciplines and Faculties. We encourage applicants to consider interdisciplinarity in multiple ways. A wider collaboration spanning disciplines, Faculties, etc. will be an advantage in applications, as will incorporating Indigenous knowledge or engaging the community. For Stage 1 of the space allocation process, the Deans and external experts will advise on the interdisciplinary strength, breath and integration of the applications.

Q: What is the role of the Academic Lead(s)?



A: One of the Academic Leads is responsible for submitting the EOI application package and will be the key point of contact for the VPRI and Provost offices. All faculty members identified as Academic Leads are expected to relocate to the ICI building and use the ICI building as their primary space.

Q: Who needs to sign the cover page?

A: The Academic Leads and their Dean, or the Dean's designate, must sign the cover page. In addition, each faculty team member listed on the EOI that has indicated an interest in moving into the ICI building must include their Dean's (or designate's) signature on the cover page. If there is more than one faculty member from the same Faculty, only one signature from the Dean is required.

Q: What happens if there are issues with collecting all the signatures on one document?

A: If there are technical issues with multiple signatures on the cover page, a written approval from the Dean or delegate via email will be accepted. This email approval should be converted to a PDF and included in the application package.

Q: Do you have to move into the building if you are a part of a team application?

A: No, not all team members listed on the EOI cover page have to move into the building for various reasons (e.g., specialized equipment required for a team member to do his/her work is located elsewhere on campus; the team member is external to UBC Okanagan; nature of commitment to the team activities, etc.).

Q: Is career stage/rank a consideration in the EOI process?

A: The goal is to have faculty/team members at various stages in their careers located in the ICI. Career stage will be a consideration in the space allocation process.

Q: If I am/our team is shortlisted after the EOI, what will happen in the second stage?

A: To fulfill the vision of the ICI building and to optimize space use, Stage 2 will begin with a detailed assessment of the research and space needs for shortlisted applicants. The Infrastructure Development team will gather detailed information on existing research spaces (location, type, size, etc.) and ICI space needs/requirements (wet/dry lab spaces, specialized equipment, number of students, postdoctoral fellows, staff, etc.).

Stage 2 will also consider mentoring and collaborative opportunities to organize interested faculty into interdisciplinary "neighbourhoods."

Q: What is the neighbourhood building process?

A: The ICI will uniquely be organized into "neighbourhoods" based on shared research interests and key collaborative linkages, where co-location has a campus-wide benefit. Interdisciplinary neighbourhoods will allow faculty in all career stages, as well as graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, to interact with others outside their home academic departments/groups and develop working relationships that benefit from proximity and shared infrastructure and spaces.

This process will take place in Stage 2 of the space allocation process and will take approximately one year. Shortlisted candidates from Stage 1 will be considered.

Q: Does the EOI process consider equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) measures?

A: EDI is embedded in all internal programs, and EDI will be an important consideration in the ICI space allocation process.



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Q: Can I get help with the EOI?

A: Begin by sharing your ideas and questions with your Head/Director and Dean, and be sure to attend the ICI Town Hall on April 4 where you can ask further questions and chat with other faculty members interested in interdisciplinary research. As always, feel free to reach out to Internal Programs Manager, Strategic Initiatives & Operations, Nicole Bennett, nicole.bennett@ubc.ca.

Q: What if I have more questions about the EOI process?

A: Please send questions to Internal Programs Manager, Strategic Initiatives & Operations, Nicole Bennett, nicole.bennett@ubc.ca.