

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Academic Program Group  
Research Unit Directors  
Research Associate Deans

FROM: Arthur Lupia, Vice President for Research and Innovation (interim)

DATE: July 7, 2025

SUBJECT: Promotion Casebooks for Research Scientist Track Faculty, 2025-2026 Promotion Cycle

This memorandum summarizes the procedures that need to be followed for promotion recommendations for individuals appointed to the Research Scientist (RS) track. The RS track includes individuals holding the following ranks: Research Investigator<sup>1</sup>, Assistant Research Scientist, Associate Research Scientist, and Research Scientist.

The University of Michigan Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) is responsible for oversight and administration of promotions for the RS track faculty. All promotions to the ranks of Associate Research Scientist and Research Scientist must be reviewed and approved by the Vice President for Research and Innovation (VPRI). As a reminder, Schools and Colleges on the Ann Arbor, Dearborn, and Flint campuses, along with the Life Sciences Institute and the Institute for Social Research, have the authority delegated to them by the VPRI to make promotions to the Assistant Research Scientist rank. Units that report to OVPR should submit their promotion recommendations for Associate Research Scientist and Research Scientist ranks through OVPR for review and approval by the VPRI.

Please ensure the promotion review process for Research Scientists is thorough, equitable, and timely. Refer to the checklist for specific dossier requirements. Incomplete dossiers cannot be accepted.

OVPR considers RS promotions just once a year (as is true for all faculty appointments). This ensures that a common frame of reference is used in making these decisions and enables OVPR to review the total research faculty promotional pattern within the University. Accordingly, recommendations for all RS track promotions, the effective date of which would be **August 25, 2026**, are due:

**Deadline: February 11, 2026**

As a general guideline, please keep in mind that putting the proper effort into preparing the promotions casebook is crucial to this process. This includes establishing a promotions Review Committee to review each candidate. The Committee membership should include peers at an equal or higher rank than the proposed rank for the candidate and should have at least one member from outside the department or unit.

### Disruptions to Scholarly Activity

We acknowledge that many faculty on our campus have experienced new disruptions to their scholarly activity since January, 2025, including disruptions in grant reviews, funding announcements, and research activity. Again, we ask that you instruct faculty evaluators in your unit to assess casebooks holistically

<sup>1</sup> Entry level position appointed directly by the individual school, colleges, Dearborn, LSI and ISR. There is no promotional path to this rank.

and with appropriate flexibility and that you address such impact in your dean's cover memo as may be appropriate.

### **Extension Requests Due to COVID-19**

Due to COVID-19, units may elect to postpone the promotion cycle for one year. This should be done in consultation with the candidate and should not be viewed as automatic. Rather, units should look at the circumstances and determine whether productivity was sufficiently impacted to grant an extension. Such extensions need not be approved by OVPR, but notification must be provided.

### **Service Requirements**

Please note that while there is no service requirement for appointment to Assistant Research Scientist, **there is** a service requirement for promotion to both Associate Research Scientist (Some Internal Service required) and Research Scientist (Significant Internal Service and Some External Service required).

### **External Review Letters**

At least five external review letters are required, **only two must be "arm's length" for the RS track.**

### **Recommendations for RS Track Promotions to Associate Research Scientist and Research Scientist**

Please note that all RS casebooks are to be submitted electronically following OVPR instructions.

OVPR will complete the review of all RS promotion dossiers and will notify Deans and Departments of the decisions no later than **May 22, 2026**. It is the Dean's/Director's responsibility to contact individual faculty regarding a negative decision for promotion.

Please forward this memorandum and the attached casebook checklist to Department Chairs, Program Heads, or others in your unit who are directly responsible for the promotional review of Research Scientists. These materials are also available electronically at:

<https://research.umich.edu/research-resources/research-faculty-affairs/>

Please contact OVPR at [ovpr.faculty.affairs@umich.edu](mailto:ovpr.faculty.affairs@umich.edu) with any questions about the promotion process.

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Attachments