

# Attachment 2:

## Research Scientist Track - Solicitation Letter Template

*At a minimum, the following language is required:*

[Date]

[Name]

[Title]

[Department]

[Institution]

[Street Address]

[City, State, Zip]

Dear Professor [Name]:

The [Unit] at the University of Michigan (U-M) is considering [Candidate Name] for promotion from the rank of [specify rank] to the rank of [specify rank] on the Research Scientist track. Faculty at the U-M on the research scientist track are promoted on the basis of research, scholarly, and creative contributions; teaching contributions, if applicable (not required); and service. These contributions may occur within independent or collaborative, team-based research environments. Recognition of the quality of their work by their peers is a significant factor in the review process. We value your candid assessment of the candidate's research accomplishments and future promise, including both positive points and areas needing improvement. Your scholarly and professional judgments will play an important part in our evaluation of [Candidate Name] for promotion.

Based on the enclosed materials and any other knowledge you have about the candidate's work or professional accomplishments, we would like your candid evaluation of [Candidate Name's] written and scholarly contributions in relation to others of comparable experience in the candidate's field. In particular, we would appreciate your comments on the the following topics:

1. How do you know [Candidate Name]?
2. What are your impressions about the quality, quantity, focus and scholarly impact of the candidate's works?\*
3. Which, if any, of the scholarly publications or works do you consider to be outstanding?\*
4. How would you estimate the candidate's standing in relation to others in the candidate's peer group who are working in the same field?
5. How would you evaluate the candidate's service contributions to the discipline; that is, the candidate's work on professional committees, as a reviewer of proposals or papers, as an editor, or similar activities?\*
6. With respect to research and scholarly productivity, would the candidate's work meet the requirements for someone being considered for promotion according to the University of Michigan Research Scientist criteria? If not, why?

***[The following paragraph (word-for-word) must be included in ALL letters soliciting an evaluation of the candidate.]***

***Questions sometimes arise about the confidentiality of external review letters, and we do want to advise you that your letter will be reviewed by senior faculty at the University of Michigan. Because the University is a public institution, legal considerations limit our ability to assure confidentiality but it is our practice not to release external review letters unless required to do so by law.***

We request that you return your review to us by [Date]. We would also appreciate it if you would provide us with a short biosketch, including a brief description of your areas of expertise and current research interests.

We realize that your schedule is full and that this may be a time-consuming task; however, we will be most grateful for your assistance. We have selected you because of your expertise in this area. Should you not respond, we will note this in the candidate's promotion record. If you need further information, please contact [Contact Name] at [Phone/Email].

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Title]

## Enclosures

\*Please consider a broad range of **scholarly products/contributions**, which can include products beyond peer-reviewed publications, such as:

- Conference peer review
- Organizing a panel or workshop (local, regional, or national)
- Conducting community-based or engaged research
- Community engagement (e.g., research translation)
- Conducting research funded by industrial, nonprofit, or other non-federal or foundation sources
- Creating a start-up company that enhances the broader scholarly, public service, or health care missions of the university
- Pursuing creative performance
- Creating new or enhanced practices, products, or services
- Working to patent or license an invention
- Developing collaborative approaches to solving complex world problems
- Engaging with policymakers or other external groups to advance policy
- Policy contributions (e.g., guideline committees, advisory boards, national committees)
- Journal peer review
- Editorial position
- Invited panel presenter
- Leadership role in a professional society
- Study section and grant peer review
- Leading data training and dissemination

Activities like these both strengthen the University's research enterprise and our scientific communities, and should be considered as meaningful components of evaluation for Research Scientist faculty promotion considerations.