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# Memorandum

**To:** York University Community

**From:** Rhonda L. Lenton, President and Vice-Chancellor

**Date:** November 26, 2019

**Subject:** Appointment of new Vice-President Research and Innovation

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Following an extensive national and international search, I am pleased to announce that York University has selected a new Vice President of Research & Innovation. The Executive Committee of the Board of Governors has accepted the recommendation of the search committee that Dr. Amir Asif be appointed for a five-year term beginning on May 1, 2020.

Dr. Asif has served as the Dean of the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science (GCS) at Concordia University since 2014. He is well known to members of the York community, having served as the founding Chair of the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS) from 2006 – 2014. As Chair, he transformed EECS into a comprehensive department offering programs in computer engineering, software engineering, electrical engineering, computer science, digital media and computer security, which was selected as one of the two founding departments for the new Lassonde School of Engineering at York University. He is also currently serving as the Chair of the Research Committee of the Engineering Deans Canada, the national council of Deans of Engineering and Applied Science in Canada.

Dr. Asif has over 15 years of experience serving in senior university leadership positions. Most recently, he led the development of the 2016/21 GCS Strategic Plan and the creation of faculty research support and capital infrastructure funds focused on attracting the best researchers and achieving excellence in research. Asif was instrumental in establishing successful research collaborations between the public and private sectors, examples of which are NSERC Canada Excellence Research Chair in Smart and Resilient Cities and Communities (\$10M), Green-Surface Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing approved as a NSERC Strategic Partnership Grant (\$5.5M), multiple NSERC Collaborative Research and Development Grants (\$10M), four Industrial Research Chairs (over \$6M) and various NSERC Create and Mitacs Accelerate Grants (\$5M). During his five-year term as Dean, the School of Engineering and Computer Science grew by 35 percent in terms of student enrolment and 40 per cent in terms of faculty complement. The research funding within the School grew by over 50 per cent during his deanship.

Dr. Asif led the development of Concordia's Department of Chemical and Materials Engineering and 10 new interdisciplinary research centres at Concordia, including collaborations with the other Faculties and disciplines. Dr. Asif is also passionate about refining public policy on higher education and improving the student experience. As Vice-Chair of the University Senate and Chair of the Senate Committee on Academic Standards, Curriculum and Pedagogy at York University, he oversaw the development of University-wide policy on academic standards, regulations, curriculum and programs, including research-informed pedagogy.



Innovation and interdisciplinarity are also at the heart of his research. As a specialist in signal processing, Dr. Asif focuses on developing next-generation technologies for a variety of everyday applications including health and medical devices, radar and sonar applications, distributed multi-agent networked systems and electrical power grids. He leads by example in the pursuit of research excellence, maintaining active research and teaching profiles. He is the recipient of several prestigious teaching awards and has published extensively in scientific journals and international conferences. He has been awarded grants for core engineering research and applied industrial projects undertaken in Canada and internationally, including from the Ontario Research Foundation/Research Excellence program for his work as principal investigator of the Centre for Innovation in Information Visualization and Data Driven Design (CIV/DDD), a multi-million dollar, multi-institutional research project. He continues to work with industry on applied research projects, the latest such collaboration leading to a joint patent filing with IBM.

I know you will join me in welcoming Dr. Asif to the York community. I am very grateful to the members of the search committee for their contributions to this process.

I also want to take the opportunity to thank Rui Wang for his excellent work and leadership as the Interim Vice President of Research & Innovation. An update will be forthcoming regarding this role for the winter term.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rhonda L. Lenton', with a stylized, cursive script.

Rhonda L. Lenton  
President & Vice Chancellor