Alberta Gaming Research Institute
2001-2004 Business Plan

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

Vision

An institute that is internationally recognized for its contribution to the scientific knowledge base in gambling research

Mission

To significantly improve Albertans' knowledge of how gambling affects society

Core purposes

The purposes of the Institute are to:

> ➢ Expand the breadth and depth of scientific knowledge into gambling;
>
> ➢ Provide education about current knowledge through research publications and reporting of research results;
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> ➢ Provide research related to emergent gaming activities;
>
> ➢ Act as a clearinghouse for literature related to gaming research;
>
> ➢ Forge strong collaborative links with national and international scholars and organizations involved in gaming/gambling research and studies.

Background

The Alberta Gaming Research Institute was established by an Agreement, dated November 26, 1999, signed between the Alberta Government and the Universities of Alberta, Calgary, and Lethbridge. Subsequently, an associated document, the Universities' Organizing Agreement (draft in process) was drawn up to outline the terms and conditions by which the Institute is to be organized and administered.

The Alberta Gaming Research Institute is a consortium arrangement of the three signatory universities. Its primary purpose is to support and promote research into various aspects of gaming and gambling. The identified research domains include bio-psychological and health care, socio-cultural, economic, and government and industry policy and practice. Through the funding of research grants, communication activities, public events and conferences, and capacity-building efforts at the partner universities, the Institute aims to achieve international recognition in gaming-related research.

A Board of Directors working in collaboration with the Alberta Gaming Research Council governs the Institute. An Executive Director located at the University of Alberta administers it. The Ministry of Alberta Gaming provides $1,500,000 annually on a rolling 3-year basis to support the research focused activities of the Institute.

Core businesses

- Develop and promote research programs *(see Goal 1)*
- Develop and sustain research infrastructure *(see Goal 2)*
- Establish and encourage national and international research linkages *(see Goal 3)*
- Establish and efficiently conduct research governance and administration *(see Goal 4)*

SECTION 2:
BUSINESS GOALS, STRATEGIES, MEASURES, TARGETS AND RESULTS

Goal 1: Develop and promote research programs

The Institute will carry out its businesses and achieve its purposes through the facilitation of high-quality gaming research. Hence, the Institute will develop an active research program in the four broad research domains described in the Government-Institute Universities Agreement (November 26, 1999):
- Bio-psychological and health care;
- Socio-cultural;
- Economic;
- Government and industry policy and practice.

1-1: To ensure that gaming research conducted by the Institute will be of the highest academic quality

Key Strategies:
1. Develop a peer review process for all research proposals
2. Encourage publication of Institute supported research in leading peer-reviewed scholarly journals and books

Measure	Target	Result
To ensure that gaming research is of the highest academic quality	• All research grant competitions are evaluated through peer-review • Institute-sponsored research is routinely published in leading academic journals	• Expand peer review pool (numbers and range of research expertise); • Increase number of applications and range of research initiatives across domains • Promote publication of research outcomes in academic journals; • Confirm grant award condition of publication of research outcomes • Post Institute-funded research results on website

1-2: To ensure that gaming research is actively pursued at the Institute Universities

Key Strategies:
3. Develop Institute Universities research capacity through position funding
4. Develop mentored programs that might include graduate fellowships; post-doctoral fellowships, visiting scholarships, graduate and senior student stipends
5. Develop research nodes to provide campus-specific support in developing research initiatives and capacity

Measure	Target	Result
Gaming research actively pursued at each of the Institute Universities	• Each Institute University is engaged in competitions	• Capacity-building funds provided for each partner university; • Maintain and develop faculty and librarian research complement at Institute Universities; • Collaborative cross-researcher linkages supported within three universities (and beyond)

1-3: To ensure that research is conducted in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Government-Institute Agreement and within broadly defined priorities and guidelines of the Alberta Gaming Research Council (AGRC)

Key Strategy:

6. Develop appropriate reporting mechanisms and processes for defining and, as appropriate, clarifying general Council priorities and guidelines

Measure	Target	*Result*
Research conducted in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Government-Institute Universities Agreement and AGRC general guidelines and priorities	• All research activities are rationalized within AGRC priorities and guidelines	• Recommendations of Summit '98 addressed through communications and sponsored research initiatives as defined by the Government-Universities' Agreement • Bi-annual reporting of status of research and capacity-building activities including budget controls

Goal 2: Develop and Sustain Research Infrastructures

2-1: To ensure that the libraries' collections of specialized gaming literature address the needs of the Institute in such a way as to facilitate the Institute becoming Canada's most comprehensive clearinghouse for literature on gaming research

Key Strategies:

7. Institute Universities' libraries will collect gaming-related literature to meet the specific needs of their clientele
8. Institute Universities will establish a comprehensive "gray literature" collection pertinent to the four general research domains

Measure	Target	Result
Institute Universities' library collections complete in four domains	• Maintain current collection of monographs and appropriate periodicals in Institute Universities' libraries • Collect contemporary gray literature from major institutes of gambling research and governmental agencies (or, as appropriate, make it available in annotated reference form)	• Make collections as complete as possible in four domains; • Increase access to resources

Achieve recognition as Canada's leading gaming literature resource base	• Institute will possess Canada's best collection	• Develop evaluation criteria for collection including specified timelines

2-2: To ensure broad and timely access to gaming literature and information resources

Key Strategies:

9. Develop ease-of-access and integrated search process of Institute libraries' catalogues and user-initiated requests for other resources
10. Facilitate access to pertinent web resources and on-line databases
11. Develop links to the Institute-supported pre-print server
12. Negotiate rights for digital formatting and produce digital formatted materials

Measure	Target	Result
Broad and timely access to gaming literature and information	• 'High satisfaction' among Institute-sponsored researchers on matters of availability and access	• 'Gambling' resources linked when resource base sufficient to warrant; • Determine how 'high satisfaction' will be measured

2-3: To facilitate the dissemination of gaming-related research

Key Strategies:

13. Communicate research findings to academic audiences, the AGRC, the Government, other agencies, and the public, as appropriate
14. Provide both conventional and experimental alternatives for the dissemination of research information and literature emanating from the Institute including via a website and specialized publications
15. Promote the use of Institute-sponsored research results and Institute collections in degree credit program teaching and continuing professional education
16. Experiment with preprint service
17. Sponsor, promote and participate in conferences, seminars and colloquia
18. Publish a regular Institute newsletter
19. Investigate and make recommendations on establishment of a peer-reviewed gaming research journal

Measure	Target	Result
Dissemination of gaming-related research	• Promote distribution of Institute research results and facilitate educative activities broadly based in Alberta and elsewhere	• Examine feasibility of Institute publishing literature reviews, academic journal, and/or other documents; • Publication of research findings in academic journals a condition of research grant funding; • Publish Institute newsletter; • Expand co-production and other communications arrangements and opportunities eg. website links, collaborative resource-sharing arrangements with other organizations, journal publication, other venues

Goal 3: Establish and encourage national and international research linkages

3-1: *To establish the reputation of the Institute as Canada's leading university-based Gaming research organization. This is a longer-term goal that will be achieved largely through the conduct and communication of high-quality research.*

Key Strategies:
20. Develop collaborative ties with all Canadian research organizations investigating gaming and gambling-related topics
21. Develop links with Albertan, Canadian governmental, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector entities for purposes of promoting the Institute, effecting collaboration, and securing funds
22. Establish links with all international research organizations and active scholars investigating gaming and gambling-related topics
23. Provide opportunities for national and international experts to participate in Institute-sponsored activities

Measure	Target	Result
Institute is Canada's leading university-based gaming research body	• Key policy publics acknowledge the Institute as the leading Canadian university-based gaming research organization	• Revise and implement communications plan to achieve objectives (conduct formal review in 2003); • Promote continued growth of Institute both through expansion of existing and incorporating new initiatives

Goal 4: Establish and efficiently conduct research governance and administration

Goal 4-1: *To effect good governance of the Institute (including Council-Institute relations) through defined and transparent processes.*

Key Strategies:
24. Establish an Inter-institutional Agreement that reflects the spirit and codifies the key operational requirements of the consortium
25. Conduct a systematic annual review of Institute priorities and strategies and companion budget review to ensure alignment of priorities, strategies, and expenditures
26. Work with the Alberta Gaming Research Council to develop appropriate processes and protocols for budget and reports approvals through the Council
27. Promote regular opportunities for Council-Institute interaction including extending invitations for council member participation in Institute sponsored events and peer-review activities

Measure	Target	Result
Effect good governance of Institute.	• Inter-institutional Agreement ratified by Institute Universities • Collaborating universities function as equal partners	• Finalize Institute Organizing Agreement • Communicate information about Institute practices and activities with stakeholders and Albertans

4-2: *To achieve efficient and effective administrative practices in Institute operations*

Key Strategies:
28. Employ Executive Director
29. Establish sufficient administrative support through the hub to ensure good business practices for the Board and ancillary committees
30. Effect regular and effective communications between the hub and node operations for purposes of ensuring reciprocal support, constancy, and consistency with Institute purposes, and effectiveness of this administrative complex

31. Seek efficiencies and economies in administrative and operational support through judicious analysis of production arrangements (ie. internal production, co-produce, contract) for all Institute activities and operations
32. Create and maintain accounting, records, and other systems through the hub to guarantee administrative business practices that will pass reviews by the Office of the Auditor-General

Measure	Target	Result
Effective and efficient administration.	• Accounting records and internal control systems conform to Institute Universities' policies and procedures that are subject to yearly audit • Sufficient resources are available to collaborating universities to support hub and node activities	• Continue to review and refine practices based on feedback • Provide bi-annual progress report to AGRC from Board • Provide Government-Universities' Agreement required documents on a timely basis

4-3: To secure funding to ensure that the activities defined within the Institute's business plan can be achieved

Key Strategies:

33. Work effectively with Institute universities to ensure availability and optimal use of in-kind infrastructure, resources, and other support
34. Establish and execute a Communications Plan for informing and engaging the Alberta Gaming Research Council and the Minister of Gaming on Institute funding requirements
35. Develop a systematic procedure for researching and identifying Institute funding opportunities
36. Secure gaming industry and other extra-Ministry funding (ie. funding from external sources such as the Federal Granting Councils and other research funding agencies)

Measure	Target	Result 2001/04
Sufficient funding to execute business plan	• All Business Plan activities receive adequate fund support	• Actively pursue supplementary funding sources and long-term projects