THE LEITHWOOD AWARD:

The OISE Outstanding Thesis of the Year

## Background

The **Leithwood Award: the OISE Outstanding Thesis of the Year** is a cash award supported by fundraising on the occasion of the retirement of Dr. Ken Leithwood, and by the OISE Dean’s Office. The competition is open for doctoral theses in education completed at OISE between January 1 and December 31 in the year prior to the deadline. Studies using any research approach (ethnographic, experimental, historical, survey, etc.) are encouraged. Each study will be assessed in light of this approach, the scholarly quality of the dissertation, and the significance of its contributions to knowledge in education. Theses that combine theory and practice to inform relevant policy decisions will also be considered.

This Award was created in 2003 under the auspices of Dr. Leithwood when he was Associate Dean of Research at OISE. During Dr. Leithwood’s long career at OISE, he supervised close to 90 doctoral dissertations. His graduates are now on the faculty of most Educational Administration programs in North America. His research on educational leadership and educational change has contributed to shaping theory, policy and practice in most jurisdictions in Canada, and indeed, across the English-speaking world. His work in England, the United States and Australia has guided the formation of policy on leadership development, educational reform, and teacher practice. In light of this close connection between Dr. Leithwood’s research and the practice of education across the country, the exceptional work he has done with so many graduate students, and the high standards he has set for research in the academy, this award has been named in his honour. Funds contributed by his colleagues and his students will ensure that this award continues to celebrate the finest scholarly work in educational research in this country.

The award will normally be presented to the recipient at an OISE event [to be confirmed] and the recipient will receive an award cheque of $500.

## Purpose of Award

The purpose of the award is to recognize exceptional, stimulating, and cutting-edge research produced by doctoral students in the last phase of their graduate work. This award gives OISE an opportunity to celebrate the splendid quality and diversity of scholarly interests among our doctoral students.

## Overview of Criteria

When assessing submissions, the review committee will pay special attention to:

* Research excellence, including innovative conceptualization, design, and execution. Does the approach shift the reader’s consciousness? What new knowledge is being produced?
* The significance of the problem – the nominee should demonstrate why the research is important, placing the work in a larger context and making a case for the significance of the work.
* Research impact and external reach – for example, external reviewers’ comments, resulting publications, requests from external groups to present/share results, interest from book publishers
* Quality of the 6-page written report
* Strength of the letter of recommendation from the faculty supervisor. Faculty supervisor letters should refer to and explicitly cover the above criteria. Please include headings for Research excellence (including innovative conceptualization, design, and execution), Significance of the problem, and Research impact and external reach.

## Submission Information

Each entry must include a written report summarizing the thesis and how it meets the above criteria (maximum 6 pages excluding references – 12 pt. font, single spaced), a completed application form (see below) and a letter of recommendation from the faculty supervisor (maximum 3 pages – 12 pt. font, single spaced). Both the written report and letter of recommendation should be written for a non-specialist audience. The student’s department must also endorse nominations via the Department Chair’s signature on the application form (there is no maximum number of nominations per department). Applications must be received no later than **12noon February 15th**, for theses completed between January 1 and December 31 in the previous calendar year. If the deadline falls on a weekend or public holiday observed by University of Toronto, the deadline is 12noon on the next business day. Applications should be sent in pdf form to the Research Office by email to [OISE.research@utoronto.ca](mailto:OISE.research@utoronto.ca). **Late applications will not be considered. Please note that applications MUST be sent by email – hard copy applications will not be accepted.**

For any queries please contact [oise.research@utoronto.ca](mailto:oise.research@utoronto.ca).

#### APPLICATION FORM

Leithwood award for Outstanding Thesis of the Year

Name of nominee:

Department:

Email:

Thesis Title:

Date of completion:

Brief Description of the Research:

Name of Faculty Supervisor:

Signature of Faculty Supervisor:

Name of Department Chair:

Signature of Department Chair:

Date: