Dear Dr. XX,

I am preparing an application for the Early Researcher Award (ERA) Program, and you kindly agreed to write a letter of support on my behalf.

The ERA program, established by the Ontario Government, helps promising researchers in the early stages of their academic career attract talented people to their team. ERA funding ($100,000 cash over a period of five years) builds research teams of undergraduates, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, research assistants, associates, and technicians.

When making decisions, the ERA Board relies heavily on letters of support from researchers of national and international stature. The Board looks for letters that strongly support: 1. the research excellence and potential of the candidate: 2. the excellence, importance, promise, and impact of the proposed research project: 3. its training value and contribution to the highly qualified personnel (HQP); and 4. the strategic value of the project for Ontario.

To help you prepare a reference letter, Queen’s University Research Services recommends that you address the following points:

1. Excellence of the Researcher: your knowledge of the candidate and their work

* name of candidate, length of time you have known the candidate, and nature of relationship with the candidate, if applicable (Important note: Please do not overstate your familiarity with the candidate as this may negatively impact the eligibility of your letter)
* knowledge of the candidate’s work, the originality, significance and impact of the candidate’s research
* candidate’s national and international standing and reputation if known
* candidate’s funding and publishing record
* other relevant information that indicates the substantial contributions made by the candidate in his/her field

2. Quality of the research

* your assessment of, and comments on the proposed research, including its strengths, vision, excellence
* your assessment of the potential impact of the research in terms of contribution to knowledge, social, and/or economic benefits

3. Development of Research Talent

* quality of the training to be expected from the proposed research for the trainees involved in it
* quality of the training environment the candidate provides
* if the candidate has an excellent track record of high-quality training then this can be mentioned as well

4. Strategic Value to Ontario

* The potential impact of the research results and the training of HQP on one or more of the following:
	+ economic benefits
	+ knowledge transfer
	+ enhancement of the province’s profile in the global academic community
	+ social/cultural benefits

Please address the signed reference letter to the ERA Selection Committee at:

Early Researcher Awards Program

Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade

Research, Science and Strategy

2 Queen Street East 3rd Floor

Toronto, ON M7A 1N3

but do not send the letter to the ERA Selection Committee. The signed reference letter must be sent to University Research Services for inclusion in the final application package.

The signed reference letter should be on official letterhead if appropriate.

Please **scan and email** the reference letter to Queen’s University Research Services at earlyresearcheraward@queensu.ca.

I have attached my research proposal and CV for your consideration. I would be happy to discuss any questions you might have, and would greatly appreciate your letter of support for my ERA application.