

International Funds

Call for project outlines

NOTE: Implementation of the International Funds is subject to approval of changes to legislation expected in June 2001.

To be successful in the global knowledge-based economy and address today's health, environmental and social challenges, Canada needs to play an active role in international research activities. Canadian institutions and their researchers need to perform research at the highest of international standards of excellence in partnership with the very best in the world. To this end, institutions must take full advantage of the knowledge and talent found in Canada and have access to unique international facilities and research endeavours.

The CFI International Funds use a variety of mechanisms to increase Canada's capacity for innovation by challenging institutions and researchers to collaborate with the very best researchers in other countries through:

- investments in infrastructure;
- provision of access to facilities outside Canada;
- provision of access to international programs.

CFI support for these activities will lead to achievements not possible otherwise.

What kinds of projects does CFI want to invest in?

There are two international funds, each with a \$100M budget::

- The **International Joint Ventures Fund** will support the establishment of a small number (no more than four) of very high profile research infrastructure projects in Canada to take advantage of extraordinary research opportunities with leading facilities in other countries that will bring significant benefits to Canada.
- The **International Access Fund** will provide access for Canadian institutions and their best researchers to facilities in other countries and major international collaborative programs. They will perform innovative research through unique collaborative research opportunities that will lead to significant benefits for Canada.

The CFI encourages eligible Canadian institutions to come together and include Canadian and international partners from different sectors and disciplines in the development of challenging and transformative projects that will lead to significant benefits for Canada and the other countries involved. Projects should be in areas highlighted in the strategic research plans of the participating Canadian institutions. Projects must propose new activities. There must be no substitution for current funding.

The CFI will invest in projects that:

- Capitalize on innovative research opportunities and extraordinary capability in Canada and require international partnership to fully achieve the objectives.
- Enable researchers to work on groundbreaking topics requiring facilities and talent that are beyond the capability of Canadian institutions to tackle alone.
- Increase research excellence and strengthen Canada's capacity for innovation by having Canadian researchers participate in international collaborations and having excellent researchers from other countries do research in Canada.
- Create a stimulating and innovative training environment with an international dimension in order to better prepare individuals for research and other careers.
- Make a difference and contribute to the Canadian economy (including commercialization of research results) and/or to the improvement of society, the quality of life, health, or the environment.

Who is eligible to apply and receive funds?

Universities, colleges, hospitals and not-for-profit institutions that have been recognized as eligible by the CFI can apply for and receive funds provided they have filed the summary of their strategic research plan and signed the Institutional Agreement with the CFI.

Eligible institutions will be responsible for the management of funded projects. The CFI realizes that some projects may involve several eligible institutions across the country. In such cases, institutions may choose to form a consortium to manage, operate, and use the infrastructure.

Under the International Access Fund, the eligible institution(s) are not expected to have majority interest and exercise de facto control over the use of the infrastructure. However, they must have in place the necessary agreements with the international partners to ensure appropriate access for Canadians.

What types of items are eligible?

For a general description of eligible costs, see the Policy and Program Guide.

Project requests may also include funding to contribute to the incremental operating and maintenance costs associated with capital projects. The requested amount from the CFI should not exceed 25% of the capital costs.

Under the International Access Fund, membership in or access fees to international facilities or international research projects are eligible when institutions can demonstrate how this will help them meet their research objectives in areas identified in their strategic plans. Purchase or construction of infrastructure in other countries is also eligible.

The CFI does not provide funds for the conduct of research per se, for feasibility studies or for student and faculty exchange programs. Funds may not be transferred to non-eligible institutions to cover the cost of their participation.

What contributions does the CFI expect from partners?

The CFI will cover up to 100% of the eligible capital costs of projects. However, the CFI encourages institutions to seek capital funding from other partners when this will broaden the scope of the initiative and make for better outcomes.

Institutions will have to demonstrate that they can secure the funding from other partners for the conduct of research and for the full cost of the operation and maintenance of the infrastructure.

The CFI expects that international partners will fund their costs of research and any infrastructure located outside Canada needed for the collaboration. Canadian partners (e.g., government agencies, or companies) that are not eligible recipients may also invest funds in activities related to the project or in the project itself in the context of collaborations with eligible institutions.

What is the application process?

Institutions must submit a project outline by July 3, 2001. The project outline of no more than 10 to 12 pages should describe briefly:

- the research opportunity (stressing its transformative qualities);
- the infrastructure and/or access arrangements;
- the nature and benefits of the proposed international collaboration including the agreements (or a plan for agreements) with international partners;
- the institutions and researchers involved and their partners (no CVs required);

- the potential benefits to Canada;
- the plans for the management of the project;
- the timeline and deliverables; and
- a budget estimate.

There will be no deadline for submission of complete applications. For projects invited to submit a full application, the CFI will develop with the institution a schedule for the submission and review of the project. The full proposal will be made using the CFI application form.

There are no plans for future calls for project outlines at this time. There may be other calls if funds remain after this round.

How will CFI assess proposals?

Project outlines

A multidisciplinary committee will recommend the most promising projects that should proceed to a full application on the basis of the information provided. We do not foresee inviting more projects to full review than can feasibly be funded within the budget available. However, invitation to submit a complete application is not a guarantee of subsequent approval.

In inviting full applications, the CFI is likely to outline its expectations with respect to various aspects that should be covered by the full proposal. It may also require the submission of additional material (in addition to the CFI application form).

Complete applications

A review process and timetable will be established for each project and will be tailored to the nature and level of complexity of the project. Various review mechanisms could be used. For instance, the review of a project could involve joint review mechanisms with agencies in Canada or other countries to avoid duplication of efforts. Final recommendations will come from the multidisciplinary committee.

The committee will review the projects against the following criteria:

1. Quality of research and need for infrastructure
 - Excellence and innovative potential of the research and the researchers at the very highest of international standards;
 - Quality of the partnerships;

- Demonstration that the proposed infrastructure and the international collaboration are essential to develop innovative research activities that could not be pursued otherwise;
- Effectiveness and efficiency of the proposed infrastructure in view of the research activity planned;
- Effective management, operation and maintenance of the infrastructure on an ongoing basis.

2. Contribution to strengthening the capacity for innovation

- Importance of the infrastructure to institutional capacity for innovation;
- Potential for increased international visibility for Canadian research;
- Contribution to exchanges of highly qualified personnel e.g. awareness of the international dimension of research, unique expertise from abroad;
- Contribution to the training of highly qualified personnel;
- Contribution to building linkages of high quality among institutions and researchers within Canada and outside Canada, among sectors and disciplines.

3. The potential benefits of the research and the international collaboration to Canada

- Contribution, through innovation, to the Foundation's goals of job creation and economic growth (including commercialization of research results); and/or
- Improvement of the environment, health and quality of life.

A proposal must meet all three criteria to a degree appropriate to the size and complexity of the project in order to be funded. Given the limited number of projects to be funded, consideration may be given to distribution by research areas and regions. Preference may also be given to projects that can start within a year of approval and show significant results in three to five years.

Funding decisions

The CFI Board will make decisions on both project outlines and full applications. In both cases, institutions will receive a summary of comments made as a result of the evaluation.

Institutions will be responsible for ensuring that the necessary interinstitutional and international agreements for a project are in place. CFI reserves the right to review these.