College-Industry Innovation Fund – Stream 2

Guidelines for completing a proposal

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

These guidelines are intended for researchers and institutional research services personnel invited to submit a proposal to the Canada Foundation for Innovation's (CFI) College-Industry Innovation Fund (CIIF) – Stream 2. This stream applies to research infrastructure associated with a grant application to the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada's (NSERC) College and Community Innovation – Build Innovation Enhancement (CCI-Build IE) program. Proposals will only be accepted from institutions invited to submit a proposal following the review of the Letter of Intent for the CCI-Build IE program. Proposals must be submitted through the CFI Awards Management System (CAMS). Links to the technical instructions for using CAMS, and other useful resources, are listed below.

Helpful links

- CIIF – Stream 2 Call for Proposals
- Getting started with CAMS

On-line submission of a CIIF – Stream 2 proposal

The steps necessary to submit a proposal are summarized in Figure 1 below.
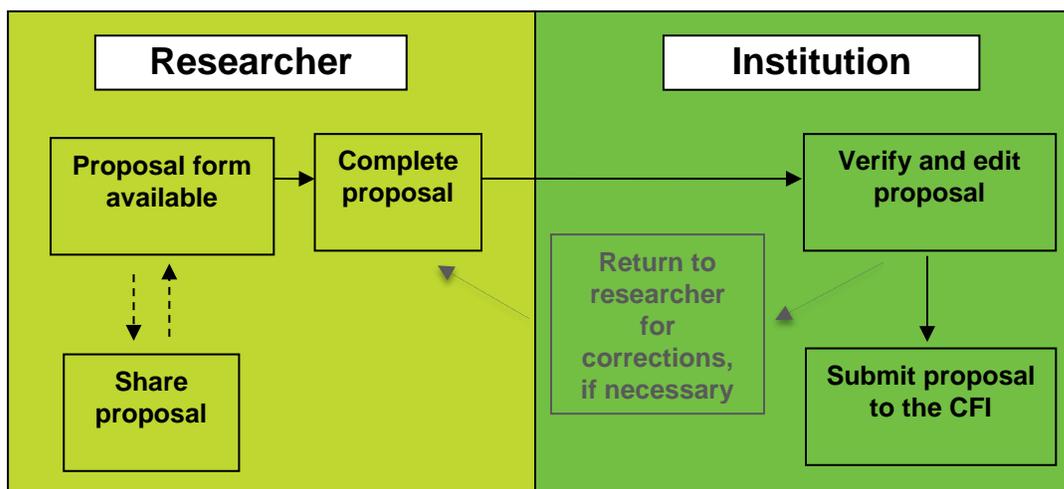
Figure 1 – Proposal submission process

Creating an account
Researchers must first create an account by following the instructions on the CAMS website. Once the account is created, researchers can sign in to CAMS and access the researcher dashboard where they will be able to access all forms and information necessary for managing CFI proposals and awards.

Creating a new proposal when the form becomes available
From the CAMS researcher dashboard, researchers can create proposals for all CFI funds. In this case, "College-Industry Innovation Fund — Funding for research infrastructure associated

with a CCI-Build IE grant application" should be selected. The initiator automatically becomes the project leader of the newly created proposal. Once essential information (project title, applicant institution and language of proposal) has been provided, they will be able to save the proposal and return to it at a later date. To facilitate the merge process of the CCI-Build IE full application and the CFI proposal, both components should display the same project leader name and project title.

Sharing a proposal
Key participants will automatically have read-only access to the proposal through their researcher dashboard. (See Chapter 3 for more information on key participants.) The project leader may share the proposal with other CAMS account holders (e.g. the institution's CFI liaison) through the project sharing module. The project leader can give different levels of access — from read access to update access — to other users. If the project leader shares access with a user who also has access to the institutional dashboard in CAMS, that user will need to first click on "Researcher dashboard" in the left navigation bar before they can access the proposal.

Completing a proposal
The project leader (or their delegate) should complete all sections of the proposal as outlined in Chapter 3.

Once all sections of the proposal are completed and validated by the CAMS system, the project leader sets the Notice of Intent to "complete" through the researcher dashboard thereby making it available to the institution for approval and submission to the CFI.

Once the proposal has been submitted to the institution, the project leader will be able to read it, but will no longer be able to modify its content.

| Action	Proposal status
Project leader creates proposal	In progress
Project leader completes proposal	Completed by researcher
Institutional administrators verify the proposal	Verified by institution
Institutional administrator submits the proposal to the CFI	Submitted to the CFI
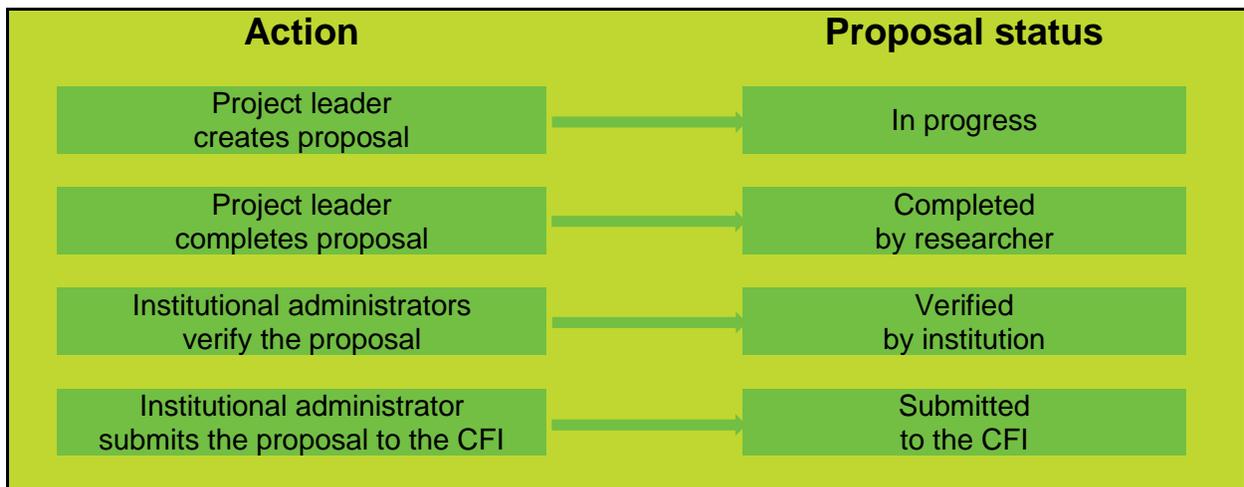
Figure 2 – Proposal statuses

Verifying and editing a proposal
This step is done by institutional administrators through the institutional dashboard where they have access to any proposal created by researchers from their institution.

Once the project leader has submitted the proposal to the institution, institutional administrators should verify its content and edit it if necessary through their institutional dashboard. Institutional administrators will also have the option to send the proposal back to the project leader for modifications.

Submitting a proposal to the CFI
The verified proposal can now be submitted to the CFI by an institutional administrator with submission privileges through the institutional dashboard. Once the proposal has been submitted to the CFI, institutional administrators will be able to read it, but cannot modify its content.

Colleges are also required to send a proposal submission letter, signed by an authorized signatory, to the CFI by the proposal submission deadline (see Chapter 4 for more information on the submission process). We will provide the completed CIIF – Stream 2 proposals to NSERC, where they will be combined with the full CCI-Build IE applications for a joint review.

CHAPTER 2 - GUIDELINES FOR ATTACHMENTS

Electronic forms
Proposals for CIIF – Stream 2 must be completed and submitted to the CFI through CAMS.

Conformance with instructions for proposal preparation
It is important that all proposals conform to the instructions provided on the electronic proposal form as well as those in this guide. It is strongly recommended that the forms be carefully reviewed prior to submission to the CFI to ensure completeness and compliance with the guidelines.

Pagination
CAMS will automatically paginate proposals submitted to the CFI. Attachments *should not* be individually paginated prior to upload to the electronic system.

Page formatting
Expert reviewers and the CCI-Build IE review committee assess the electronic versions of the proposals. It is therefore imperative that proposals be properly and consistently formatted. Attachments should be formatted in a standard, single-column layout on an 8.5" x 11" page. Avoid using a two-column or landscape format since it may cause difficulties when reading the document electronically.

Legibility is of paramount importance and should take precedence in the selection of an appropriate font for use in the proposal form. **You are strongly encouraged to use a 12-point, black-coloured font and single line spacing (six lines per inch) with no condensed type or spacing.**

Additionally, the CFI expects attachments to conform to the following guidelines:

- Header: Indicate the lead institution in the top left, the title of the section in the middle and the project number on the top right of each page.
- Footer: Do not include any information in the footer as this area will be used for automatic page numbering.
- Page margin: Insert a margin of no less than 2.5 centimetres (1 inch) around the page. The header may be within the margin.
- File format and size: Only PDF files may be uploaded. Documents in other formats should be converted to PDF prior to upload and should not be encrypted or password-protected. The file size must not exceed twenty megabytes (20 MB).

Adherence to the page formatting guidelines and requirements noted above is necessary to maintain legibility for reviewers and to ensure that no applicant has an unfair advantage by using smaller type, line spacing or margins to provide more text in the proposal. Non-compliance with the above recommendation may result in the CFI returning the proposal for further revision.

CHAPTER 3 - PROPOSAL STRUCTURE

The proposal should clearly present the merits of the proposed CIIF project. Sufficient information should be provided to enable reviewers to evaluate the proposal in accordance with the assessment criterion established by the CFI.

The CIIF – Stream 2 proposal consists of four separate CAMS modules:

- **Project module**: Provides information about the proposed project and how it meets the objectives and criteria of the CIIF – Stream 2 competition, as well as a budget justification for the infrastructure items requested in the finance module;
- **Collaborating institutions module**: Identifies other CFI-eligible institutions that will receive requested infrastructure, if applicable.
- **Finance module**: Provides information pertaining to the budgetary details of the proposal and a budget justification for the infrastructure items requested.
- **Suggested reviewers module**: Identifies individuals who are qualified to provide an informed and impartial review of the proposal.

The online forms will dictate the maximum number of characters that can be included in each section and the page limits for uploaded files.

Project module
The project module consists of the following sections:

- Project information
- Key participants
- Assessment criterion and budget justification (attachment)
- Financial resources for operation and maintenance
- Performance indicators

Project information
The project information section captures basic information about the project such as the title, applicant institution and keywords.

Key participants
List the key participants (up to five) included in the CCI-Build IE proposal and their affiliations. To be consistent with the CCI-Build IE proposal, the CFI expects the same key participants to be identified in the CFI proposal as the ones indicated in the CCI-Build IE proposal.

Key participants must have a CAMS account to be included on a proposal. Creating a CAMS account can be done through the CAMS sign-in page. Once a key participant is added to a proposal, they will receive an email invitation to participate in the proposal. Before the proposal is submitted to the CFI by the institution, all key participants need to agree to participate by signing into CAMS and accepting participation in the proposal from their researcher dashboard. Once they have accepted participation, the key participants will automatically have read-only access to the proposal through their researcher dashboard.

Assessment criterion (maximum 18 pages)
For this section of the online form, upload a PDF document that contains key information on how the proposal meets the objectives and the established assessment criterion for the CIIF – Stream 2 competition. Ensure that the document follows the guidelines on format, spacing and font use detailed in Chapter 2 of this document.

The assessment criterion is associated with a number of aspects that you must address in the proposal. Failure to address all of the aspects will lead to a lower rating.
If an aspect is not applicable to the proposed facility, this should be clearly stated in the proposal.

The attachment allows you maximum flexibility to address the criterion, including through the use of figures or diagrams where appropriate. The allocation of pages to address the different aspects of the criterion standard is at your discretion, up to the total page limit.

Infrastructure (including budget justification)
Criterion standard:

- Existing applied research capacity will be further enhanced by the requested infrastructure and associated institutional commitments.
- The requested infrastructure plays an essential role in creating and enhancing collaborations with industrial partners.
- The infrastructure will be optimally used and maintained to ensure continued collaborations with, and relevance to, the partners.

Each of the following aspects must be addressed:

- By referring to the individual items (including item number) listed in the finance module, demonstrate that the requested infrastructure is required for the applied research activities.
- Describe how the institution's existing applied research capacity will be enhanced by the requested infrastructure.
- Demonstrate how the infrastructure is: relevant to industry; essential for creating and enhancing collaborations with industrial partners; and, versatile enough to respond to their immediate and long-term applied research needs.
- Describe the overall expertise of the team's key participants regarding the operation of the infrastructure requested, including previous experience with similar equipment.
- By referring to the financial resources for operation and maintenance section, indicate how the infrastructure will be efficiently used and maintained in the short term and sustained over the long term. Specify the institutional commitments towards its sustainability.

Additional aspect to address, if applicable:

- For proposals that include construction or renovation costs, you must also include the following information:

  o A description of the entire space, including common elements (e.g. corridors, washrooms, etc.). The description should include the location(s), size and nature (wet lab, dry lab, office, greenhouse, etc.) of the space;

  o A breakdown of the overall cost of the construction or renovation project, categorized by cost component (i.e. direct, soft and contingency costs); and,

  o A timeline identifying key dates for the various stages of the proposed renovation or construction.

Financial resources for operation and maintenance
This section of the project module captures the annual costs and sources of committed support to ensure the effective operations and maintenance of the infrastructure for the first five years after implementation.

In cases where the useful life[1] of some of the infrastructure items requested is longer or shorter than five years, the assessment criterion section of the proposal should provide complementary information regarding the operating and maintenance needs for these items over their useful life.

In the table, do not include costs related to research and/or technology development. If funding sources include the CFI's Infrastructure Operating Fund (IOF), list these under the institutional contribution category.

Performance indicators
Provide projected values for each indicator for the timeframe indicated.

Collaborating institutions module
If applicable, identify the institutions eligible for CFI funding collaborating in this project. A collaborating institution is one that receives part of the infrastructure.

Do not include the lead institution identified in the project information section in this list.

Finance module
The finance module consists of the following sections:

- Cost of individual items
- Floor plans (if applicable)
- Contributions from eligible partners
- Infrastructure utilization
- Overview of infrastructure project funding (generated automatically)

For each section of the finance module, you should ensure that all requested information has been entered into the relevant fields.

The tables in the section called "Overview of infrastructure project funding" will be automatically populated with information taken from the other sections of the finance module. Note that the

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[1]The useful life of the research infrastructure is considered to be the period of time over which the infrastructure is expected to provide benefits and be usable for its intended purpose as per the proposal, factoring in normal repairs and maintenance.

amount requested from the CFI is calculated based on the difference between the total contributions from eligible partners and the total eligible costs.

Cost of individual items
We recommend that you bundle items into functional groupings when completing the cost of individual items section. The infrastructure (including budget justification) section should, however, detail and provide justification for each item within a group.

List only the eligible infrastructure acquisition and development costs as outlined in Section 4.6 of the CFI *Policy and program guide*. List the full cost of each item or functional groupings. Retain documentation (price lists, quotes, etc.) so that you can provide it to the CFI upon request.

Please note:

- If the infrastructure will be used for purposes other than research or technology development, list only pro-rated research or technology development costs.
- The total eligible costs must include taxes (net of credits received), shipping and installation. However, taxes must not be calculated on the in-kind portion.
- When preparing budget estimates, you must follow your existing institutional policies and procedures. Costs included in this budget must be close estimates of fair-market value. Refer to section 6.5 of the CFI *Policy and program guide* for information on how in-kind contributions must be assessed.

Floor plans (if applicable)
For proposals that include construction or renovation involving multiple rooms, please provide floor plans of the proposed area(s), showing the location of the infrastructure and the scale of the plans. The floor plans must be legible when printed in black and white on standard letter size paper (8.5" x 11").

Note: The floor plans will be a separate attachment and not included in the 18-page maximum for the assessment criterion and budget justification section of the proposal.

Contributions from eligible partners
List all contributions from eligible partners as outlined in Section 4.8 of the CFI *Policy and program guide*. Do not include the amount requested from the CFI. Provide the partner name and type, as well as a breakdown of contributions (cash and in-kind) for each eligible partner. You are encouraged to bundle all expected in-kind contributions from vendors into a single line. If partner contributions are expected but have not yet been confirmed, outline the plans for securing these funds.

Infrastructure utilization
This section of the finance module captures the use of the requested infrastructure for CFI-eligible and non-eligible purposes and any applicable prorating of costs.

Suggested reviewers module
Identify a minimum of six reviewers who are especially well-qualified to review the proposal and who are not in a position of conflict of interest. A conflict of interest may be deemed to exist or perceived as such when reviewers:

- Are a relative or close friend, or have a personal relationship with the project leader or one of the key participants;
- Are in a position to gain or lose financially/materially from the funding of the proposal;
- Have had long-standing scientific or personal differences with the project leader or one of the key participants;
- Are currently affiliated with the project leader's or the key participants' institutions, organizations or companies — including research hospitals and research institutes;
- Are closely professionally affiliated with the project leader or one of the key participants, as a result of having in the last six years:
    o Frequent and regular interactions with the project leader or one of the key participants in the course of their duties at their department, institution, organization or company;
    o Been a supervisor or a trainee of the project leader or one of the key participants;
    o Collaborated, published or shared funding with the project leader or one of the key participants, or have plans to do so in the immediate future; or,
    o Been employed by the lead institution; and/or,
- Feel for any reason unable to provide an impartial review of the proposal.

Note: The decision whether or not to use the suggestions remains with the CFI.

CHAPTER 4 – SUBMISSION PROCESS

Proposals for CIIF – Stream 2 must be submitted through CAMS. In addition, a cover letter (see Appendix 1 for template), including a list of all proposals on which the institution is the administrative institution, must be submitted to the CFI. The cover letter must be signed by the President or an authorized signatory as per the institutional agreement and sent to the CFI no later than the proposal submission deadline.

The CFI does not require hardcopies of proposals. Scanned cover letters including the list of proposals must be emailed to Elaine Salmon at elaine.salmon@innovation.ca

Appendix 1: TEMPLATE – CIIF PROPOSAL SUBMISSION COVER LETTER TO THE CFI

Mohamad Nasser-Eddine
Director, Programs
Canada Foundation for Innovation
450 - 230 Queen Street
Ottawa ON
K1P 5E4

Re: Confirmation and institutional approval of proposals to the Canada Foundation for Innovation's (CFI) College-Industry Innovation Fund — Stream 2 competition

Dear Dr. Nasser-Eddine,

I am pleased to approve the submission of this proposal:

Project number:

Project leader:

Project title:

In signing this letter, I confirm that the institution:

- Agrees to and accepts the conditions governing CFI funding, as outlined in the *Policy and programs guide* and the institutional agreement;
- Accepts its commitment to ensure appropriate resources are provided for the operation and maintenance of the proposed CFI-funded research infrastructure over its useful life (i.e., the period of time over which the infrastructure is expected to provide benefits and be usable for its intended purpose, factoring in normal repairs and maintenance); and,
- Has previously, or as an attachment to this letter, submitted to the CFI its most recent strategic research plan.

Sincerely,

_____   _____
President (or authorized signatory)   Signature

_____   _____
Institution   Date