
VP UPDATE

A periodic update from the Vice Presidents of the Canada Foundation for Innovation

September 2015

In this issue:

- CFI signs agreement with Government of Canada for funding from Budget 2015
- Pan-Canadian consultation on funding architecture launched
- Draft call for consultation posted for Major Science Initiatives Fund
- Infrastructure use study now available online
- CFI team welcomes new Senior Programs Officer; search for Director, Programs in full swing
- 99 percent of expected Project progress reports now received

CFI SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH GOVERNMENT OF CANADA FOR FUNDING FROM BUDGET 2015

Agreement breaks down the funding allocated to the CFI in last April's Federal Budget

We have recently signed an agreement with the Government of Canada defining the broad parameters of the use of for the funds allocated to the CFI in the April 2015 Federal Budget. CFI management wishes to thank officials at Industry Canada for their collaboration and tremendous effort in securing the required governmental approvals and finalizing the agreement so quickly. The funds will be allocated as follows:

- **\$258,000,000*** for the [John R. Evans Leaders Fund \(JELF\)](#) for a three-year period covering 2017–18, 2018–19 and 2019–20. This represents yearly investments of approximately \$86 million (\$66 million in research infrastructure and \$20 million in generated Infrastructure Operating Funds) under JELF over this period;
- **\$552,000,000*** for the next [Innovation Fund](#) competition, to be launched in early 2016, with funding decisions expected in June 2017. This represents an investment of approximately \$425 million in research infrastructure and \$127 million in Infrastructure Operating Funds in the next competition;

- **\$75,000,000*** for future [Cyberinfrastructure Initiative](#) competitions;
- **Up to \$45,000,000*** for future [College-Industry Innovation Fund](#) competitions; and,
- **Up to \$400,000,000** for the next [Major Science Initiatives Fund](#) competition covering the five-year period between 2017–18 and 2021–22, with funding decisions expected in September 2016.

*These amounts include Infrastructure Operating Funds.

Pan-Canadian consultation on funding architecture launched

This fall, we will be in listening mode

Over the coming months, we are undertaking a nationwide consultation with research institutions and key CFI stakeholders to assess potential adjustments and improvements to our funds in order to make sure they keep pace with evolving needs and priorities. Your input is invaluable in this process.

How can my institution participate in the consultation?

A discussion paper will be **posted on our website by September 23, 2015** to help stimulate discussions with the community. The paper presents some observations and raises a series of key questions, but we would also like to hear your additional questions and suggestions related to the overarching objectives of the consultation expressed below.

Why a consultation now?

With an agreement now in place with the federal government for the allocation from the 2015 budget, it is an opportune moment to consult the community on **potential adjustments to the CFI's core funding mechanisms**: the [Innovation Fund](#), the [John R. Evans Leaders Fund](#), the [College-Industry Innovation Fund](#), the [Cyberinfrastructure Initiative](#) and the [Infrastructure Operating Fund](#). It is also an ideal time to seek input on a few **key strategic issues** of relevance to the research community and other CFI stakeholders. Please note that we are currently conducting a separate targeted consultation on the [Major Science Initiatives Fund](#).

What's the purpose of the consultation?

The purpose of the consultation is to:

- identify opportunities for better alignment with institutional and community needs;
- make adjustments to the design of our funds to address evolving priorities; and,
- encourage the development of research infrastructure proposals of the highest quality, in order to better enhance the capacity of institutions and their researchers to conduct world-class research and technology development.

In particular, the results of the 2015 Innovation Fund competition raised a few important questions, specifically about the low participation and success rate of smaller institutions and institutions in Atlantic Canada. These consultation meetings will be critical in helping us determine how our suite of funds can best meet the needs of the full spectrum of institutions across the country.

CFI staff will make an effort to meet as many stakeholders as possible over the next two months, including a series of meetings across the country and some webinars to be scheduled shortly. We invite you to submit your comments in writing **by November 30, 2015 to consultation@innovation.ca**.

You may recall that the 2013 pan-Canadian CFI consultation led to a number of small but significant improvements to our fund architecture and design. For example, under the Innovation Fund we provided an opportunity for institutions to request additional funding to cover the incremental costs of managing multi-institutional proposals, larger JELF proposals (>\$400K) were integrated into the regular proposal submission cycle, and the College-Industry Innovation Fund proposal maximum CFI request was increased to \$1M. Changes like these underscore the importance and value of the feedback you provide and the suggestions you put forward during these consultations.

DRAFT CALL FOR CONSULTATION POSTED FOR MAJOR SCIENCE INITIATIVES FUND

Funding decisions expected in September 2016

We recently posted a [draft call for consultation for the MSI Fund](#) on our website. We expect to make funding decisions in September 2016 to provide sufficient time for administrative institutions to finalize the MSI award in advance of March 31, 2017 (the end of the first MSI Fund award period). This would allow facilities that are currently

supported under the MSI Fund and are successful in this new competition to receive continued support without interruption.

INFRASTRUCTURE USE STUDY NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

Report finds the CFI infrastructure is well used by a diverse community of researchers

As described in the [July 2015 issue of VP Update](#), we recently completed an in-depth study to examine the level of use of CFI-funded infrastructure, as well as the factors influencing usage profiles. The study confirmed that CFI-funded infrastructure is being fully used by broad and diverse communities of researchers and that project leaders and principal users are conscientious stewards of the infrastructure and endeavor to ensure its optimal use. We'd like to thank the researchers and institutional representatives who participated in the project. The full report, [Usage of CFI-funded infrastructure](#), is now available online.

CFI TEAM WELCOMES NEW SENIOR PROGRAMS OFFICER; SEARCH FOR DIRECTOR, PROGRAMS IN FULL SWING

Staffing changes come partly as a result of the anticipated additional program activities

We are pleased to announce that we've recently added a new Senior Programs Officer to our team. This addition was made in response to the anticipated increased workload and programs activities over the coming years. Mireille Labrie is well known to many of you, with seven years under her belt at the CFI, primarily as a Programs Officer in the John R. Evans Leaders Fund team. Prior to joining the CFI, Mireille worked in the Research Office of l'Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières. I know you will join me in welcoming Mireille in her new role, which she took on in July.

In the meantime, our search for the next Director, Programs progresses well.

99 PERCENT OF EXPECTED PROJECT PROGRESS REPORTS NOW RECEIVED

Data from the reports essential for accountability

We are happy to report that as of August 1, 2015, 1,801 of the expected 1,817 *Project progress reports* (PPRs) have been submitted. The submission rate (99.1 percent) is simply exceptional and underscores the importance you place in working collaboratively with the CFI. As you know, we rely on the data collected through the PPRs to develop our annual [Report on results](#), one of the key accountability tools that we use to tell the positive story of the outputs and outcomes of CFI-funded research infrastructure.