



About POMS

Over the years the CFI has made substantial investments in platforms-type infrastructure through both targeted initiatives (e.g. National Platforms Fund) or core CFI programs (e.g. Leading Edge/New Initiatives funds). These projects have experienced significant difficulties in demonstrating their contributions with the CFI's current reporting tools. In view of these challenges, the CFI developed a flexible customizable framework – the Platform Outcome Measurement Study (POMS). The methodology was developed to capture the outcomes and impacts of large-scale, specialized, purpose-built research infrastructure that serve specific needs of the Canadian research community while considering the uniqueness of each platform.

The POMS builds on the successes and learning from 28 outcome measurement studies (OMS) conducted by the CFI between 2007 and 2011. The OMS is an innovative assessment tool developed by the CFI and that has been an important component of the CFI's approach to performance measurement and accountability¹.

THE PLATFORM OUTCOME MEASUREMENT STUDY

The platform OMS (POMS) assessment is structured around an in-depth questionnaire which aims to explore the extent to which funding provided by the CFI and its partners as well as the resulting platform infrastructure have had a transformative impact on the Canadian research landscape. From this in-depth questionnaire, the platform develops a report that captures with numbers and narrative their outcomes and impacts in three core categories: Capacity Building, Leadership and Research Enabled, and Extrinsic Benefits. The governance and management of the platform are also examined because of their influence on the outcomes and impacts of the platform.

The platform report is validated by a visiting panel of subject matter experts. This expert panel subsequently produces a report that summarizes their assessment, discussions and recommendations. Their findings and conclusions inform the CFI and its funding partners of challenges and lessons learned that can be applied to current or future programs, and achievements that help demonstrate to the CFI Board and other key stakeholders the extent to which the CFI is achieving its mandate. Likewise, the views, conclusions and

¹ Tremblay G, Zohar S, Bravo J, Potsepp P, Barker M. (2010) The Canada Foundation for Innovation's outcome measurement study: a pioneering approach to research evaluation, *Research Evaluation*, 19(5), p.333–345.



recommendations set forth by the expert panel should provide the platform with input and lessons learned for improving their performance, finding solutions to challenges and charting their way forward.

The POMS is different in objective and approach to typical merit-review processes. Funding is not affected by the findings of these visits, nor are they used to rank projects and institutions.

The POMS also explicitly recognizes the uniqueness of platforms. As a result, discussions are held around the in-depth questionnaire developed by the CFI and that serves as a common framework to assess the progress and outcomes of platforms. These discussions serve to tailor some of the parameters and questions to the specificities and constraints of the selected platform. Similarly, careful consideration of attribution is implicit. The relative contribution of funders and other factors exogenous to the CFI is coupled with longitudinal analysis in order to document attribution realistically and in context. Taking into account this reality, representatives from other major funding stakeholders (e.g. tri-agencies, provincial governments) are invited to attend the expert panel meeting as observers with the purpose of maximizing the value of the effort required of the platforms and the CFI.