

**NATIONAL PLATFORMS FUND
KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT RESOURCES
FOR THE HUMAN AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The objective of the National Platforms Fund is to provide research infrastructure, resources, and services that meet the needs of many research areas, and that may require periodic reinvestments to stay competitive internationally because of the nature of the technologies. To achieve this objective, a pan-Canadian approach or strategy that builds on and transcends the priorities and development plans of single institutions is needed, and requires the support of a number of partners and agencies. Knowledge management for the human and social sciences has been identified as meeting the purpose and intent of this funding mechanism.

In an era characterized by an unprecedented explosion of knowledge, effective knowledge management resources are becoming invaluable research tools. These enable researchers in the human and social sciences to tackle research questions, both new and old, in different and innovative ways, thereby enhancing their potential to build knowledge and expertise on key social, cultural and economic issues. It is by addressing real life issues that researchers in these fields can best contribute to the well-being of Canadians. These tools also offer the potential of not only transforming the mode of production of knowledge but as well of enhancing the efficacy, efficiency and, ultimately, the economy of the entire research enterprise in these fields of science.

Electronic publication services, site licensing initiatives, information repositories, web-based dissemination systems, and other such tools, aim to preserve, provide access to and disseminate substantial information to researchers located in a number of regions across the country, each of which is characterized by its particular situation and needs. Ensuring the research community has access to such information will allow it to bring all of its intellectual capital to bear on future opportunities and challenges.

Others have also recognized the need for new knowledge management resources, including for example the U.S National Science Foundation and the American Council of Learned Societies in their recent investigations on the need for new cyberinfrastructure.

ELIGIBILITY TO APPLY

A key requirement is that any proposal to the National Platforms Fund be submitted by one or more CFI eligible institutions.

ELIGIBLE COSTS

The CFI will provide up to \$25 million to support the costs (capital as well as operations and maintenance) of knowledge management projects in the human and social sciences. Specifically, the CFI will support no more than 40% of the capital cost of a project, with the institutions being responsible for identifying the sources of funding for the remaining 60 percent.

Institutions may also opt to use a portion of the \$25 Million to support operations and maintenance costs through the CFI's Infrastructure Operating Fund (IOF). The IOF will be equivalent to no more than 30% of the amount provided by the CFI to support capital costs.

As they prepare their application, applicants are expected to communicate with funding partners to discuss any potential funding requests and the eligibility of costs.

THE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The assessment of the proposals will be carried out on the two interdependent themes below as needed. If proposals have not been the subject of previous funding, then the assessment will only be based on the second theme.

- 1 Impacts of past investments on the part of CFI and/or other partners;
- 2 Pan-Canadian Strategy.

1. Impacts of Past Investments on the Part of CFI and/or other Partners

1.1 Results and outcomes of past investments. Past investments:

- enabled leading-edge and multidisciplinary research that would not have been possible to undertake without the research resources;
- enabled institutions and their researchers to gain a competitive advantage nationally and internationally;
- attracted and retained excellent researchers;
- enhanced the training of highly qualified personnel through research;
- strengthened partnerships among institutions and enhanced the efficiency and effectiveness of research resources;
- provided resources that are used to their full potential;
- contributed to bringing benefits to the country in terms of improvements to society, the quality of life, health and the environment or contributed to job creation and economic growth.

2. Pan-Canadian Strategy

2.1 The need for knowledge management resources to support quality research in the human and social sciences. The strategy will:

- enable research with the potential of being internationally competitive, innovative, and transformative, and that could not be pursued otherwise;
- meet the needs of institutions and their researchers effectively and efficiently;

- provide a high degree of accessibility and usability;
- be potentially scalable, extendable or otherwise upgradable in the future, as applicable.

2.2 Effectiveness of the proposed infrastructure in contributing to strengthening the national capacity for innovation in the human and social sciences. The strategy will:

- build regional, provincial, and national capacity for innovation and for international competitiveness;
- capitalize on the complementarities and synergies of initiatives across the country;
- combine the required expertise to ensure researchers have access to unprecedented resources and support to conduct their research;
- attract and retain the best researchers or those with the highest potential;
- create a stimulating and enriched environment for training highly qualified personnel;
- strengthen multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches, collaborations among researchers, and partnerships among institutions, sectors, or regions;
- ensure effective governance both at the national and regional levels, including the management, accessibility, operation and maintenance of the knowledge management resources on an ongoing basis;
- address all costs related to long-term sustainability issues.

2.3 The potential benefits to Canada of the research or technology development enabled by the knowledge management resources. The activities enabled by the strategy will:

- support improvements to society, quality of life, health, and the environment, including the creation of new policies in these areas;
- contribute to job creation and economic growth in Canada.

The proposals must meet all criteria, to a degree appropriate their respective size and complexity, in order to be funded or partially funded

THE PROPOSALS

The proposals must be submitted by **May 31, 2006**. The main body of each proposal will consist of up to 20 pages of free text, using regular 8.5”X11” page size, and no less than a 10-point font. Additional pages may be used for case-studies and budget (see below). Pictures and diagrams may be included within the number of pages permitted.

The applicants should structure the proposal to provide information that will address, if applicable, the four (4) assessment criteria (i.e. those listed in the previous section). Specifically, the proposals must comprise a section of no less than five pages for each criterion. The applicants will however have the flexibility to determine the

structure and the sequence of the sections of the application. Relevant information should include but is not limited to:

- a description of the process used to determine the current and future needs of researchers for knowledge management resources in the human and social sciences across Canada;
- the types of research enabled by the knowledge management resources. In this regard, the applicants should append case studies describing the type of leading-edge research that they would be able to undertake with the research resources being acquired. Such case studies would not count as part of the 20 pages, but should amount to no more than 15 pages in total;
- a management plan addressing all factors necessary to ensure the optimal operation, functionality, and sustainability of the requested knowledge management infrastructure. A description of the governance structure should also be included;
- an implementation plan (what/where/when), including a risk mitigation plan, and a detailed overall budget. The applicants should breakdown the budget by region and timing of investments, as appropriate;

Only the 'Financial Information' module of a regular application needs to be completed for the National Platforms Fund. Note however that there is no page limit for the budget justification attachment. The main body of the proposal will consist of up to 20 pages of free text as described above. For further details on the submission process, applicants should contact CFI staff directly (email: alain.malette@innovation.ca telephone: (613) 943-1248). A paper copy of the proposal, including signatures from the Presidents [or their designates] of all participating institutions, should also be submitted.

THE REVIEW PROCESS

The proposals will be verified for completeness, and additional material may be requested to ensure that all required information is available for review.

An international review committee will be tasked with reviewing the proposals to assess their respective merits against the assessment criteria. The review committee may meet with proponents to obtain further clarification and/or reassurances on aspects of the proposal.

THE FUNDING DECISION

It is expected that decisions would be made by December 2006.