



Canada Foundation for Innovation
Fondation canadienne pour l'innovation



A DECADE OF RESULTS
THROUGH INNOVATION
UNE DÉCENNIE DE RÉALISATIONS
GRÂCE À L'INNOVATION

Institutional Progress Reports 2007:

An Analysis of Communications Activities

Prepared by:
CFI External Relations and Communications
October 2007

INSTITUTIONAL PROGRESS REPORTS 2007: An Analysis of Communication Activities

1 - Introduction

Over the past 10 years, governments across the country have increased their commitment to research and development, investing significant amounts of public money to create programs and organizations aimed at strengthening Canada's capacity to compete in the global, knowledge-based economy. As a result of these commitments, universities, colleges, and other research institutions have benefited from an unprecedented surge of interest from government decision-makers, the media, and the public.

An important component of being entrusted with significant public funds is the responsibility to be open, transparent, and accountable to the public regarding the impact and outcomes of its investments in research infrastructure. The CFI works closely with research institutions of all sizes across the country to communicate the impact of its investments to the Canadian public. Additionally, the research institutions themselves are also expected to communicate the results of investments to their researchers, partner institutions, and communities, as well as to demonstrate the benefits of their research to Canadians.

Since 2004, the CFI has been collecting, by way of the Institutional Progress Reports submitted annually by funded institutions, data that measure the breadth and success of communications activities related to CFI-funded projects that took place over the course of the year. Institutions are also asked to forecast activities planned for the upcoming year. This information is helpful in a number of important ways. It lets the CFI know what is happening at individual institutions and, through this analysis, helps the CFI identify trends and tendencies in the overall communications efforts of its partners.

Ultimately, the purpose of this analysis is to:

- further the CFI's public accountability obligations by measuring the extent to which the impacts of its investments are being communicated to the public;
- allow the CFI's External Relations and Communications team to gauge its success in participating in and/or gaining visibility from the activities of the institutions it funds, as well as identify opportunities and mechanisms for improved collaboration with the institutions with respect to those activities;
- allow the CFI to inform the institutions it funds of the national communication landscape in which they operate, and help them identify ways in which they can contribute to the improvement of overall efforts.

2- Data Collection

2.1 - Procedures

All institutions eligible for CFI funding who have had projects finalized within the past five years are required to submit an Institutional Progress Report by June of each year. Like applications to the CFI, this data-collection exercise is administered through an on-line, electronic process. The data is subsequently compiled and analysed by the CFI's External Relations and Communications team, in cooperation with the CFI's Outcome and Assessment team.

In addition to the data collected by way of the institutional reports, the following analysis also makes use of data tracked by the CFI itself. The CFI systematically monitors and archives a wide variety of information related to the projects it funds. This includes newspapers, magazines, and university press publications, press releases issued by CFI-funded institutions, information related to events organized by CFI-funded institutions, and stories produced by the CFI for its various communications products.

While monitoring activities are not exhaustive—there certainly exist articles published, press releases issued, and events organized of which the CFI is not aware—the data collected is indeed sufficient to allow the CFI to draw conclusions about overall trends in communication activities emerging across the country. This, ultimately, is the goal of this analysis.

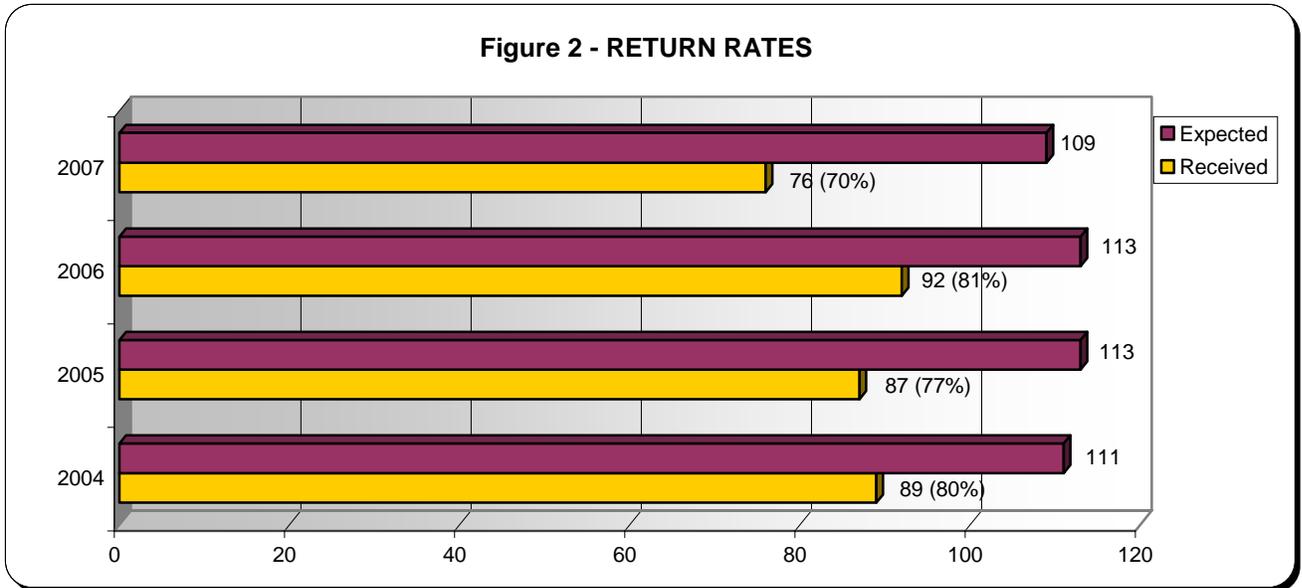
2.2 - Accuracy

It is important to point out that the much of the data collected for this analysis are self-reported by the institutions. Due to their volume, there is no immediate verification of the accuracy of the data by the CFI. It is worthwhile noting, however, that there is little incentive for institutions to provide false information in the reports, as these have no bearing on potential future funding. Rather, inaccuracies might arise from a lack of administrative capacity to fill out forms comprehensively and track numbers, particularly at large institutions that have multiple communication departments.

It is important to note that the numbers received by the CFI over the past four years reveal an apparent trend of over-estimation on behalf of the reporting institutions. According to the numbers reported, the CFI should have seen in 2006 an average of 2 press releases, 1.6 events, and 7.2 news items per day, 365 days a year (and this taking only 70% of institutions eligible for CFI-funding into account). Compare these to actual numbers for 2006 (activities of which the CFI was aware): 0.3 press releases, 0.2 events, and approximately 3 news items per day (see Section 5 for more details). While there are certainly many activities taking place across the country without the CFI's knowledge, the scale of disconnect between the numbers reported by institutions and those observed by the CFI calls into question the integrity of the data under review. As a result, data collection procedures are currently under review by the CFI, with a view to significantly improving the accuracy and value of the information collected.

2.3 - Sample

In 2007, the CFI received a total of 76 reports out of 109 that were expected, for a return rate of 70%. This was down 11% from 2006, when the CFI received 92 out of an expected 113, for a return rate of 81% (see Figure 2). This is both the lowest rate of return, and the smallest sample size observed by the CFI since data collection began in 2004. The relatively low number of reports received does have an impact on the effectiveness of this analysis: i) it makes it comparative assessments from year to year more difficult, and ii) it renders the identification of trends and tendencies, in a variety of areas, less accurate. These realities are taken into account throughout the report.

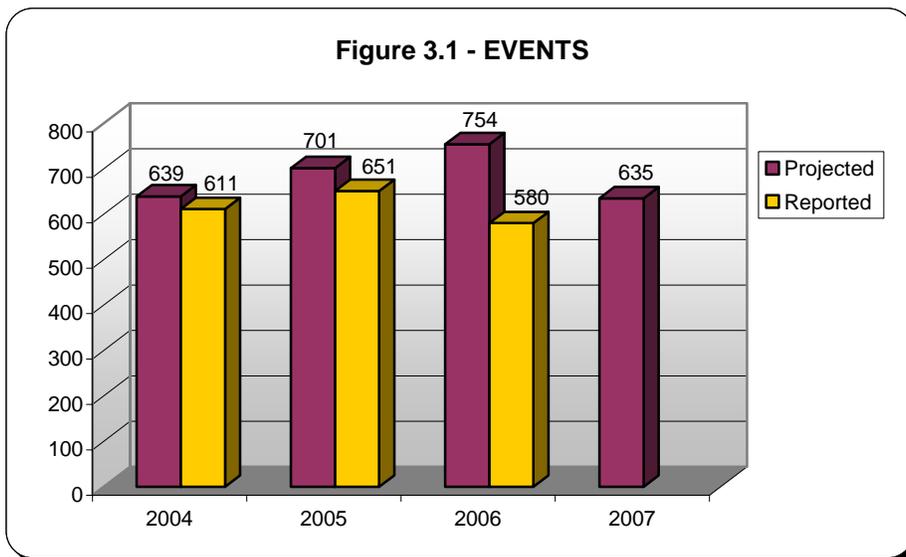


3 - Communication Activities

Below are details on the three main types of communication activities that institutions are invited to report on. The figures below identify the amount of activity, by type, projected for 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007, as well as the amount of activity reported as having occurred in 2004, 2005, and 2006. It is important to note that institutions are invited to report on only those activities that are related to projects that have received funding from the CFI.

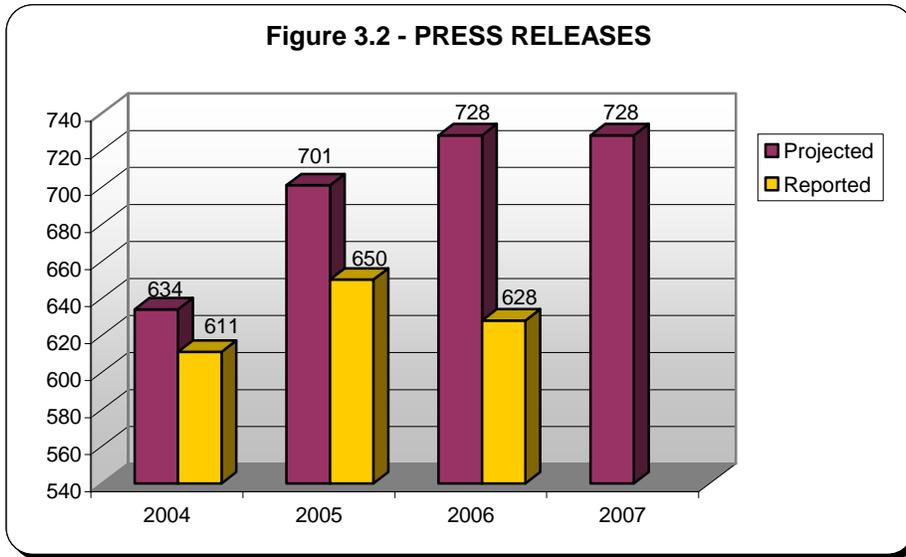
3.1 - Events

Includes receptions, open houses, groundbreakings, launches, openings, institutional funding announcements, impact or outcome announcements, conferences, symposia, news conferences, and other events.



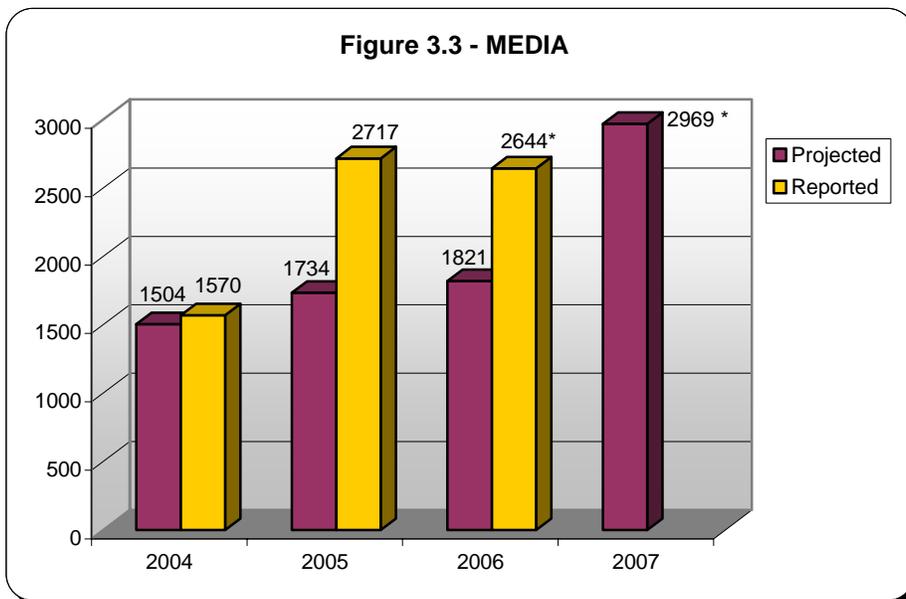
3.2 - Press releases

Includes press releases issued locally, nationally, and in conjunction with the CFI to support national funding announcements.



3.3 - Media

Includes newspaper, magazine, and university press articles, articles published in online sources, articles submitted for publication (including in the CFI's online magazine), and articles published in other non-academic publications. Additionally, starting in 2007, institutions were asked to report on TV and radio items related to CFI-funded projects. The addition of this new category explains the significant increase in activities projected for 2007 compared to those projected for 2006.



* Includes additional data on TV and radio items. This information was not requested prior to 2007.

Some interesting information can be gleaned from the communication activities reported:

- There was a **decrease reported in all categories of activity over the course of 2006**, including those in the Media category despite the addition of TV and Radio items to the data tracked. This drop-off can be explained in part by the smaller sample size.
- The data received in 2007 confirms a trend observed since tracking began with respect to the ranking of activities by quantity of instances, which has remained consistent from year to year. With 2,644 instances reported, **Media was again the most prolific communication vehicle in 2006**, and is projected to remain as such in 2007. This is followed by Press Releases (638 instances) and then by Events (580 instances).
- Data indicates that **institutions were again overambitious in their projections** for 2006 both in terms of Press Release (728 projected vs. 628 reported) and Events (754 projected vs. 580 reported). This is a confirmation of the trend observed every year since tracking began.
- The **trend of underestimation continues to manifest itself in the Media category**. In 2006, 2644 instances were reported versus the 1821 projected for the year, for a 45% discrepancy. This gap, however, is not as wide as that observed in 2005 (which saw a 57% underestimation), particularly if you take into account the fact that TV and radio items are included in the reporting not having been taken into account in the projections. Mitigating this, however, is the fact that projections were received from 92 institutions, while activities reported were received from only 76. Whatever the scope of the underestimation, the trend should not be regarded as negative. Rather, it can arguably be explained by the fact that the majority of the activities that constitute the Media category—newspaper, magazine, and website articles, TV and radio items—are most often generated by third parties (media outlets) and therefore beyond the control of the institutions. The fact that institutions once again underestimated this number indicates that CFI-funded projects are consistently receiving more attention from the media than institutions are anticipating they will. This continuing trend will hopefully reinforce the belief that the research success stories that result from CFI-investments are indeed newsworthy and merit the full attention of the communications staff at funded institutions.
- Finally, an important observation regarding the number of articles reported in the Media category. The 2644 reported averages out to 7.2 news items a day, on par with the data reported in 2006, but up substantially from the 4.3 items a day reported in 2004. Moreover, the data reported in 2007 only take into account information reported by 70% of institutions. The CFI believes, based on its own monitoring activities over the year (more on this below), that the **numbers reported seem implausibly high**. Unfortunately, there is no way of verifying the accuracy of that number, although an estimate calculated by the CFI establishes an average 4 per day as reasonable to expect.

4 - Activities Projected for 2007

Further to the information provided in Section 2, the following table provides a more detailed account of the communication activities projected for the 2007 period, as reported by the institutions. Although these numbers are subject to change, they provide the CFI's External Relations and Communications team with an indication of what to expect for the upcoming year. The table also includes the numbers projected in 2006. Comparing the two projections provides some insight into the shifts of priorities at the institutions.

	National News Release	Regional News Release	News Releases Concurrent to CFI	Newspaper articles	Radio & TV items	Magazine articles	Campus news	Online publications	InnovationCanada.ca	Other publications or articles	Receptions / Open Houses	Groundbreaking / Launch / Opening	Funding Announcements	Impact / Outcome Announcement	Conference / Symposium	News Conferences	Other
2007	244	381	103	1015	502	149	474	573	145	106	132	82	82	64	183	n/a	93
2006	202	340	74	581	n/a	201	486	290	91	172	139	84	71	31	165	47	217
+ / -	+42	+41	+29	+434	n/a	-52	-8	+283	+54	-66	-7	-2	+11	+33	+18	n/a	-125

4.1 – Concurrent news releases

One of the most important statistics in the table above for the purpose of this analysis is that of news releases issued concurrently with the CFI. These typically occur in conjunction with national funding announcements, which the CFI makes following every meeting of its Board of Directors. On the occasion of these national announcements, the CFI looks to the recipient institutions to showcase their individual or collective awards through various communications mechanisms (e.g. media profiles, publications, awards ceremonies, or in this case, news releases). These concurrent announcements provide an opportunity for institutions across Canada, their researchers, and their partners—along with a local member of parliament and the CFI—to showcase the research taking place in their communities.

The number of concurrent press releases projected for 2007 is up significantly from that forecast in 2006 (from 74 to 103, a 39% increase). This is a welcome increase following the unexpected 38% downturn observed in 2006. In fact, 103 concurrent releases is only slightly below the number that the CFI hopes to see in 2007, given the fact that it will be making a total of 5 national announcements:

- 1 announcement of the International Joint Venture Project (which resulted in 1 concurrent release);
- 1 announcement of the National Platforms Fund – Social Sciences and Humanities announcement (which resulted in 2 concurrent releases);
- 3 announcements of the Leaders Opportunity Fund (which involves approximately 40 institutions per announcement, for a total of 120 potential concurrent releases).

Last year's report commented that the CFI was concerned about the underestimation observed 2006, which indicated that institutions were either uninformed about upcoming announcements, or informed but not intending to make a concurrent announcement. Recovery of those numbers in 2007 indicates that the CFI was indeed more effective at informing institutions of occasions anticipated for the upcoming year and the importance of their participation in those. Providing the institutions with more notice and better lead times allows for better planning and execution. All stakeholders – the CFI, the institution, the Government of Canada, etc. – stand to gain from the visibility incurred.

4.2 - Events

The overall number of projected events related to CFI-funded projects is expected to decrease slightly from 785 in 2006 to 634 in 2007. This minor downturn can be accounted by a significant shift (-

125) in the amount of activity reported under the 'other' category. Institutions were asked this year to specify what they understood as 'other.' Examples include public lectures and lab tours. This new requirement may have dissuaded many from simply adding what used to be unqualified number in the 'other' box. Also affecting the decrease was the elimination of a stand alone 'news conference' category. This change in data collection methods was implemented to avoid double counting – most other categories (can) include a news conference component as part of the event. Finally, also affecting the totals is a decrease in the number of institutions reporting (76 in 2007 vs. 92 in 2006).

Balancing the downturns in the above cited categories are projected rises in the 'funding announcements', 'impact/outcome announcement', and 'conference/symposium' categories. These saw a combined increase of 62 events. This is a promising turnaround that CFI would like to see continue. It is these events that provide the CFI, and more importantly the Government of Canada, an opportunity to showcase the actualization of its substantial investments, publicly and through the media. These opportunities are critical in rallying and reinforcing public support for investments in research and research infrastructure. Both the CFI and the institutions stand to gain from increasing these types of activities. The challenge now remains to improve collaboration with the institutions in order to increase the level of activity that raises the visibility of the CFI and its investments (see Section 5 for more details).

5 - Collaborative Communications

Institutions play a critical role in raising the visibility of the CFI. It is at the institutions that facilities are built, that labs are equipped, that research takes place, and that funded projects come to fruition. This frontline status earns the institutions the role of spearheading the bulk of communications efforts related to CFI-sponsored research. And because it is through these efforts that the results of the CFI's investments are publicized, it is critical that the CFI be made aware of and involved in these efforts. Moreover, everyone stands to gain from raising the CFI's profile through institutional communications; only through raising public and political awareness of the benefits of CFI investments can the CFI's transformative role on campuses be secured, demonstrated, and sustained.

5.1 - Events

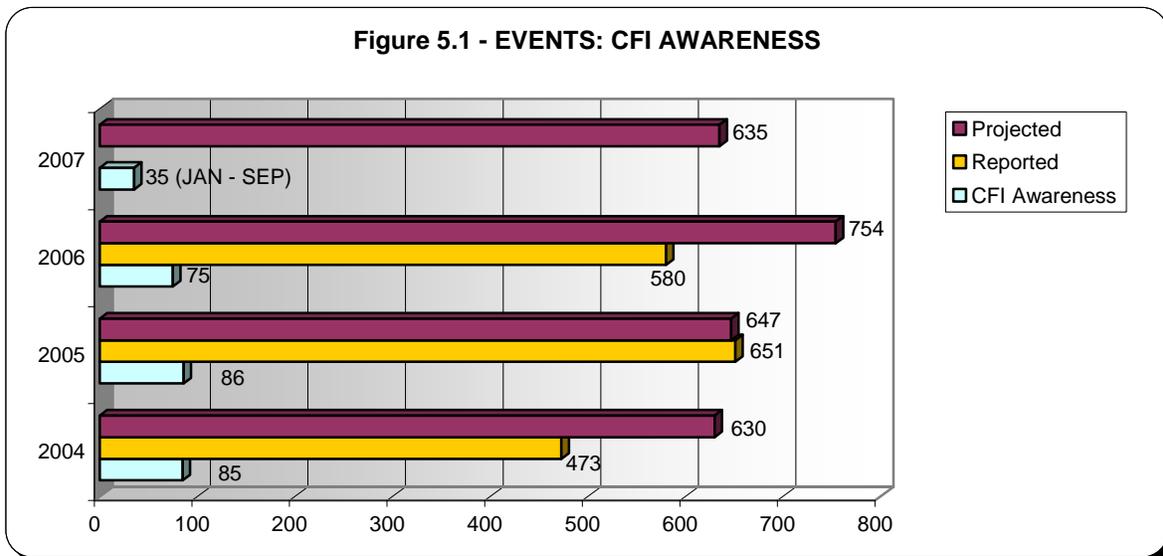


Figure 5.1 looks at events related to CFI-funded projects reported as having taken place at institutions across the country in 2006, versus the number of events that the CFI was aware of. These include

receptions, open houses, groundbreaking ceremonies, launches, openings, funding announcements, impact and outcome announcements, conferences and symposia, news conferences, and others. According to the figures, **the CFI was aware of only 13% of the events that were reported as having occurred during 2006**. This number is identical to that observed for 2005. Numbers tracked to date by the CFI for 2007 (35 events from January through September) indicate the same trend for next year. While the accuracy of the numbers reported by the institutions are questionable (see below), the wide disconnect between the events reported and the number of events of which the CFI was aware is certainly cause for concern.

Particularly disconcerting is the fact that **disconnect has not improved since tracking began in 2004**. The importance of a role for the CFI and the Government of Canada in these events cannot be overemphasized. There is clearly a need to improve cooperation and communication with the institutions with regards to event projection, planning, and execution.

That being said, the nature of the events in question – news conferences, groundbreakings, openings, etc. – would dictate that the CFI must be better informed of their occurrence: Institutions are indeed grateful to their funding partners, and as a general rule make an effort to include them in events that showcase the results of their investments. The number of events forecasted for 2007 (635), while in line with numbers reported in years past, appears once again to be over-ambitious. This number breaks down to an average of just under 2 events per day, 365 days a year. While it is true that the CFI has funded 5,400 projects at 128 institutions since 1997, the likelihood of close to 2 events related to CFI-funded projects talking place every day is doubtful. The reason for this seeming inaccuracy, however, remains unclear (see section 1).

5.2 - News Releases

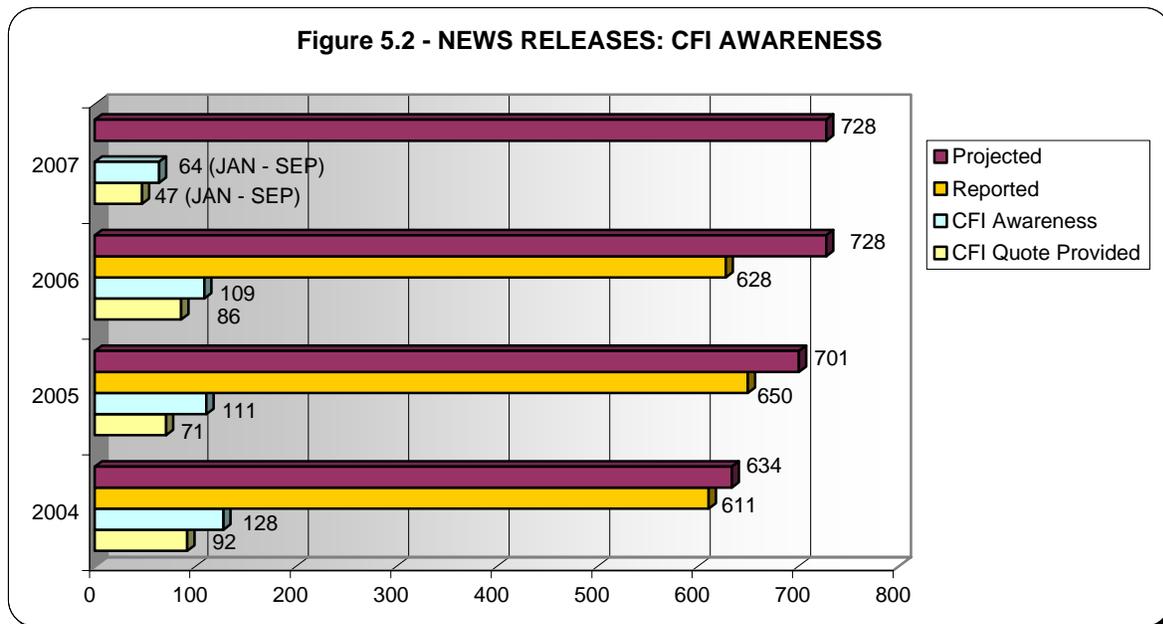


Figure 5.2 looks at news releases related to CFI-funded projects reported by the institutions (issued by newswire, online, or email) versus the number of news releases of which the CFI was aware. Also identified is the number of releases in which the CFI was quoted. As is the case with events, **there is a major disparity between the releases reported as having been issued versus those of which the CFI was aware**. In 2006, the CFI knew of only 17% of the press releases reported (109

of 628). This rate of awareness is identical to that observed in 2005 (111 of a reported 650 – 17%). Numbers tracked to date in 2007 indicate that this same trend will continue again in the upcoming year.

It should also be noted that the majority of releases of which the CFI is aware are those prepared concurrently to CFI national announcements. In the case of national announcements, the CFI works closely with the institutions to encourage them to publicize funding locally by way of press release. Moreover, it is typically in these releases that the CFI is quoted. The quantity of concurrent releases varies from year to year depending on the number and scope of funds being announced by the CFI. The fluctuation in the net number of releases of which the CFI is aware is therefore of less concern than the downward trend in the overall percentage of press releases of which the CFI is aware. As is the case with events, it is imperative that the CFI do a better job of impressing upon the institutions the importance of providing the CFI an opportunity to gain visibility from the press releases they prepare related to funded projects.

6 - The University Press

The university press (campus newspapers, websites, etc.) represents a very important communication tool for universities and colleges. With a readership that consists of students, faculty, alumni, and media, it represents a key vehicle for sharing news with some of their primary target audiences.

The CFI carefully monitors a wide variety of university press publications and websites for mentions of the CFI and CFI-funded projects and researchers. It goes without saying that the CFI hopes that any university press article featuring CFI-funded research mentions the fact that research was facilitated by the CFI's infrastructure investments. Data tracked since 2004 indicate that improvements have been made in this respect.

Figure 6 outlines the number of university press articles reported versus the number of articles in which the CFI was mentioned. It is important to note that the number of CFI mentions is a figure not reported by the institutions, but rather ascertained by the CFI's own monitoring efforts.

Some interesting trends can be gleaned from Figure 5:

First, **the net number of mentions increased significantly from 2005 to 2006 – from 106 to 174, a 64% increase.** The CFI evidently received a substantial amount of visibility from these important communication vehicles. This is a positive trend that the CFI hopes will continue in 2007.

Second, the ratio of CFI mentions (tracked by the CFI) to the number of articles being reported by the institutions improved from 23% in 2005 to 41% in 2006. This is a positive development that would seem to indicate that the communication teams at partner institutions are putting increased stock into mentioning the CFI as having enabled a given project. Again, a positive trend that we hopes will continue.

Finally, **the number of articles projected has typically increased each year** (while projections for 2007 are slightly lower than they were for 2006, it is important to keep in mind that the sample is smaller this year - see Section 1). This trend is to be expected given that the number of CFI-funded projects also increases annually.

7 - Success Stories

In their reports, institutions are asked to identify which CFI-funded projects they foresee showcasing as “success stories” in the coming year. The identification of success stories is valuable to the CFI in a number of important ways.

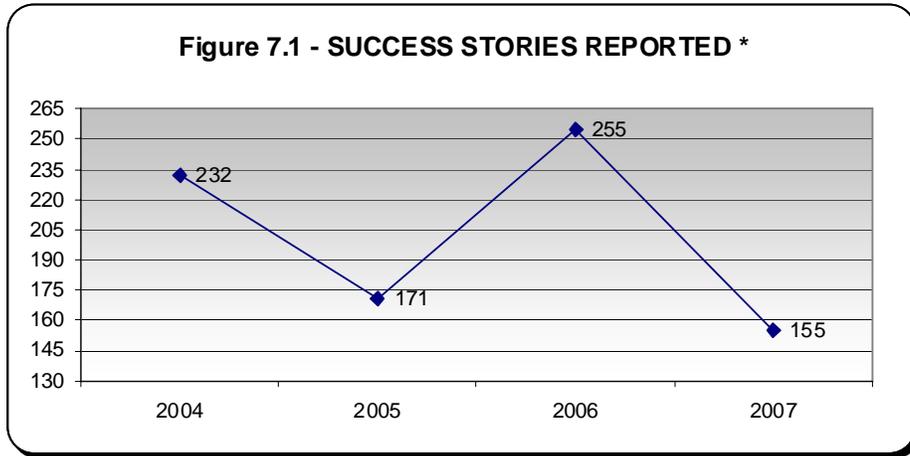
First, success stories provide the CFI’s Outcome Assessment team with a source of legitimate qualitative information to support the extensive quantitative data accumulated and analyzed via the institutional and project progress reports. This mixed-method approach results in not only improved data collection, but also a greater understanding of the findings: while quantitative data can show that change occurred and how much change took place, qualitative data can help understand why.

Secondly, success stories helps the CFI keep other stakeholders – the Government of Canada and funding agencies in particular – aware of what is and what will be occurring at institutions with respect to communications.

Last but not least, success stories help the CFI’s External Relations and Communications team identify potential content for a variety of products such as the *InnovationCanada.ca* online magazine, the Annual Report, and corporate documents. They also help the CFI plan for the coming year in terms of event coordination and media relations opportunities.

7.1 - Number of stories

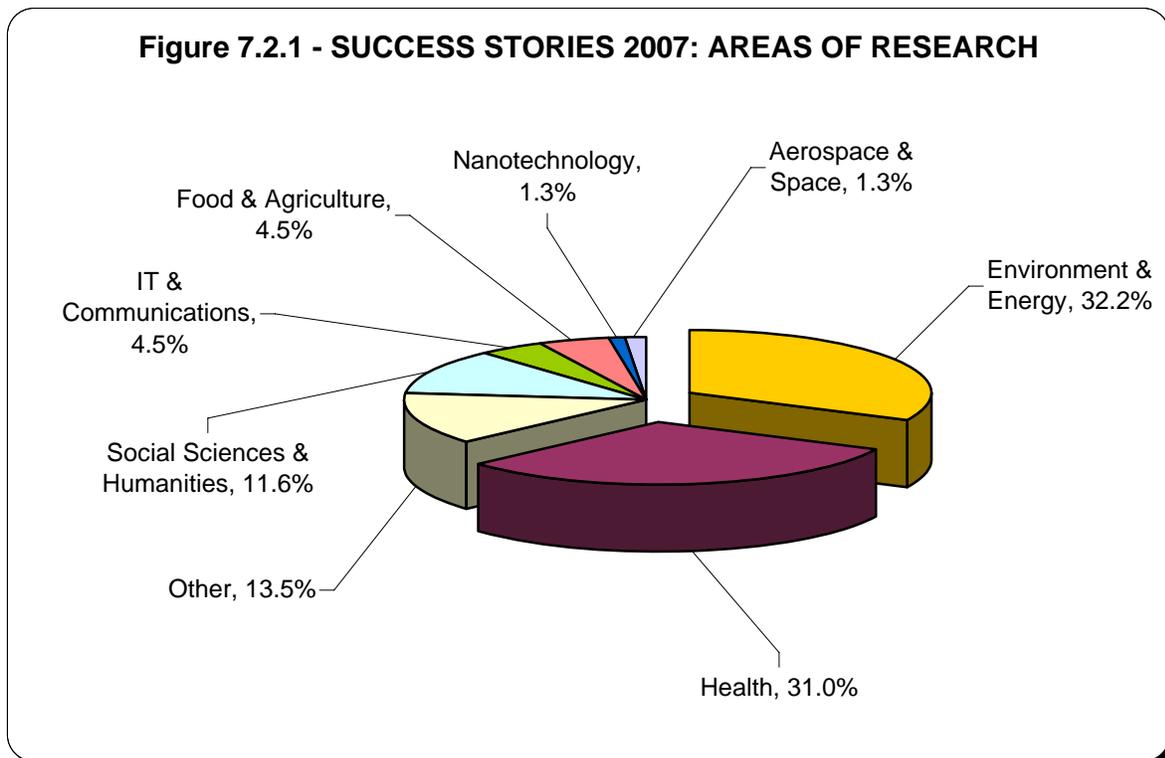
In 2007, **a total of 155 success stories were identified by the institutions** (see Appendix 1 for complete list). This number is down 65% from 2006, when 255 success stories were identified – please see below for further information on this downturn.



[*] It is important here to qualify the decrease in success stories observed in the Figure 7.1. Part of the downturn can be attributed to the smaller sample of institutions. Another part can be attributed to a change in data collection procedures. Previous to 2007, CFI staff would mine Institutional Progress Reports in their entirety (particularly the section on how institutions are meeting the objectives of their Strategic Research Plan, a portion not subject to review in this analysis) in order to seek out mentions of potential success stories. This year, the analysis takes into account only those specifically identified by institutions (up to a maximum of three per institution).

7.2 - Areas of research

Figure 7.2.1 breaks down the success stories by areas of research.



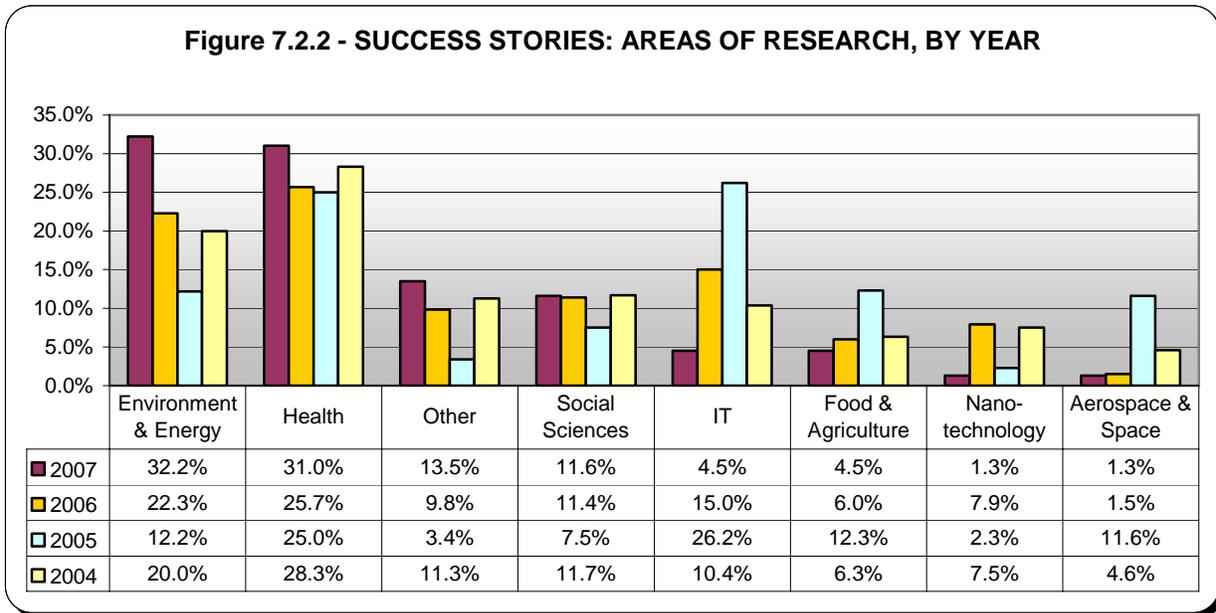
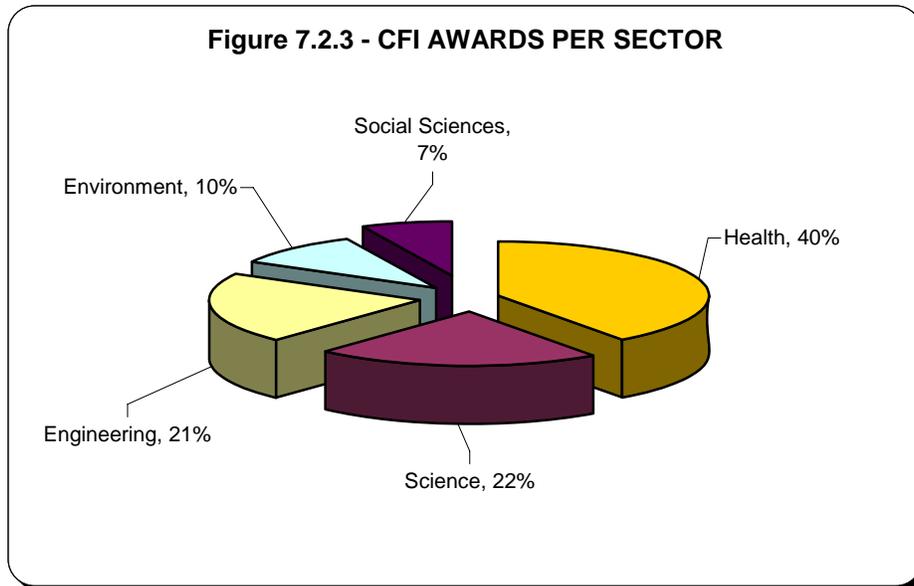


Figure 7.2.2 breaks down the success stories by areas of research in terms of historical progression. This information helps the CFI ascertain if the information that the public is receiving from the institutions reflects the areas in which the CFI has been investing. It also helps us understand what areas of research are deemed as worthy of promotion by the institutions and their communications staff.

There were some interesting shifts this year in terms of focus. Most notably, **the Environment, Energy, and Sustainable Development category is up for a second year in a row – from 22.3% to 32.2% - surpassing health to become the number one category of success story in 2007.** Health made minor gains again this year to reach 25.7%. The ‘other’ category – which includes areas such as forestry, mining, civil works, manufacturing, mathematics, and automotive – also rose to reach 13.5%. These gains came at the expense of the IT category, which saw a second substantial drop in as many years to reach a new low of 4.5%, along with nanotechnology, which gave up the gains it had made in 2006 by receding to 1.3% (representing only 3 potential success stories).

It comes as no surprise to see the environment overtake health in the 2007 rankings. Shifts in public policy, public opinion, and media coverage affect the themes on which institutions choose to focus their communication efforts. In light of the global climate change crisis, public opinion polls in Canada regularly reveal that the environment has overtaken health to become the number one priority for Canadians. Institutions have evidently identified this trend, choosing to focus their communication efforts on research that addresses this reality.

Combined, the **Environment and Health make up over 60% of the success stories identified in 2007.** Considering that 50% of CFI awards (in terms of number of projects as opposed to dollar amounts) have gone to the areas of health (40%) and the environment (10%), it would appear that trends in communications are indeed reflective of the breakdown of research areas that the CFI funds (see Figure 7.2.3).

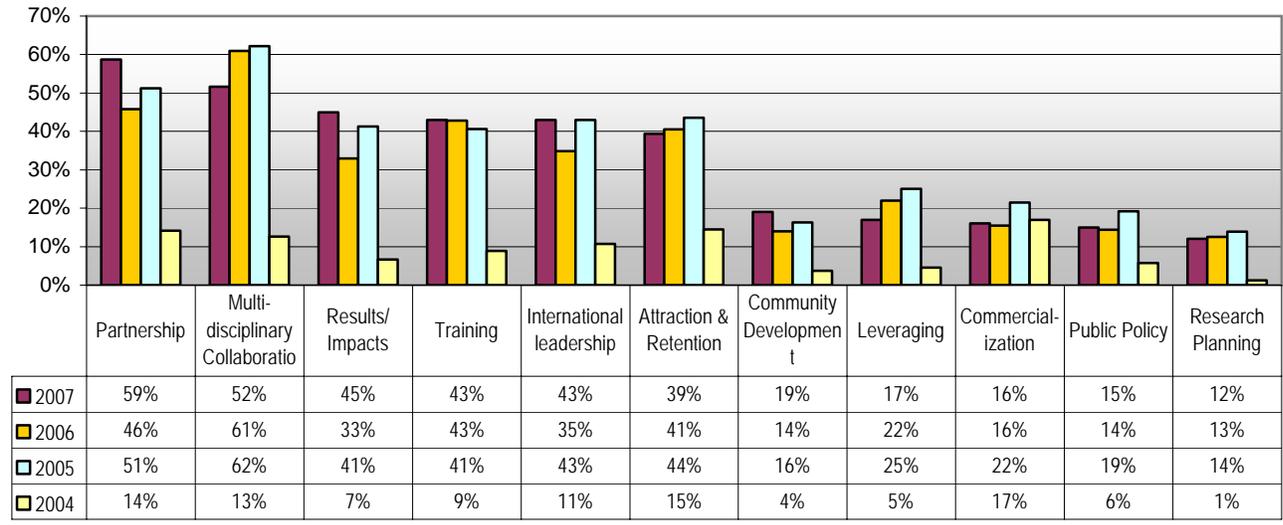


7.3 - The “CFI effect”

Another important aspect about success stories that institutions are asked to provide is the “CFI-effect”, or the positive repercussions, for the institution and/or for Canada, engendered by a given CFI-funded “success story.” These effects represent the wide range of social and economic benefits that the CFI’s investments are intended to stimulate for Canada and Canadians, outlined by the four national objectives laid out in the CFI’s funding agreement with the Government of Canada:

- To support economic growth and job creation, as well as health and environmental quality through innovation;
- To increase Canada’s capability to carry out important world-class scientific research and technology development;
- To expand research and job opportunities for young Canadians; and
- To promote productive networks and collaboration among Canadian post-secondary educational institutions, research hospitals and the private sector.

Figure 7.3 * - SUCCESS STORIES: "CFI EFFECTS"



[*] An important note regarding the statistics in figure 7.3: There was a significant change in the method of reporting between 2004 and 2005. Whereas in 2004, institutions were asked to identify only one “effect” per story, since 2005, they were free to identify as many as deemed appropriate per story. This change in methodology explains the increase in all categories between 2004 and 2005.

Figure 7.3 ranks the CFI effects that success stories identified by the institutions will highlight in 2007. It also compares and contrasts the shift in from 2004 to 2007. This information helps the CFI understand two key pieces of information regarding the communication of its investments. First, the results – both real and perceived – of the CFI’s investments at the institutional level; and second, the image that the CFI can expect institutions will project to the public through their communications efforts.

Overall, it is encouraging to see that these effects are reflected in the success stories that the CFI and its partners can expect to see publicized over the coming year(s). Success stories help publicly validate the CFI and its mandate by demonstrating funded infrastructure is helping attract, retain, and train the world’s best talent, and is fostering a research environment where partnership is flourishing – between disciplines, between universities and the private sector, and between Canada and the international community.

7.3.1 - Networking, collaboration and multidisciplinary among researchers

Partnership facilitation (59%) and multidisciplinary collaboration (52%) were for a third consecutive year the most commonly identified CFI-effects. This trend matches that which appears in the analysis of Project Progress Reports (PPR), collected annually by the CFI from project leaders, where multidisciplinary collaboration and partnership emerge as two of the most regularly cited and important impacts of the CFI’s investment. Data collected in the PPRs suggests that investments in research infrastructure – particularly in large, complex facilities requiring effort and buy-in from different research groups and funding partners – both enable and provide and incentive for multidisciplinary collaborative research.

In fact, PPRs reveal that a high proportion (92%) of researchers report that they collaborate within the institution(s) while approximately 70% collaborate with other institutions within Canada. In the past year alone, over 16,000 researchers from outside institutions advanced their research by using infrastructure

supported by the CFI. More than 70% of the project leaders indicated that the research benefited from a multidisciplinary approach and that it had been enabled by the CFI-supported infrastructure.

Over half (53% in 2007) of the project leaders report that the infrastructure has contributed to fostering international collaboration in a significant manner while a smaller proportion (40%) reported that the infrastructure fostered local or regional collaboration. During the past year, 73% of project leaders indicated that the infrastructure had some influence in fostering local or regional collaboration in the formation of R&D clusters or regional R&D-based initiatives in Canada.

(For more details, please refer to 2007 Report of Results: An Analysis of Investments in Research Infrastructure, available at www.innovation.ca).

7.3.2 - Attraction, retention, and training of research personnel

Also identified as important CFI-effects were training of research personnel (43%), and attraction and retention of highly-qualified personnel (39%). Again, this trend corresponds to that observed in the analysis of PPRs.

Attraction and retention of high quality researchers is an ongoing challenge for institutions. Competition for highly skilled research personnel has intensified around the world. Within Canada, state-of-the-art infrastructure is a significant incentive that institutions rely on to recruit and retain faculty. In the past year, 1,060 or 35% of project leaders report that the availability of the infrastructure was an important factor in the decision to join an institution. In fact, over 2,300 researchers were recruited in the past year. Of this number, over 90% were recruited from the academic/hospital sector.

At the same time, more than 16,000 Post-Doctoral Fellows and Graduate Students were attracted to these same facilities due to the availability of CFI-supported research infrastructure. An examination of the level of attraction since the beginning of the project reveals that over 37,000 Post-Doctoral Fellows and Graduate Students have used the infrastructure as a key resource in their research project. Of this group, 58% have stayed at the institution as trainees while an additional 11% have joined another Canadian academic institution, college, or research hospital.

Finally, the ability to operate and properly maintain state-of-the-art infrastructure is a key component of the research process. As a result, technical personnel play a key role in supporting research and innovation. Since the beginning of the project, almost 11,000 technical personnel have been trained on the use and maintenance of the infrastructure. Of this group, 69% have stayed at the institution while an additional 11% have joined another Canadian academic institution, college, or research hospital.

(For more details, please refer to 2007 Report of Results: An Analysis of Investments in Research Infrastructure, available at www.innovation.ca).

7.3.3 - Commercialization

The data collected suggests that **'commercialization,' stagnant at 16% for a second consecutive year, has not yet emerged as a particularly noteworthy 'effect' of the CFI's investments,** at least with respect to selected success stories. Given the increased focus in Canada and around the world on reaping the economic benefits of public investments in R&D, the CFI certainly hopes to see this number grow over the coming years. Data collected by way of the PPRs reveals that CFI investments have indeed resulted in significant benefits for Canadians. For projects funded since 2002, the availability of the infrastructure has led to:

- The creation of more than 4,000 public/private sector jobs;
- The generation of 1,750 intellectual property rights;
- The development of 760 new or improved products, processes or services;
- The development of 613 new or improved public policies or programs;
- The creation of 198 spin-off companies.

7.4 - Success Stories by Fund

The table below identifies the number of success stories breakdown by type of CFI fund.

FUND	NO. OF STORIES (2007)	2007	2006	2005
Innovation Fund (IF)	49	32%	37%	42%
Canada Research Chairs Infrastructure Fund (CRCIF)	37	24%	25%	24%
New Opportunities Fund (NOF)	30	19%	27%	21%
Leaders Opportunity Fund (LOF)	18	12%	4%	n/a
Leading Edge Fund (LEF)	10	7%	n/a	n/a
New Initiatives Fund (NIF)	7	5%	n/a	n/a
International Joint Venture Project (IJVP)	1	<1%	0%	<1%
International Access Fund (IAF)	0	0	<1%	<1%
College Research Development Fund (CRDF)	1	<1%	1%	2.3%
Research Development Fund (RDF)	0	0%	4%	6%
Institutional Innovation Fund (IIF)	0	0	1%	3.5%

Not surprisingly, **success stories related to projects funded under the Innovation Fund (IF) top the list.** This is to be expected given the generally large scale and scope of projects funded under the IF program. Expect to see success stories related to the LEF and NIF—twin programs that replaced the IF in 2006—increase as projects funded under these continue to develop over the coming years (N.B.: the results of the first and only competition under the LEF/NIF were announced in November 2006).

Interestingly, **stories related to smaller scale projects funded under the CRCIF, NOF, and LOF programs (led by 1 to 3 researchers) make up 55% (85 of 155) of the stories identified.** These outnumber those related to large scale projects funded under the IF, NIF, LEF, and IJVP, which combine to make up 43% (67 of 155).

This finding is somewhat surprising given the generally higher profile of the larger projects funded under the latter: The 2007 Project Progress Report Analysis reveals that the Innovation Fund represents the largest overall proportion (63.5%) of funding for the 2007 sample (\$1.1 billion invested in 328 projects) reports.

On the flip side, the finding can be explained by the fact that in terms of number of projects funded, smaller scale investments far outweigh the larger ones: The 2007 Project Report Analysis reveals that that the large majority (87%) of awards accounted for in the 2007 sample fall under the NOF, Canada Research Chairs Infrastructure Fund and Leaders Opportunity Fund (projects).

8 - Conclusions

The following are some of the trends and conclusions that we can draw from this analysis:

- **The CFI received in 2007 both its smallest sample size (76 institutions) and its lowest report return rate (70 of 109 – 70%).** This had an impact on the accuracy and effectiveness of the analysis by i) making comparative assessments from year to year more difficult, and ii) rendering the identification of trends and tendencies, in a variety of areas, less accurate. (See Section 2 for details)
- The data reported by the institutions since tracking began in 2004 reveals an apparent **trend of overestimation**. Data collection procedures are currently under review by the CFI with a view to significantly improving the accuracy and value of the information collected. (See Section 2 for details)
- **A downturn was reported in all categories of activity for the period of 2006**, including the Media category which decreased despite the addition of TV and Radio items. This drop-off can be explained in part by the smaller sample size. (See Section 3 for details).
- Although not as apparent in 2007, **a trend of underestimation has emerged in the projection of activities under the ‘Publications’ category**. The trend can arguably be explained by the fact that much of the activities that fall under the category (i.e. newspaper, magazine, and website articles, TV and radio items) are most often generated by third parties (media outlets), and therefore beyond the control of institutions. The underestimation on the part of institutions indicates that CFI-funded projects are consistently receiving more attention from the media than the institutions are anticipating. (See Section 3 for details)
- Again this year, there was a **substantial discrepancy between the communications activities (events and press releases) reported versus those of which the CFI was aware**. In the case of press releases, the CFI was aware of only 17% of those reported. In the case of events, the number drops to 13%. This is a continuation of the trend observed in 2004 and 2005. The clear disconnect is an area that the CFI must improve through improved communication and cooperation with partner institutions, particularly given the critical importance of the potential visibility gained from these activities by both the CFI and the Government of Canada. (See Section 5 for details)
- Last year’s report commented that the CFI was concerned about underestimation regarding the quantity of press releases prepared by institutions in conjunction with the CFI. The underestimation indicated that institutions were either uninformed about upcoming announcements, or informed but not intending to make a concurrent announcement. Recovery of those numbers in 2007 reveal that **the CFI was more effective at informing institutions of announcements anticipated for the upcoming year** and the importance of their participation in those. As mentioned in last year’s analysis, providing the institutions with more notice and better lead times allows for better planning and execution of announcements. All stakeholders – the CFI, the institution, the Government of Canada, etc. – stand to gain from increased visibility. (See Section 5 for details)
- There was a **65% decrease in success stories identified by the institutions in 2007** compared to 2006 (155 versus 255). The downturn can be explained by the smaller sample of institutions that reported in 2007 (76 in 2007 versus 92 in 2006), and by a change in data collection procedures. (See Section 7.1 for details)
- **Mentions of the CFI in university press articles increased** from 106 in 2006 to 174 in 2007, indicating that CFI received a substantial amount of visibility from this important communication vehicle. Moreover, the ratio of CFI mentions (tracked by the CFI) to the number of articles

reported by the institutions improved from 23% in 2005 to 41% in 2006. This is a positive development which indicates that the communication teams at partner institutions are increasingly mentioning the CFI as having enabled a given project. (See Section 6 for details)

- **Success stories focused on the environment overtook those focused on health** to emerge as the hottest area of research (from a communications point of view) identified in 2007. This matches shifts in public policy, public opinion, and media coverage over the past year, where environment has overtaken health as the number one issue for Canadians. (See Section 7 for details)
- **The “CFI effects” (positive repercussions of CFI investments) associated with the success stories identified by the institutions for 2007 correlate well with the project assessment data collected from project leaders** by the CFI’s Evaluation and Outcome Assessment team. Partnership and multidisciplinary collaboration again led the way with 59% and 52% respectively. This is a positive trend that confirms that CFI success stories validate the CFI’s mandate, outlined in its agreement with the Government of Canada (see Section 7 for details)
- **Success stories related to smaller scale projects funded under the CRCIF, NOF, and LOF programs (led by 1 to 3 researchers) make up 55% (85 of 155) of the stories identified.** These outnumber those related to large scale projects funded under the IF, NIF, LEF, and IJVP, which combine to make up 43% (67 of 155).

8- Recommendations

- The data reported by the institutions since tracking began in 2004 reveals a trend of overestimation. The CFI must work more closely with the institutions to refine the data collection and verification process in order to improve the value, accuracy and integrity of the data. The CFI may want to consider randomly auditing a cross-section of institutions to verify the accuracy of the data provided. Ultimately, however, the institutions bear the responsibility of providing accurate numbers. The CFI should attempt to provide additional incentive to institutions by demonstrating more clearly that the time and resources invested to complete the annual survey are indeed worthwhile.
- There is a clear and urgent need to improve communication and cooperation with the institutions to ensure that the CFI is made aware of and increasingly involved in activities (particularly events and press releases) related to the projects it funds. Everyone stands to gain from raising the CFI’s profile by way of these activities: only through improved public and political awareness of the benefits of CFI investments can the CFI’s transformative role on campuses across the country be secured.
- The CFI’s External Relations and Communications team can do a better job of utilizing the success stories identified by institutions. The information provided is a very valuable resource that can improve, through more systematic use, the quality of products produced the ERC team such as the Annual Report, the online magazine, a media related products.