

CFI Update

A periodic update from the vice presidents of the **Canada Foundation for Innovation**

December 2020

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Extensions to project end dates

As we enter the ninth month of the COVID-19 pandemic we realize that your institution may need another extension to the end date of some CFI-funded projects that were delayed due to COVID-19.

If your institution needs an extension for CFI-funded projects that meet the following criteria, please let your Senior Programs Officer know by email:

- The delay will not have a negative impact on the project.
- The current end date is between December 1, 2019 and September 30, 2021.
- The project was not funded through our Exceptional Opportunities Fund – COVID-19 competitions.

In most cases, we will automatically grant a six-month extension — an explanation is not required. We will update the CFI Awards Management System to reflect the new end date. Some older projects may be excluded from the automatic extension. Your Senior Programs Officer will notify you if this is the case.

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As usual, an amendment request submitted through CAMS is required for any projects for which there will be a negative impact or significant changes to the infrastructure. For further details, please refer to the [FAQ: Changes due to COVID-19 section](#) on our website.

Process change for award finalization forms in CAMS

In late spring 2021, we will introduce a new way to complete and submit the award finalization form within the CFI Awards Management System (CAMS). Instead of the current process where institutions fill out, sign and upload a PDF into CAMS, the new submission process will be fully electronic. You will no longer need to sign the form and only individuals listed in the institutional agreement (i.e. president, authorized signatory, account administrator or liaison) will be able to submit the electronic form within CAMS. This new process will help streamline the award finalization process.

Annual reporting requirements

We would like to thank institutions and project leaders for submitting their financial and project progress reports (PPRs). Despite the pandemic, the CFI has benefited from strong support from institutions, with submission rates for these reports of 80 percent and 98 percent, respectively. Thank you!

The financial reports are used by the CFI to assist in the proper management of projects. We also perform follow-up procedures on issues identified in the review of the financial reports. Your response to these issues is important and we encourage you to address any outstanding issues as soon as possible. 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 demonstrate the outputs and outcomes of CFI-funded research infrastructure. Over the coming weeks, reminders will be sent to your institution's CFI account administrator and the CFI liaison advising them of any outstanding reports.

College-Industry Innovation Fund – Stream 1

The [call for proposals](#) for the 2021 competition of the College-Industry Innovation Fund – Stream 1 is now posted on our website.

Annual public meeting

We held our first virtual annual public meeting on November 26, which featured highlights from our 2019–20 fiscal year, as well as an overview of some of our current activities. In addition, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi microbiologist, Catherine Girard, and Canada's 28th Governor General, the Right Honourable David Johnston, joined our president and CEO, Roseann O'Reilly Runte, to

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discuss how Canada's tradition of innovation can carry us through challenging times. If you were unable to attend, you can find the recording [here](#). You can also find our [2019–20 annual report](#) online.

Preliminary data from the Innovation Fund competition

This was the first Innovation Fund competition launched under our permanent funding model and it included a few firsts for the CFI.

The competition was designed to help promote the value the CFI places on equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in the research enterprise, and to collect information about institutional EDI practices that could help guide our future competitions.

We offered institutions the option of selecting up to two team leaders instead of one. This allowed applicants to not only recognize other leaders within their research teams, but also to compose a more diverse team. This is also the first Innovation Fund competition for which we have full self-identification data for our applicants and reviewers.

Our preliminary review shows that many institutions took advantage of the opportunity. Close to 70 percent of the Innovation Fund projects submitted included two team leaders. In addition, women accounted for 50 percent or more of the team leaders in 41 percent of proposals received (126 out of 307), and in 39 percent of funded projects (40 out of 102).

We have only begun our post-mortem analysis of the Innovation Fund competition data. We expect those efforts to reveal if our new approach encouraged more diversity among team leads with respect to gender, ethnicity, career stage and other EDI parameters.

Over the coming months, we will complete this in-depth analysis. This will help us set baselines for the participation of underrepresented groups, and identify good practices institutions use and challenges they face so we can do our part to support efforts to increase equity, diversity and inclusion in the research community.

Integrated calendar of funding opportunities

The CFI together with Canada's federal research funding agencies have recently launched an [integrated calendar of funding opportunities](#) for researchers, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students and research institutions.

The calendar lists the principal funding opportunities offered by the four agencies, including agency-specific programs and ones that are jointly administered. It provides links to the related program web page for more information on each opportunity.

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Important upcoming dates

You can also always find [key dates for all the CFI's funding opportunities](#) on our website. Here are a few important dates coming up:

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| February 10, 2021 | Deadline for John R. Evans Leaders Fund–SSHRC, Partnership Grants – Stage 1 proposals |
| February 15, 2021 | Deadline for John R. Evans Leaders Fund (unaffiliated) proposals |
| March 15, 2021 | Deadline for College-Industry Innovation Fund – Stream 1 notices of intent |
| March 23, 2021 | CFI Board of Directors meeting |
| June 15, 2021 | CFI Board of Directors meeting |

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