

CANADA FOUNDATION FOR INNOVATION

College Fund

Call for proposals

January 2022

Building partnerships between colleges
and their communities

INNOVATION

Canada Foundation
for Innovation

Fondation canadienne
pour l'innovation



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About the Canada Foundation for Innovation

The Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) makes financial contributions to Canada's universities, colleges, research hospitals and non-profit research organizations to increase their capability to carry out high-quality research.

The CFI invests in infrastructure that researchers need to think big, innovate and push the boundaries of knowledge. It helps institutions to attract and retain the world's top talent, to train the next generation of researchers and to support world-class research that strengthens the economy and improves the quality of life for all Canadians.

A promising future, now
25 years of investing in ideas that change our world

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Part 1 – What you need to know about this fund

Purpose of the College Fund

The purpose of the College Fund is to support partnerships between colleges and a range of public, private or not-for-profit partners.

Through the College Fund, the CFI:

- Supports innovative projects that enhance the capacity of Canadian colleges to carry out applied research and technology development across all disciplines
- Provides colleges with research infrastructure to foster partnerships (in their strategic priority areas) with the public, private or not-for-profit sector.

The innovation generated through these research partnerships must address the social, business, health or environmental needs of a Canadian industry or community. It is expected to lead to the creation or adaptation of knowledge and technology to develop or improve a product, process or service.

The proposed activities and requested infrastructure supported through this fund should not:

- Duplicate existing services or facilities in the region
- Be used to compete with private-sector businesses.



The CFI's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion

The CFI is committed to the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion. In all our activities, we recognize that a breadth of perspectives, skills and experiences contributes to excellence in research.

Equity: We aim to ensure all CFI-eligible institutions have the opportunity to access and benefit from our programs and CFI-funded infrastructure through our well-established, fair and impartial practices.

Diversity: We value attributes that allow institutions and their researchers — from any background and from anywhere — to succeed. This includes individual attributes such as gender, language, culture and career stage; institutional attributes

such as size, type and location; and attributes that encompass the full spectrum of research, from basic to applied and across all disciplines.

Inclusion: We encourage a culture of collaboration, partnership, contributions and engagement among diverse groups of people, institutions and areas of research to maximize the potential of Canada's research ecosystem.

We believe that nurturing an equitable, diverse and inclusive culture is the responsibility of every member of the research ecosystem, including funders, institutions, researchers, experts and reviewers.

Participation from the public, private or not-for-profit sectors

The level of involvement of partners from the public, private or not-for-profit sectors is a key consideration in making funding decisions. We consider close collaboration between the college and its partners essential to enabling innovation that is relevant to the industry or community.

We expect proposals to clearly demonstrate the commitment of partners including their active participation and contribution to the applied research program and their anticipated benefits.

Objectives of the College Fund

The objectives of the College Fund are to:

- Create and enhance partnerships with the public, private or not-for-profit sectors that lead to innovation. These innovations must address social, business, health or environmental needs of a Canadian industry or community
- Enhance and optimize the proven applied research capacity of the college that is related to the proposed applied research or technology development activities
- Generate social, economic, health or environmental benefits locally or nationally including the development of highly qualified personnel.

Important dates

We hold annual competitions through this fund, with the deadlines landing on the same day every year. If a deadline falls on a weekend or statutory holiday, the date will be moved to the next business day.

Activity	Deadline
Deadline to submit notices of intent	April 7
Deadline to submit proposals	June 7
Decision by CFI Board of Directors	November

Application process

See Part 2, "[How to apply](#)" for details on how to complete each stage of the application process.

Eligible institutions

Canadian colleges [recognized as eligible to receive funding from the CFI](#) can apply to the College Fund. If your institution is already eligible, make sure your institutional agreement with the CFI is up to date before you submit a proposal.

Colleges that are not currently eligible must provide the necessary documentation to become eligible no later than 10 weeks before the notice of intent deadline.

Email us at colleges@innovation.ca to find out more about the process and supporting documentation required to apply for institutional eligibility.



How many proposals can a college submit?

Colleges can submit up to three notices of intent and three proposals per competition. If your college decides to submit more than one proposal per competition, the proposals must not fall within the same field of applied research.

Eligible infrastructure projects and costs

An eligible infrastructure project involves acquiring or developing research infrastructure to enhance existing applied research or technology development capacity. Eligible costs are described in section 4.6 of our [Policy and program guide](#).

The research infrastructure must be used to carry out applied research or technology development activities with public, private or not-for-profit partners. It may be used for training purposes only in cases where the training is linked to an applied research or technology development program.

We expect that research computing resources funded through the College Fund and which cost more than \$100,000 will typically be housed, managed and operated by the Digital Research Alliance of Canada (the Alliance). Consult with the Alliance if you are planning to request advanced research computing infrastructure. Visit the [Alliance's website](#) for information on their established process for facilitating collaboration with institutions.

To be eligible for funding, research infrastructure expenditures and in-kind contributions must have taken place no more than 12 months before the proposal submission deadline. We consider expenditures incurred once goods are received, services have been rendered or work has been performed.

Consult our [Policy and program guide](#) for more information on eligible infrastructure projects.

Infrastructure location

The infrastructure is typically located at a CFI-eligible institution. Infrastructure may be located outside an eligible institution when this is the most effective way to proceed, provided the eligible institution retains majority interest and exercises de facto control over access to and use of the research infrastructure.

If the infrastructure will be located outside the applicant institution, an inter-institutional agreement will be required as part of the post-award finalization process.

Eligible partner funding

The CFI will fund up to 40 percent of a project's eligible infrastructure costs. For the remaining 60 percent, we encourage you to work with potential funding partners at an early stage in the planning and development of proposals.

The following partners are eligible to contribute to the infrastructure project:

- Institutional funds, trust funds or foundations
- Firms and corporations
- Departments and agencies of the federal government
- Departments and agencies of provincial, territorial and municipal governments
- Not-for-profit organizations
- Individuals.



How much funding can a college request?

Colleges can submit proposals with total CFI requests of between \$60,000 and \$1 million.

Only cash or in-kind contributions made to the eligible costs of a project are considered eligible partner contributions. Include contributions from research partners only if they are for the acquisition of CFI-eligible infrastructure.

We do not consider cash or in-kind contributions for applied research activities (except the purchase of infrastructure) to be eligible partner contributions. However, you can mention these in the proposal as evidence of the partner's engagement in the applied research program.

Funding from the federal research funding agencies (Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) is not considered partner funding.

Consult our [Policy and program guide](#) for more information about eligible and ineligible cash and in-kind partner contributions

Operating and maintenance costs

We will contribute to the operating and maintenance (O&M) costs of funded projects through our [Infrastructure Operating Fund](#). Your college will automatically receive an allocation equivalent to 30 percent of the CFI contribution to your funded projects.

Sustainability is assessed and is an integral part of the review process; it may influence the recommendations of the Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee.

You need to demonstrate that appropriate O&M resources are, and will continue to be, available to capitalize on the full potential of the requested infrastructure over its useful life.

Review process

Through our structured merit-review process, we ensure that proposals are reviewed in a fair, competitive, transparent and in-depth manner. The following sections outline the review process for proposals for this competition, including the roles and responsibilities of each committee.

Expert Committees

In the first stage of review, Expert Committees review small groups of proposals from the same area of research to assess their strengths and weaknesses in relation to the assessment criteria.

We select Expert Committee members from diverse sectors for their specific expertise in the area of the proposal. They are knowledgeable about the needs of the targeted industry or community and the college environment.

Only proposals that meet the competition's threshold of excellence will move to the next stage. (See "[What is the threshold of excellence?](#)")



How is the useful life of research infrastructure defined?

The useful life of the research infrastructure is the period over which it is expected to provide benefits and be usable for its intended purpose, factoring in normal repairs and maintenance.



What are the assessment criteria?

Expert Committees evaluate proposals based on five assessment criteria that reflect the three competition objectives:

Applied research or technology development —

The proposed applied research or technology development activities respond to clearly identified needs of an industry or community and have been developed in collaboration with partners to ensure the research achieves the intended outcomes.

Partnerships — The institution has demonstrated its ability to build and maintain productive partnerships with an industry or community. The institution has identified partners for the planned applied research activities. The institution has a plan to stimulate new partnerships with the industry or community.

Infrastructure — The requested infrastructure is necessary and appropriate to conduct the proposed

applied research activities. It enhances and integrates with the college's existing applied research capacity. The infrastructure will be optimally used and maintained to ensure continued collaborations with, and relevance to, the industry or the community.

Team — The team comprises the breadth of expertise and experience needed to conduct the proposed applied research activities and operate the requested infrastructure.

Benefits — The proposed activities are likely to lead to social, economic, health or environmental benefits at the local or national level. The proposed activities will enable the development of highly qualified personnel.

See Part 2, "How to apply," for details on how to address each assessment criterion in your proposal.



How do Expert Committees rate proposals?

Expert Committees use a five-point scale to rate how well a proposal meets each of the fund's assessment criteria.

EX	SA	SW	PS	NS
Significantly exceeds the criterion standard	Satisfies the criterion standard	Satisfies the criterion standard with only a few minor weaknesses	Partially satisfies the criterion standard with some significant weaknesses	Does not satisfy the criterion standard due to major weaknesses



What is the threshold of excellence?

Proposals meet the threshold of excellence unless they receive one rating of **NS** or two or more ratings of **PS**.

Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee

In the second stage of review, the Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee (MAC) assesses the proposals that meet the threshold of excellence at the Expert Committee stage. We select MAC members for their breadth of understanding of the applied research and technology development environment, the role of colleges in the innovation process and the needs of partners.

Following a careful analysis of the proposals and the Expert Committee reports, the MAC is then responsible for:

- Identifying proposals that best meet the three competition objectives relative to other competing requests
- Establishing the amount that the CFI should award for each proposal
- Making funding recommendations to the CFI Board of Directors.

Collaborating with provinces and territories

To coordinate the review processes and avoid duplication of efforts, we will share a list of the notices of intent submitted and provide reports from the Expert Committees and Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee, along with the names and affiliations of committee members, to relevant provincial and territorial funding authorities.

We will disclose the list and committee reports only in accordance with agreements between the CFI and provincial or territorial funding authorities, as permissible pursuant to the Privacy Act.

We encourage colleges to work with relevant provincial and territorial funding authorities as partners at an early stage in the planning and development of proposals.

Funding decisions

The CFI Board of Directors will make funding decisions at its November meeting each year. Following this meeting, we will notify your college that the decisions and review materials for your proposals are available in the CFI Awards Management System (CAMS).

To access decisions and review materials:

1. Go to your institutional dashboard and select "Overview information/Project overview" in the left navigation menu. To perform a search, select "Fund/College Fund" and enter the decision date in the "Board decision" range fields. The search results will display a table of projects and funding decisions.
2. Select the project hyperlink to access its "Project overview" page.
3. Go to "Review committees/Assessment/View" to access the Expert Committee and MAC reports. Any funding decision comments (for conditional or partial funding) can be viewed under "Decision/View Board comment(s)."

Award finalization and oversight

Colleges have up to nine months after the CFI Board's decision to finalize an award. Submit the following documents to finalize your college's award:

- **Responses to conditions:** Submit responses to colleges@innovation.ca. Your responses must be approved by the CFI before your college's award is finalized.
- **Award finalization form:** You can find this form in the CAMS institutional dashboard within the award finalization module.

- **Revised budget:** Submit this through CAMS if one or more of the following occur:
 - One or more items need to be removed or amended as per the funding decision
 - There are changes to the infrastructure that require CFI approval
 - There are changes to the timeline, floor plans and costs for construction or renovation
 - We request that an updated budget be submitted.
- **Inter-institutional agreement:** Submit this to colleges@innovation.ca if the infrastructure will be located outside your college.

We closely monitor the timely implementation of funded projects and require that colleges submit annual financial reports and project progress reports.

Consult the [Policy and program guide](#) for more information about reporting requirements.

Security considerations

Recipient institutions must conduct a consistent and appropriate due diligence review of potential security risks for funded projects and put in place timely measures to appropriately mitigate those risks. Tools and guidance are available through the Government of Canada's [Safeguarding Your Research](#) portal, [National Security Guidelines for Research Partnerships](#) and [Safeguarding Science](#) workshops.

The CFI reserves the right to:

- Refuse a project on the basis of national security
- Review funded project activities on national security grounds to ensure any national security risks are identified and addressed
- Require additional intellectual property obligations of recipients to ensure that national security risks are addressed, as necessary
- Implement additional requirements, on a case-by-case basis. This could include, but is not limited to, inspection of equipment (including IT infrastructure) and periodic security briefings, as appropriate
- Decline the participation of any partners on any grounds, to maintain the security and integrity of the project.

Public announcement

The Government of Canada makes public announcements of new funding from the College Fund. We organize these national announcements in collaboration with institutions.

Public announcements provide institutions, their researchers and partners, along with government representatives, the media and the CFI, opportunities to highlight the research and technology development enabled by CFI-funded infrastructure in their communities.

We encourage institutions to work with local and national media after the announcement to promote the benefits of research and technology development to Canadians.

Part 2 – How to apply

Tools to apply

Use the [CFI Awards Management System \(CAMS\)](#) to prepare, share and submit your notices of intent and proposals.

This call for proposals and the [Getting started with CAMS](#) documents contain all the information you need to apply to this competition, including the guidelines to prepare notices of intent and proposals. All submissions must conform to these guidelines. We strongly recommend that you review the completed notice of intent and proposal forms before you submit them to make sure they comply with these guidelines.

Submitting notices of intent

To be able to submit a proposal to this competition, your institution must first submit a notice of intent. After the notice of intent submission deadline, you will have access to submit a proposal in CAMS.

In your notice of intent, include sufficient and accurate information about your team, the proposed applied research or technology development activities, the requested research infrastructure and your partners to allow CFI staff to:

- Identify what expertise is needed to assess each proposal
- Recruit committee members
- Ensure that the requested infrastructure is eligible.

Notices of intent are not assessed as part of the merit-review process.

If you must make changes to the team leaders or applicant institution after you submit your notice of intent, contact colleges@innovation.ca as soon as possible. This is to avoid introducing potential conflicts of interest with reviewers.

The notice of intent consists of the following four sections:

- Project information
- Team
- Project description
- Suggested reviewers.

These are described below. Consult the [Getting started with CAMS](#) documents for more information on how to submit a notice of intent.

Project information

The “Project information” section captures basic information about the project such as the title, applicant institution and keywords.

Team

The team can be comprised of research and technical staff from your college and partners, as well as administrative and business development staff from your college and academic collaborators. You can identify up to eight team members, including team leader(s), and should include their affiliation. No CVs will be appended to the proposal.

When composing your team, consider the criterion standard and aspects to be addressed under the “Team” assessment criterion. List as many team members as possible. This will help us avoid any potential conflicts of interest with expert reviewers.

You can select up to two team leaders to allow you to recognize other leaders within the team and to compose a more diverse research team. The user who creates the notice of intent in CAMS will be the administrative leader by default. This person will be responsible for tasks such as completing the forms in CAMS and submitting the proposal to the institution. They will have the opportunity to designate an additional team leader. The newly designated team leader does not need to be associated with the applicant institution.

Team leaders and team members must:

- Have an active CAMS account
- Accept to participate in the project before you can submit the notice of intent.

Team leaders will have read and write access while team members will each have read access to the notice of intent.

Project description

(Maximum three pages)

The project description should reflect the full scope of the planned activities. This will inform CFI staff of the breadth of expertise required on the Expert Committee to assess the merits of your proposal. It should include a:

- High-level overview of the applied research or technology development program that will be enabled by the infrastructure
- Table of the requested infrastructure including a brief description and approximate cost of the major pieces
- Table of current and planned partners and other potential conflicts of interest. The table should include the name of the partner organizations and the name of individuals involved in the research.

Suggested reviewers

Provide a minimum of six potential reviewers who:

- Are experts in the specific area of the proposal and have a thorough understanding of the Canadian innovation process and the college environment
- Are knowledgeable about the needs of the targeted industry or community
- Come from the college applied research community or from the public, private and/or not-for-profit sectors, excluding partners and collaborators (at least half of the suggested reviewers must be from either the college community or the targeted industry or community)
- Can provide an independent assessment of your proposal
- Are not in a conflict of interest.

If the notice of intent does not include adequate and qualified reviewers, we will return it to you for additional suggestions.

We encourage you to suggest reviewers who are at different stages of their career, with diverse backgrounds and from underrepresented groups, as appropriate for the proposed research program. The decision whether to contact the reviewers you suggest remains with the CFI.

A conflict of interest may be deemed to exist or perceived as such when reviewers:

- Are a relative or close friend, or have a personal relationship with the team leader(s) or one of the team members
- Are in a position to gain or lose financially/materially from the funding of the proposal
- Have had long-standing scientific or personal differences with the team members
- Are currently affiliated with the team leaders' or the team members' institutions, organizations or companies, including research hospitals and research institutes
- Are closely professionally affiliated with the team members, as a result of having in the last six years:
 - Frequent and regular interactions with the team members in the course of their duties at their department, institution, organization or company
 - Been a supervisor or a trainee of the team members
 - Collaborated, published or shared funding with the team members, or have plans to do so in the immediate future, or
 - Been employed by the applicant institution, and/or
- Feel for any reason unable to provide an impartial review of the proposal.

Submitting proposals

The proposal should clearly present the project's merits and excellence. Provide enough information to enable reviewers to evaluate the proposal according to the assessment criteria and competition objectives.

If you must make changes to the team leaders and team members, applicant institution, partners or suggested reviewers after you submit your notice of intent, contact colleges@innovation.ca as soon as possible. This is to avoid introducing potential conflicts of interest with reviewers.

The proposal consists of three separate CAMS modules:

Project module — Information about the proposed project, how it meets the competition's objectives and criteria

Finance module — Information about the budgetary details of the proposal

Suggested reviewers module — List of potential reviewers who are qualified to provide an informed and impartial review of the proposal

The forms in CAMS will indicate the maximum number of characters that can be included in each section and/or the page limits for uploaded attachments.

Project module

The project module in CAMS consists of the following sections:

- Project information
- Plain language summary
- Project summary
- Team
- Collaborating institutions
- Financial resources for operation and maintenance
- Assessment criteria.

CAMS automatically populates some sections of the proposal with information provided in the notice of intent, including:

- Project information
- Team
- Suggested reviewers.

Find instructions below to fill out the remaining sections. Consult section 6 of the [Getting started with CAMS](#) documents for researchers and institutional administrators for more information.

Plain language summary

(1,500 characters)

Provide a short summary in plain language of the proposed project. Briefly describe what is being researched, how it is being done and why it is important. Focus on the expected impacts and benefits to Canada, beyond research or technology development accomplishments. It may be used in the CFI's communications products and on its website if the project is funded.

Project summary

(Maximum one page)

Provide a general description of the research or technology development activities to be conducted and an overview of the infrastructure you are requesting. This summary must address the extent to which the proposal meets the fund's objectives. (See "[Objectives of the College Fund.](#)")

Keep in mind that this summary should use language appropriate for non-experts as it is mainly intended for the Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee.

Team

CAMS automatically populates this section with information provided in the notice of intent.

Team members who accept to participate at the notice of intent stage do not need to reconfirm their participation at the proposal stage. However, newly added team members must have a CAMS account and accept to participate before you can submit the proposal.

Team leaders will have read and write access to the proposal while team members will each have read access.

In the assessment criteria attachment, describe the leadership role of the team leaders as well as the role of each team member.

Collaborating institutions

If applicable, identify the CFI-eligible institutions collaborating on this project. A collaborating institution is one that receives part of the infrastructure.

Financial resources for operations and maintenance

This section of the project module captures the annual costs and sources of committed support. This is to make sure the infrastructure is effectively operated and maintained for the first five years after it is implemented.

If the useful life of some of the infrastructure items requested is longer or shorter than five years, provide information in the “Assessment criteria” section of the proposal regarding the operating and maintenance needs for these items over their useful life. (See [“How is the useful life of research infrastructure defined?”](#))

Do not include costs related to research and/or technology development in the table.

If funding sources include the CFI’s Infrastructure Operating Fund (IOF), list this under the institutional contribution category. (See [“Operating and maintenance costs.”](#))

Explain estimated costs and sources of support in the assessment criteria attachment.

Assessment criteria

For instructions on how to address each of the assessment criteria, see [“Part 3 – Criterion standards and instructions.”](#)

Address each criterion according to the instructions to make your proposal as strong as possible.

Expert Committees rate the degree to which each proposal meets each criterion standard, whereas the MAC rates the degree to which the proposal meets each competition objective.

Document structure

Address the assessment criteria in a PDF document and upload it to CAMS. Include key information on how the proposal meets the assessment criteria.

Address each criterion in the order that they appear in Part 3 of this document. Clearly identify the beginning of a new criterion with a title.

Page limits

The page limit for your PDF document depends on the amount you are requesting and on whether you write your proposal in French or English. You have flexibility to address each criterion in the document you submit, including figures or diagrams, where appropriate. The distribution of pages among criteria is at your discretion.

Total CFI request (\$)	Maximum number of pages	
	Proposals written in English	Proposals written in French
\$60,000 to \$250,000	13	16
More than \$250,000 up to \$1 million	18	22



A validation error that restricts the assessment criteria attachment to the appropriate page limit will only occur when the team leader sets the proposal to “complete” and your college sets it to “verified” or tries to submit it to the CFI.

Format for attachments

CAMS will automatically paginate proposals when they are submitted. Do not paginate your document before uploading it to CAMS.

Since reviewers will assess proposals electronically, use a standard, single column on an 8.5” x 11” page layout. Avoid using a two column or landscape format since it is harder to read on screen.

Legibility is paramount and should take precedence in the selection of an appropriate font. Use a 12-point, black font and single line spacing (six lines per inch) with no condensed type or spacing.

We also expect documents to conform to the following guidelines:

- **Header:** Indicate the applicant institution on the top left and the project number on the top right of each page.
- **Footer:** Do not include any information in the footer as this area will be used for automatic page numbering.
- **Page margin:** Insert a margin of no less than one inch around the page. The header may be within the margin.
- **File format and size:** Only upload PDF files. Documents in other formats should be converted to PDF before being uploaded and should not be encrypted or password protected. The file size must not exceed 20 megabytes.

Adherence to these page formatting guidelines is necessary to ensure that reviewers receive legible proposals and that no applicant will have an unfair advantage by using smaller type, line spacing or margins to provide more text in the proposal. If you do not adhere to these guidelines we may return your proposal to be revised.

Finance module

The finance module consists of the following sections:

- Cost of individual items
- Construction or renovation floor plans (if applicable)
- Contributions from eligible partners
- Infrastructure utilization
- Overview of infrastructure project funding.

Cost of individual items

Bundle items into functional groupings when completing the “Cost of individual items” section. Provide details and justification for each item within a group when addressing the “Infrastructure” criterion in the assessment criteria document.

Consult the [Policy and program guide](#) for more information on eligible costs for infrastructure projects.

List only the eligible infrastructure acquisition and development costs. List the full cost of each item. Retain documentation (price lists, quotes, etc.) so they can be provided to the CFI if requested.

If the infrastructure will be used for purposes other than research or technology development, list only prorated research or technology development costs.

The total eligible costs must include taxes (net of credits received), shipping and installation. However, do not calculate taxes on the in-kind portion.

Follow your existing institutional policies and procedures when preparing budget estimates. We expect costs included in this budget to be close estimates of fair market value.

Consult the [Policy and program guide](#) for information on how to assess in-kind contributions.

Floor plans (if applicable)

Upload a PDF that contains the following information:

- A timeline identifying key dates for the various stages of the proposed construction or renovation
- Floor plans of the proposed new area(s), showing the location of the infrastructure and the scale of the plans (when construction or renovation involves multiple rooms). The floor plans must be legible when printed in black and white on standard letter-size paper (8.5" x 11")
- The overall cost of the construction or renovation project, categorized by cost component (i.e. direct costs, soft costs and contingency costs), when these costs are expected to be in excess of \$500,000.

Upload the timeline, floor plans and cost breakdown as a separate PDF. These pages do not count toward the page limit for the "Assessment criteria" section of the proposal. If any of the pages of the attachment provide information other than for the intended use, we will remove them from the proposal.

Contributions from eligible partners

List all contributions from eligible partners. Do not include the amount requested from the CFI. Provide the partner name and type, as well as a breakdown of contributions (cash and in-kind) for each eligible partner. Bundle all expected in-kind contributions from vendors into a single line. If partner contributions are expected but have not yet been confirmed, outline the plans for securing these funds.

Infrastructure utilization

Explain the use of the requested infrastructure for CFI-eligible (research, technology development and associated training) and non-eligible (e.g., education, administration, clinical or other service function) purposes and any applicable prorating of costs.

"Associated training" refers only to cases where the training is linked to an applied research or technology development program.

For non-eligible infrastructure, explain the methodology used to estimate the percentage of use for each category and how the budget was prorated

Overview of infrastructure project funding

CAMS automatically populates the tables in the "Overview of infrastructure project funding" section with information taken from the other sections of the finance module. The amount requested from the CFI is calculated based on the difference between the total contributions from eligible partners and the total eligible costs.

Suggested reviewers module

CAMS automatically populates the suggested reviewers module with information provided in the notice of intent.

Part 3 – Criterion standards and instructions

Objective 1

Create and enhance partnerships with the public, private or not-for-profit sectors that lead to innovation. These innovations must address social, business, health or environmental needs of a Canadian industry or community

Assessment criteria under this objective are:

- Applied research or technology development
- Partnerships

Applied research or technology development

Criterion standard: The proposed applied research or technology development activities respond to clearly identified needs of an industry or community and have been developed in collaboration with partners to ensure the research achieves the intended outcomes.

Address each of the following aspects:

- What are the needs of your industry or community and how did you determine them (e.g. stakeholder consultations, environmental scan)?
- What applied research activities will you undertake with your partners? For each, include the following:
 - What are the objectives?
 - What is the methodology?
 - What are the intended outcomes?

Make sure your descriptions provide a sufficient level of detail for experts in the field who will judge the feasibility of the activities.

Describe collaborations with partners in the “Partnerships” section.

Partnerships

Criterion standard: The institution has demonstrated its ability to build and maintain productive partnerships with an industry or community. The institution has identified partners for the planned applied research activities. The institution has a plan to stimulate new partnerships with the industry or community.

Address each of the following aspects:

- What is your college's track record of establishing and maintaining research partnerships with the industry or community? Please include information about the:
 - Outcomes of previous partnerships
 - Longevity of previous partnerships
 - Partner contributions to research in the past (e.g., financial, personnel time, participation in the research activities). (Only address the last two aspects if you are requesting more than \$250,000.)
- Who are your partners for the proposed applied research activities?
- How did you select your partners? (Only address this aspect if you are requesting more than \$250,000.)
- How will you reach out to the industry or community to stimulate new partnerships?

Objective 2

Enhance and optimize the proven applied research capacity of the college that is related to the proposed applied research or technology development activities

Assessment criteria under this objective are:

- Infrastructure
- Team

Infrastructure

Criterion standard: The requested infrastructure is necessary and appropriate to conduct the proposed applied research activities. It enhances and integrates with the college's existing applied research capacity. The infrastructure will be optimally used and maintained to ensure continued collaborations with, and relevance to, the industry or the community.

Address each of the following aspects:

- Describe each requested item and justify why acquiring the infrastructure is the best way to meet the needs of the proposed research program. Indicate the item number, quantity, location, cost that you have entered in the "Cost of individual items" table. Provide a cost breakdown for any grouping of items. For construction or renovation, provide a description of the space including its location, size and nature (e.g., wet lab, greenhouse).
- How does the requested research infrastructure enhance and integrate with the existing research infrastructure at your college?
- How is the requested infrastructure relevant and essential for creating and enhancing collaborations with partners? (Only address this aspect if you are requesting more than \$250,000.)
- How is the requested infrastructure versatile and able to respond to immediate and longer-term applied research needs of the industry or the community? (Only address this aspect if you are requesting more than \$250,000.)
- How will the infrastructure be optimally used and maintained? Specify the operating and maintenance costs and revenue sources needed to sustain the requested infrastructure over its useful life (five years and beyond). Refer to the "Financial resources for operation and maintenance" table in the finance module.

When you describe each item, be sure to specify the item's main features so reviewers can judge its suitability for conducting the proposed activities using the methodology described.

Consider explaining how much the infrastructure will be used in your regular operations for the proposed applied research activities (e.g., number of samples processed per day, hours of operation, number of users).

- If you are requesting funding for construction or renovations essential to house and use the CFI-funded infrastructure or to conduct the research activities described in the proposal, provide the following information in a separate document as part of the finance module:
 - A timeline identifying key dates for the various stages of the proposed construction or renovation. (We expect colleges to finalize contracts and start the construction or renovation component of a funded project within 18 months of the funding decision. This applies to every site when a project involves multiple sites. While we recognize that some projects involve large and complex construction or renovation components, we expect your college to have completed planning and development work for such a project before applying.)

- Floor plans of the proposed new area(s), showing the location of the requested infrastructure and the scale of the plans
- A detailed breakdown of the overall cost of the construction or renovation project, categorized by cost component (i.e. direct costs, soft costs and contingency costs), when these costs are expected to be more than \$500,000.

Team

Criterion standard: The team comprises the breadth of expertise and experience needed to conduct the proposed applied research activities and operate the requested infrastructure.

Address each of the following aspects:

- What is the experience, expertise and contribution of the research and technical staff (from your college and from your partners) to conducting the applied research and operating the requested infrastructure?
- How will staff from your college (e.g., administrative, business development) support the research and ensure the sustainability of the infrastructure? (Only address this aspect if you are requesting more than \$250,000.)
- What are the specific challenges or systemic barriers (see “How are systemic barriers defined?”) that exist in the context of your research program that could prevent individuals from underrepresented groups from participating equitably within the research team?
- Describe at least one concrete practice that you put in place to overcome the challenges or systemic barriers previously described and which demonstrates that equity and diversity were intentionally considered when composing the research team and recruiting team members.
- Describe at least one concrete practice that you will adopt to facilitate the ongoing inclusion of underrepresented groups in the research team, and how you will implement that best practice given the challenges or systemic barriers previously described.

For examples of best practices, consult the [Government of Canada's Best Practices in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Research](#).



How are systemic barriers defined?

Systemic barriers are defined as policies or practices that result in some individuals from underrepresented groups receiving unequal access to or being excluded from participation in employment, services or programs. Underrepresented groups can include, but are not limited to, women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities/racialized groups, members of LGBTQ2+ communities and early-career researchers.

Objective 3

Generate social, economic, health or environmental benefits locally or nationally including the development of highly qualified personnel

Assessment criterion under this objective is:

- Benefits

Benefits

Criterion standard: The proposed activities are likely to lead to social, economic, health or environmental benefits at the local or national level. The proposed activities will enable the development of highly qualified personnel.

Address each of the following aspects:

- What are the anticipated benefits of the applied research activities for the industry or community beyond the outcomes described in the “Applied research” section? This can include knowledge mobilization and technology transfer activities.
- What is your plan for training highly qualified personnel through applied research activities (e.g., co-op projects, capstone projects, paid internships) using the requested infrastructure? How many people will be trained and which skills will they acquire?
- Describe at least one action that you will take to promote equitable access to applied research opportunities for highly qualified personnel using the requested infrastructure. What efforts will be taken to ensure an inviting and inclusive training environment? (While we encourage you to consider this aspect in your applied research activities, you are not required to provide information, nor will we assess this aspect until 2024.)

If applicable, quantify the anticipated benefits of the applied research activities for the industry or community (e.g., number of jobs created, amount of increased revenue, number of people helped).

Appendix 1 – Summary of new features of the College Fund

Objectives

To more broadly address the needs of the college research community, we have revised the objectives of the College Fund to embrace the full spectrum of innovation. By funding applied research projects that lead to business, health or social innovation, the College Fund now supports colleges in developing and fostering partnerships with the public and not-for-profit sectors, while continuing to do the same for partnerships with the private sector. This change will allow colleges to generate not only economic benefits for Canada, but also social, health or environmental benefits.

See [“Objectives of the College Fund”](#)

Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

The CFI has developed a new equity, diversity and inclusion approach for its funds in consultation with stakeholders across Canada and based on the approach of the Tri-agency Institutional Programs Secretariat’s New Frontiers in Research Fund.

In the College Fund, we are introducing EDI considerations in two phases. In a first step, we have included EDI aspects in the “Team” criterion, which aim to ensure that equity and diversity principles are considered in the team composition and that an inclusive environment will be fostered for the entire research team. (See [“Team”](#))

Starting in 2024, an EDI aspect will be added to the “Benefits” criterion, which will promote equitable access to applied research opportunities for highly qualified personnel.

Number of proposals per college

Colleges can now submit up to three proposals per competition. This recognizes that colleges may wish to submit a greater diversity of proposals to the College Fund.

Streamlined proposals and merit-review process

To reduce the burden on applicants and reviewers, we have reduced the requirements for proposals requesting \$250,000 or less from the CFI. These proposals will have a reduced number of aspects to address under some assessment criteria and will therefore be shorter.

To shorten and streamline the review process and reduce the burden on reviewers, we will:

- Remove proposals from the competition that do not meet the threshold of excellence according to the Expert Committee review (See [“What is the threshold of excellence?”](#))
- Provide additional feedback in the Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee report for proposals that do not receive funding. All proposals will continue to receive a detailed Expert Committee report.

Proposal page limit

We will also allow more pages for applications written in French. This provision is in support of evidence demonstrating that documents written in French require approximately 20 percent more space than similar documents in English, and will ensure an equitable amount of space for applications written in either official language.

Total CFI request (\$)	Maximum number of pages	
	Proposals written in English	Proposals written in French
\$60,000 to \$250,000	13	16
More than \$250,000 up to \$1 million	18	22

See ["Page limits."](#)