

CANADA FOUNDATION FOR INNOVATION

2025 Innovation Fund




Analysis of strengths and weaknesses

June 2026

Qualitative analysis

- CFI staff undertook qualitative coding of the 2025 Innovation Fund Expert Committee reports and Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee reports.
- The percentages shared on the following pages represent the percentage of reports that contain the indicated strength or weakness code.
 - For Expert Committee reports, it is the percentage of Expert Committee reports within the indicated stream.
 - For Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee reports, it is the percentage of Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee reports within the indicated stream.
 - The “Strengths” column percentages exclude strengths coded as 4+, which are presented in the next column.

Number of proposals by stream

Stream	Expert Committee	Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee
 1	229	130
 2	32	16
 3	73	49

Expert Committee

Research or technology development

Strengths (4+)

Strengths

79%

- Innovative research

75%

- Feasible/good approach

59%

- EDI in research design

34%

- Challenges and how to overcome them well described

5.7%

- Highly innovative research

4.4%

- Exceptional breakthrough potential

3.5%

- Global leadership

2.2%

- Highly feasible and innovative approach

1.3%

- Exceptional EDI in research design

0.9%

- Co-development with local communities and Indigenous Peoples

0.4%

- Responds to urgent needs

0.4%

- Deep understanding of EDI

Weaknesses

48%

- Lack of details on methodology

36%

- Lack of details on activities

35%

- Challenges and how to overcome them poorly/not described

29%

- Feasibility concerns on some aspects

Expert Committee Team

Strengths (4+)

Strengths

91%

- Relevant experience and expertise

67%

- Good EDI evidence-based actions — participation

56%

- Career-stage balance

55%

- Good EDI evidence-based actions — working environment

49%

- Research track record

27%

- Understanding of EDI-related issues

7.9 %

- Exceptional expertise and experience

4.8%

- Exceptional research track record

3.1%

- Exceptional EDI evidence-based actions — participation and working environment

1.7%

- Global leaders

1.7%

- Deep understanding of EDI

0.9%

- Exceptional collaboration track record

0.9%

- Outstanding team leaders

0.4%

- Exceptional IP/spin-off/industry experience

Weaknesses

34%

- Missing specific expertise/no critical mass of specific expertise

21%

- Missing details/unclear roles

18%

- Limited information on EDI

18%

- Weak EDI evidence-based actions — participation

15%

- Weak EDI evidence-based actions — working environment

Expert Committee Infrastructure



Strengths

91%

- Necessary and appropriate infrastructure

91%

- Complements existing infrastructure

9%

- Innovative infrastructure

Strengths (4+)

4.4%

- Highly innovative infrastructure

1.7%

- Critical infrastructure

1.3%

- Highly versatile infrastructure

Weaknesses

45%

- Some equipment not well justified/not connected to research activities

26%

- Weak complementarity of some equipment with existing infrastructure

12%

- Limited information on the availability of similar/existing infrastructure

Expert Committee Sustainability



Strengths

84%

- Good O&M plan

83%

- Good plan for equitable and inclusive access

82%

- High demand/large user base/good access plan

79%

- Good data management plan

64%

- O&M costs well justified

Strengths (4+)

1.3%

- Proven governance and oversight plan

1.3%

- Exceptional plan for equitable and inclusive access

1.3%

- Exceptional data management plan

0.4%

- Proven O&M plan

Weaknesses

37%

- Limited information on optimal use

26%

- Limited information on data management

25%

- Limited information on equitable and inclusive access

21%

- Limited information on O&M budget

19%

- Limited information on O&M plan

Expert Committee Benefits

Strengths

91%

- Potential for impact

81%

- Credible pathways for knowledge mobilization and technology transfer

76%

- Good integration of EDI in training and mentorship

64%

- Meaningful inclusion of impacted people or communities

44%

- Strong HQP training plan

Strengths (4+)

5.7%

- Exceptional potential for impact (including commercialization and job creation)

2.6%

- Co-development with impacted people or communities

1.8%

- Exceptional HQP training track record and/or significant number of HQP

1.8%

- Exceptional HQP training plan and/or unique training opportunities

1.7%

- Proven pathways for knowledge mobilization and technology transfer

1.3%

- Exceptional integration of EDI in training and mentorship

1.3%

- Critical importance to Canada

Weaknesses

21%

- Limited information on specific benefits

21%

- Limited information on knowledge mobilization and technology transfer pathways

19%

- Weak integration of EDI in training and mentorship

18%

- Limited information on the integration of EDI in training and mentorship

15%

- Limited information on impacted people or communities

Expert Committee

Research or technology development

Strengths

94%

- Innovative research

88%

- EDI in research design

69%

- Feasible/good approach

Strengths (4+)

9.4%

- Highly innovative research

6.3%

- Global leadership

3.1%

- Responds to urgent needs

3.1%

- Challenges and how to overcome them very well described

3.1%

- Co-development with local communities and Indigenous Peoples

3.1%

- Exceptional EDI in research design

Weaknesses

50%

- Feasibility concerns on some aspects

44%

- Lack of details on methodology

38%

- Challenges and how to overcome them poorly/not described

34%

- Lack of details on activities

Expert Committee Team

Strengths

94%

- Relevant expertise and experience

78%

- Good EDI evidence-based actions — participation

56%

- Career-stage balance

56%

- Good EDI evidence-based actions — working environment

53%

- Research track record

Strengths (4+)

13%

- Exceptional research track record

9.4%

- Exceptional expertise and experience

6.3%

- Exceptional EDI evidence-based actions — participation

Weaknesses

44%

- Missing specific expertise/no critical mass of specific expertise

16%

- Weak EDI evidence-based actions — participation

13%

- Insufficient collaboration with local communities and Indigenous Peoples

Expert Committee Infrastructure

Strengths

91%

- Necessary and appropriate infrastructure

84%

- Complements existing infrastructure

13%

- Innovative infrastructure

Strengths (4+)

3.1%

- Critical infrastructure

Weaknesses

47%

- Some equipment not well justified/not connected to research activities

31%

- Weak complementarity of some equipment with existing infrastructure

6%

- Construction/renovation not well justified

6%

- Limited information on the availability of similar/existing infrastructure

Expert Committee Sustainability

Strengths

91%

- Good data management plan

88%

- Good plan for equitable and inclusive access

78%

- Good O&M plan

78%

- O&M costs well justified

Strengths (4+)

3.1%

- Proven governance and oversight plan

Weaknesses

34%

- Limited information on optimal use

28%

- Limited information on equitable and inclusive access

28%

- Limited information on data management

19%

- Limited information on O&M plan

19%

- Limited information on O&M budget

Expert Committee Benefits

Strengths

91%

- Potential for impact

84%

- Good integration of EDI in training and mentorship

78%

- Credible pathways for knowledge mobilization and technology transfer

75%

- Meaningful inclusion of impacted people or communities

67%

- Public engagement/plan for outreach

Strengths (4+)

6.3%

- Exceptional potential for impact

6.3%

- Co-development with impacted people or communities

3.1%

- Proven pathways for knowledge mobilization and technology transfer

3.1%

- Exceptional HQP training plan

3.1%

- Exceptional integration of EDI in training and mentorship

Weaknesses

22%

- Limited information on the integration of EDI in training and mentorship

19%

- Limited information on specific benefits

19%

- Weak collaboration with impacted people or communities

16%

- Limited information on knowledge mobilization and technology transfer pathways

Expert Committee

Research or technology development

Strengths

93%

- Good network of users and collaborators

77%

- Innovative research

64%

- EDI in research design

30%

- Internationally competitive

Strengths (4+)

6.8%

- Highly innovative

6.8%

- Exceptional network of users and collaborators

2.7%

- Global leadership

2.7%

- Co-development with local communities and Indigenous Peoples

2.7%

- Exceptional EDI in research design

Weaknesses

26%

- Network of users and collaborators limited in scope

19%

- Lack of details on activities

19%

- Poor EDI in research design

14%

- Research not innovative

Expert Committee Team

Strengths

96%

- Relevant expertise and experience

70%

- Research track record

67%

- Good EDI evidence-based actions — participation

64%

- Good EDI evidence-based actions — working environment

59%

- Career-stage balance

23%

- Understanding of EDI-related issues

Strengths (4+)

9.6%

- Exceptional expertise and experience

8.2%

- Exceptional research track record

2.7%

- Exceptional collaboration track record

2.7%

- Outstanding team leaders

2.7%

- Co-development with local communities and Indigenous Peoples

1.4%

- Global leaders

1.4%

- Exceptional EDI evidence-based actions — participation

1.4%

- Exceptional EDI evidence-based actions — working environment

Weaknesses

22%

- Missing specific expertise/no critical mass of specific expertise

18%

- Limited information on EDI

15%

- Missing details/unclear roles

Expert Committee Infrastructure

Strengths

93%

- Complements existing infrastructure

92%

- Necessary and appropriate infrastructure

74%

- Core O&M personnel well justified

Strengths (4+)

4.1%

- Highly innovative infrastructure

4.1%

- Perfect complement to existing infrastructure

4.1%

- Core O&M personnel critical

1.4%

- Highly versatile infrastructure

1.4%

- Critical infrastructure

Weaknesses

29%

- Some equipment not well justified/not connected to research activities

15%

- Weak complementarity of some equipment with existing infrastructure

11%

- Core O&M personnel not well justified

Expert Committee Sustainability

Strengths

89%

- High demand/large user base/good access plan

89%

- Good plan for equitable and inclusive access

82%

- Good data management plan

67%

- Good O&M plan

Strengths (4+)

4.1%

- Proven O&M plan

4.1%

- Robust business model

2.7%

- Proven governance and oversight plan

2.7%

- Exceptional team management track record

1.4%

- Exceptional plan for equitable and inclusive access

Weaknesses

41%

- Limited information on optimal use

22%

- Limited information on data management

21%

- Limited information on O&M plan

21%

- Limited information on O&M budget

16%

- Limited user base

Expert Committee Benefits

Strengths (4+)

Strengths

86%

- Potential for impact

81%

- Credible pathways for knowledge mobilization and technology transfer

81%

- Good integration of EDI in training and mentorship

71%

- Meaningful inclusion of impacted people or communities

48%

- HQP training track record

11%

- Exceptional potential for impact (including commercialization and job creation)

6.8%

- Exceptional integration of EDI in training and mentorship

5.5%

- Proven pathways for knowledge mobilization and technology transfer

4.1%

- Co-development with impacted people or communities

4.1%

- Exceptional HQP training plan and/or unique training opportunities

4.1%

- Exceptional HQP training track record and/or significant number of HQP

2.7%

- Exceptional partnership with end users

1.4%

- Critical importance to Canada

Weaknesses

23%

- Limited information on impacted people or communities

22%

- Limited information on the integration of EDI in training and mentorship

18%

- Limited information on knowledge mobilization and technology transfer pathways

12%

- Limited information on specific benefits

12%

- Weak training plan

Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee

Objective 1



Strengths

- 50%**
 - Innovative research
- 49%**
 - Relevant expertise and experience
- 38%**
 - Good EDI evidence-based actions — participation and working environment
- 30%**
 - Research track record
- 28%**
 - Internationally competitive
- 26%**
 - EDI in research design
- 25%**
 - Career-stage balance
- 25%**
 - Feasible/good approach

Strengths (4+)

- 10%**
 - Exceptional expertise and experience (including IP/spin-off/industry) and/or exceptional research track record
- 8.5%**
 - Highly innovative research
- 6.2%**
 - Exceptional breakthrough potential
- 2.3%**
 - Co-development with local communities and Indigenous Peoples
- 2.3%**
 - Global leadership
- 2.3%**
 - Highly feasible/innovative approach and/or challenges and how to overcome them very well described
- 1.5%**
 - Exceptional collaboration track record
- 0.8%**
 - Exceptional EDI evidence-based actions — participation and working environment

Weaknesses

- 18%**
 - Lack of details on methodology
- 18%**
 - Missing specific expertise/no critical mass of specific expertise
- 13%**
 - Lack of details on activities
- 12%**
 - Feasibility concerns on some aspects
- 9%**
 - Challenges and how to overcome them poorly/not described
- 7%**
 - Projects not integrated/lack of focus
- 5%**
 - Limited information on EDI in research design
- 5%**
 - Lack of details on comparable programs

Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee

Objective 2

STREAM
1

Strengths

52%

- Necessary and appropriate infrastructure

46%

- Good O&M plan

43%

- Good governance/oversight plan

40%

- Good plan for equitable and inclusive access

39%

- Complements existing infrastructure

29%

- Good data management plan

29%

- High demand/large user base/good access plan

Strengths (4+)

4.6%

- Highly innovative infrastructure

2.3%

- Perfect complement to existing infrastructure

0.8%

- Proven O&M plan

0.8%

- Exceptional team track record in management

0.8%

- Critical infrastructure

0.8%

- Integrated with sustainable facility

0.8%

- Robust business model

Weaknesses

13%

- Some equipment not well justified/not connected to research activities

11%

- Limited information on O&M budget

9%

- Limited information on data management

8%

- Limited information on optimal use

7%

- Limited information on O&M plan

6%

- Weak data management plan

6%

- Weak governance/oversight plan

6%

- Weak O&M plan

Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee

Objective 3

STREAM
1

Strengths

55%

- Potential for impact

37%

- Credible pathways for knowledge mobilization and technology transfer

30%

- Good integration of EDI in training and mentorship

26%

- Meaningful inclusion of impacted people or communities

24%

- Strong HQP training plan

Strengths (4+)

10%

- Exceptional potential for impact (including commercialization and job creation)

3.1%

- Exceptional HQP training plan and/or unique training opportunities

2.3%

- Proven pathways for knowledge mobilization and technology transfer

2.3%

- Exceptional HQP training track record and/or significant number of HQP

1.5%

- Co-development with impacted people or communities

0.8%

- Exceptional integration of EDI in training and mentorship

0.8%

- Exceptional partnership with end users

Weaknesses

12%

- Limited information on impacted people or communities

9%

- Weak technology transfer and knowledge mobilization plan

9%

- Limited information on technology transfer and knowledge mobilization pathways

8%

- Limited information on specific benefits

6%

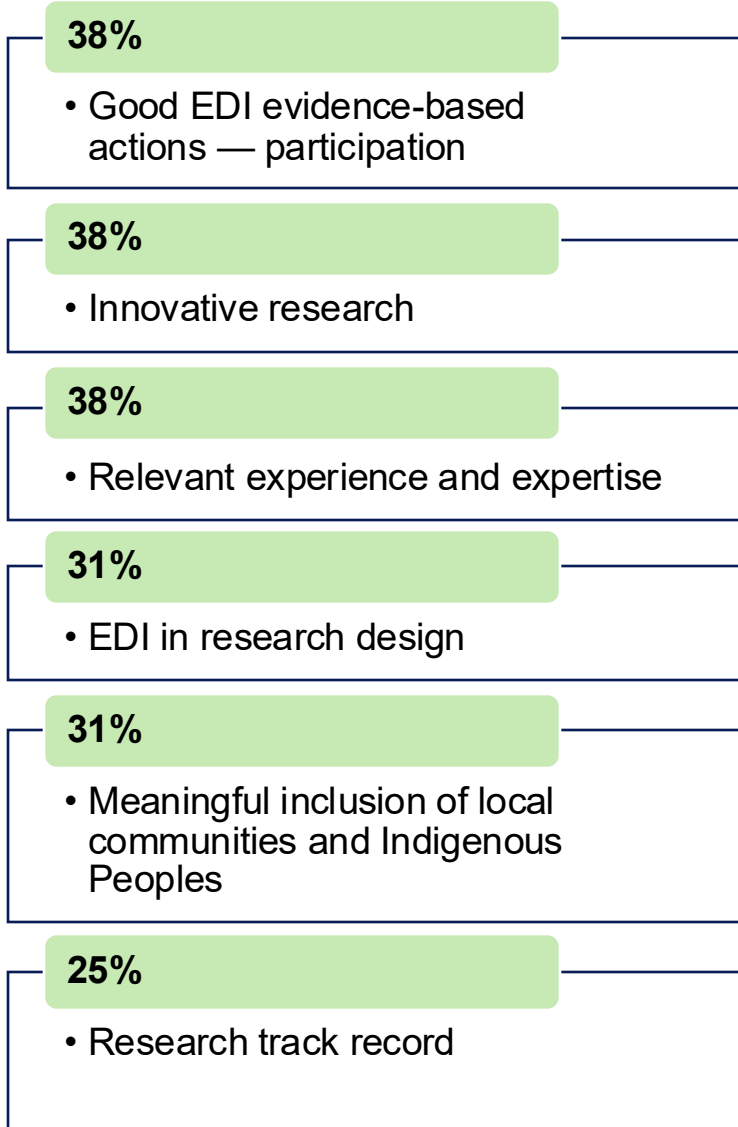
- Weak benefits

Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee

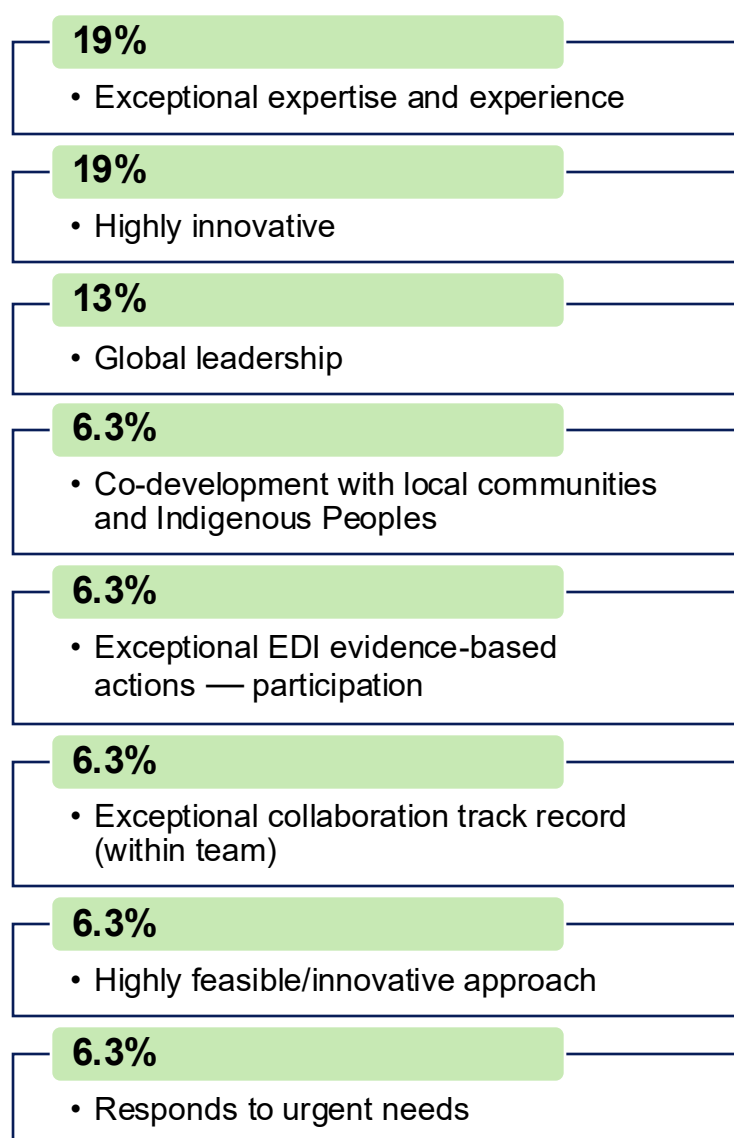
Objective 1



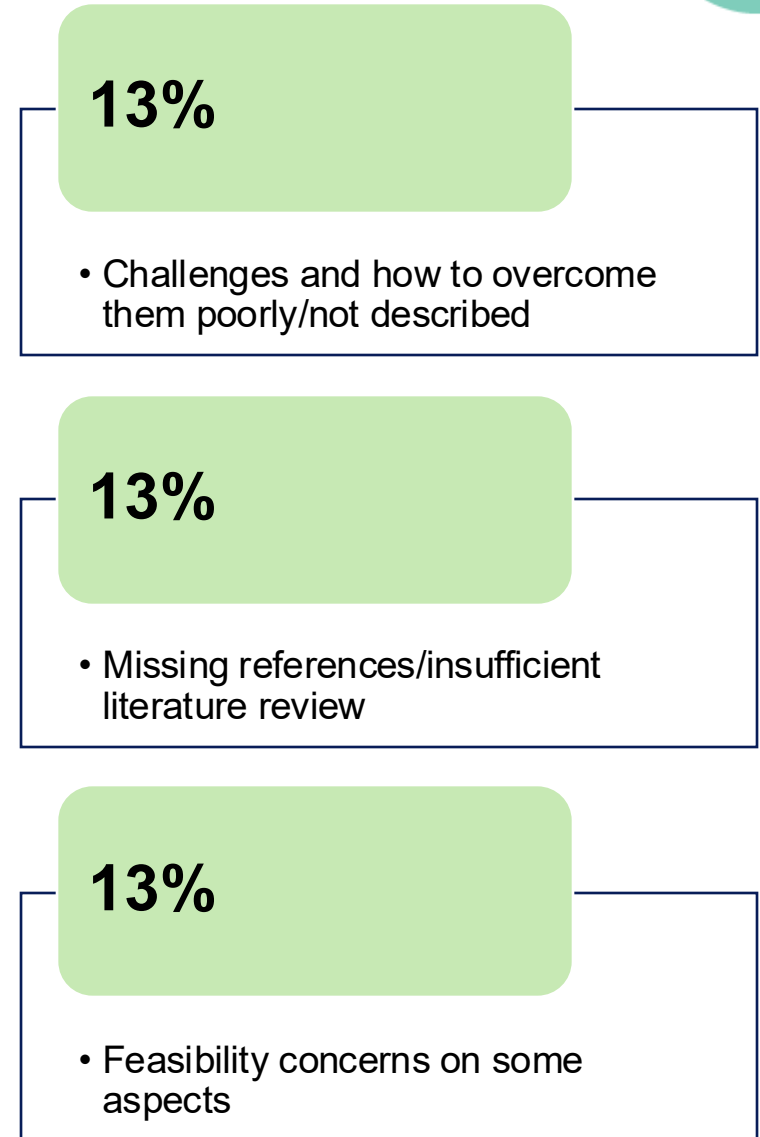
Strengths



Strengths (4+)



Weaknesses

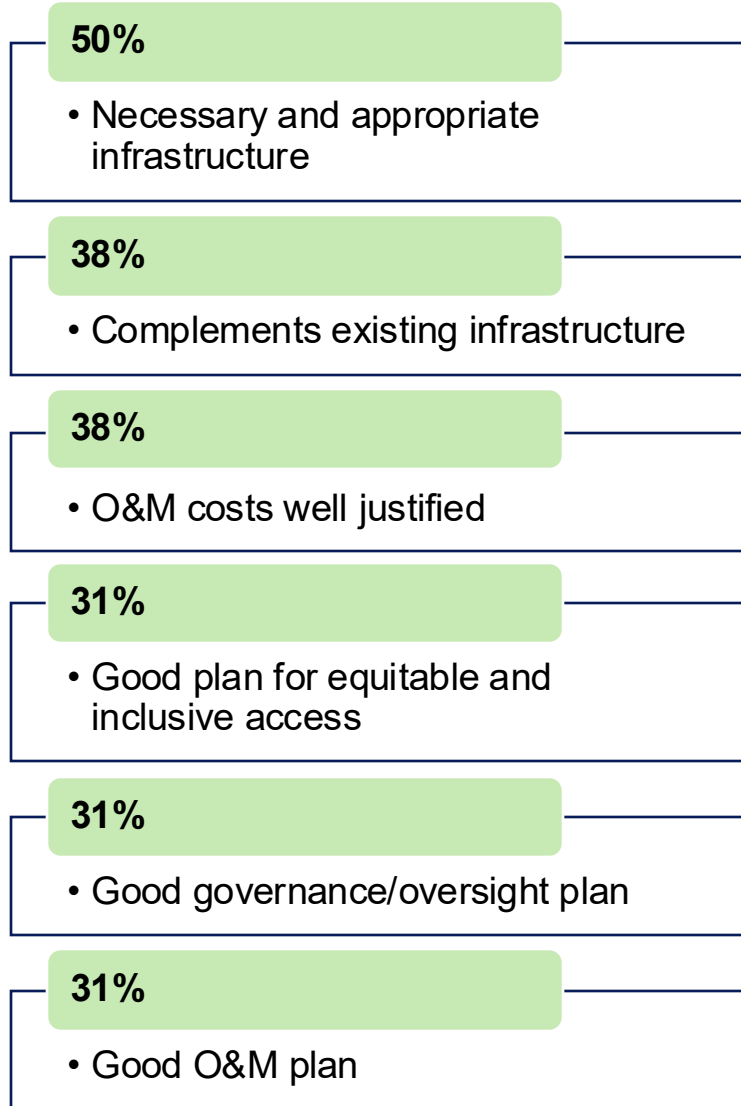


Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee

Objective 2



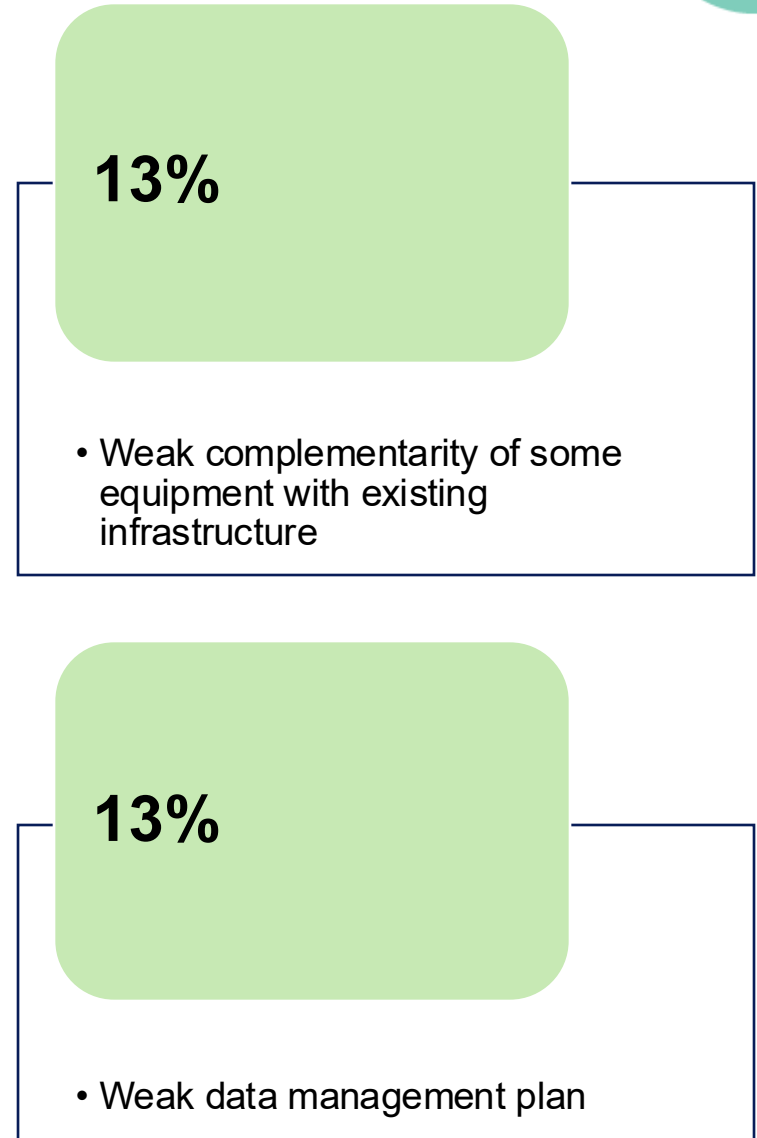
Strengths



Strengths (4+)



Weaknesses



Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee

Objective 3



Strengths

31%

- Meaningful inclusion of impacted people or communities

25%

- Credible pathways for knowledge mobilization and technology transfer

25%

- Data sharing strategy/open access

25%

- Potential career paths for HQP well described

25%

- Potential for impact

Strengths (4+)

13%

- Co-development with impacted people or communities

6.3%

- Exceptional integration of EDI in training and mentorship

6.3%

- Exceptional HQP training plan

6.3%

- Potential career paths for HQP described very convincingly

6.3%

- Exceptional potential for impact

6.3%

- Unique training opportunities

Weaknesses

19%

- Limited information on technology transfer and knowledge mobilization pathways

13%

- Limited information on specific benefits

13%

- Weak benefits

Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee

Objective 1



Strengths

- 57%**
 - Relevant experience and expertise
- 53%**
 - Innovative research
- 43%**
 - Research track record
- 39%**
 - EDI in research design
- 37%**
 - Good network of users and collaborators
- 35%**
 - Good EDI evidence-based actions — participation
- 33%**
 - Internationally competitive
- 22%**
 - Good EDI evidence-based actions — working environment

Strengths (4+)

- 16%**
 - Exceptional expertise and experience and/or exceptional research track record
- 12%**
 - Highly innovative research
- 4%**
 - Exceptional EDI evidence-based actions — participation
- 4%**
 - Exceptional network of users and collaborators
- 2%**
 - Co-development with local communities and Indigenous Peoples
- 2%**
 - Exceptional collaboration (outside team)
- 2%**
 - Global leadership
- 2%**
 - Outstanding team leaders

Weaknesses

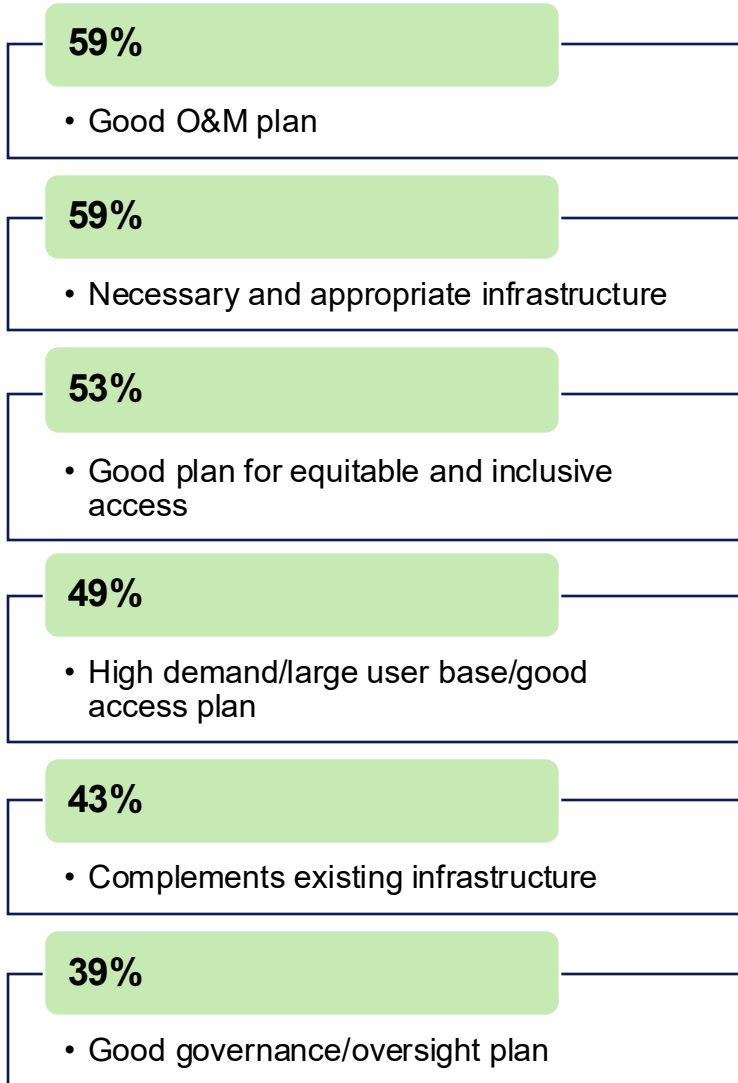
- 6%**
 - Missing details on activities
- 6%**
 - Missing specific expertise/no critical mass of specific expertise
- 6%**
 - Lack of strategic focus
- 6%**
 - Weak EDI evidence-based actions — participation
- 4%**
 - Limited inclusion of local communities and Indigenous Peoples
- 4%**
 - Network of users and collaborators limited in scope
- 4%**
 - Missing details on comparable facilities
- 4%**
 - Not innovative and/or not internationally competitive

Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee

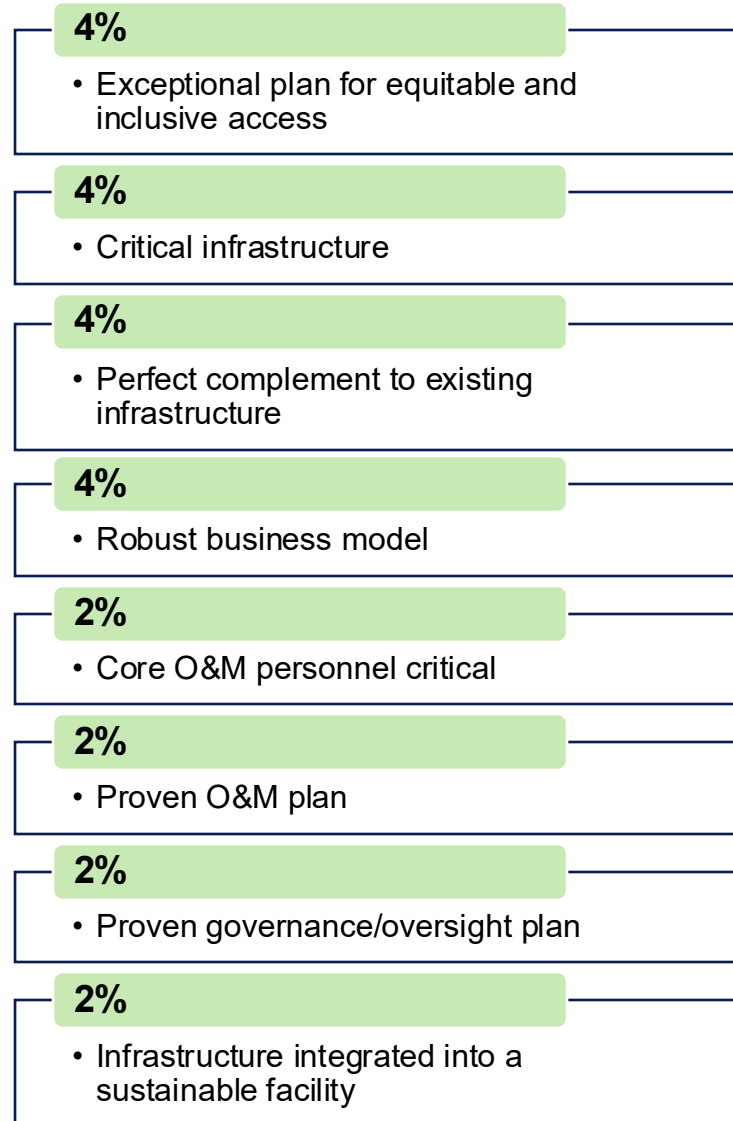
Objective 2



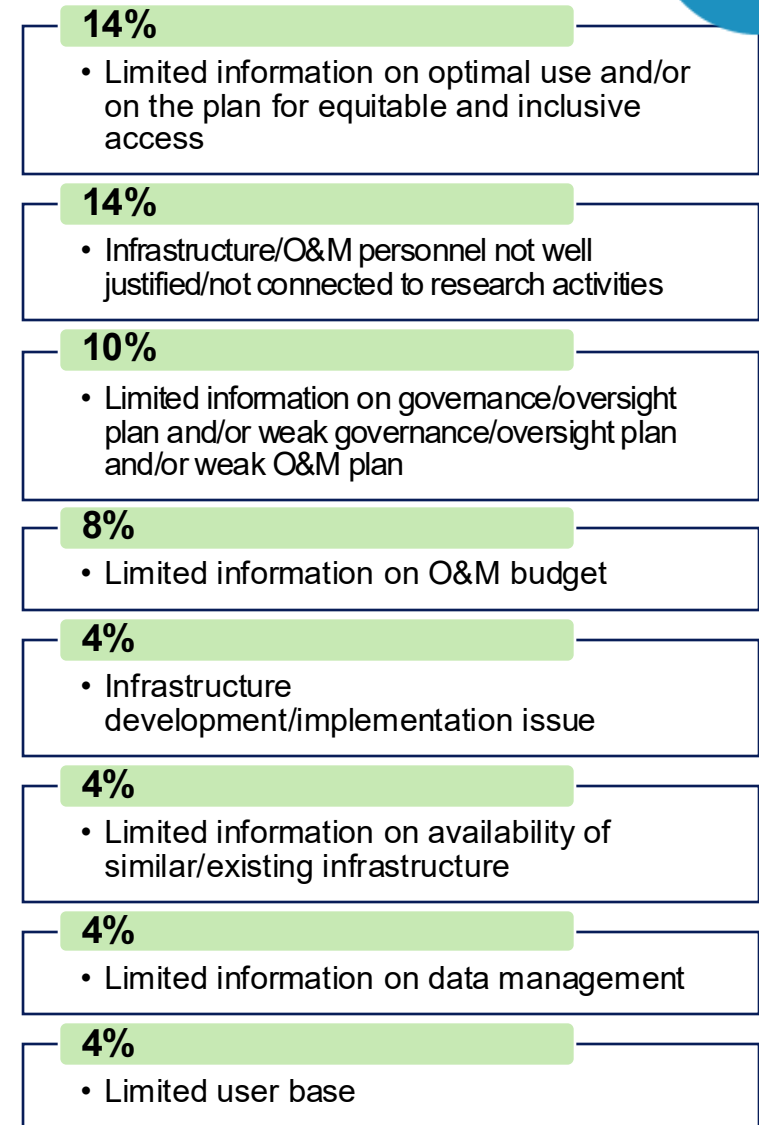
Strengths



Strengths (4+)



Weaknesses



Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee

Objective 3



Strengths

Strengths (4+)

Weaknesses

55%

- Potential for impact

10%

- Exceptional potential for impact

6%

- Limited information on specific benefits

47%

- Good integration of EDI in training and mentorship

4%

- Exceptional potential for commercialization/spin-off/intellectual property/job creation

4%

- Limited information on the integration of EDI in training and mentorship

43%

- Credible pathways for knowledge mobilization and technology transfer

4%

- Significant number of HQP

27%

- Meaningful inclusion of impacted people or communities

2%

- Critical importance to Canada

4%

- Limited information on knowledge mobilization and technology transfer pathways

27%

- Potential for commercialization/spin-off/intellectual property/job creation

2%

- Exceptional HQP training track record

27%

- Strong partnership with end users

2%

- Exceptional public engagement/plan for outreach

4%

- Weak collaboration with impacted people or communities