College-Industry Innovation Fund – Stream 1

Guidelines for completing a Notice of Intent and proposal

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

These guidelines are intended for researchers and college administrators who want to prepare and submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) and proposal to the Canada Foundation for Innovation's (CFI) College-Industry Innovation Fund (CIIF) – Stream 1.

You must use the CFI Awards Management System (<u>CAMS</u>) to prepare, share and submit NOIs and proposals for CIIF competitions. Links to the technical instructions for using CAMS, and other useful resources, are listed below.

Helpful links

- <u>CIIF Stream 1 Call for Proposals</u>
- Getting started with CAMS
- Policy and program guide

Deadlines

If you want to submit a proposal to a CIIF – Stream 1 competition, you must first submit an NOI using the submission process outlined in the next sections. The annual submission deadlines for the NOI and proposal are March 15 and May 15, respectively.



The deadline will be moved forward to the next business day if it falls on a weekend or statutory holiday.

Submitting an NOI or proposal

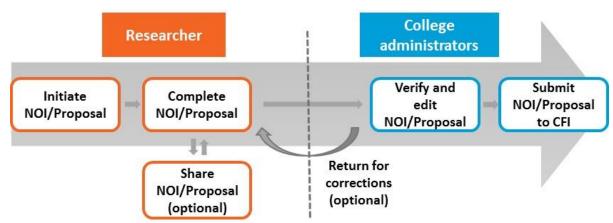


Figure 1 shows the steps to submit an NOI or proposal in CAMS.

Figure 1 – NOI and proposal submission process

Creating a CAMS account

You need a CAMS account to submit a proposal or NOI. Follow the instructions on the CAMS website to create one. Once the account is created, you can sign in to CAMS and access the

researcher dashboard where you can access all the forms and information you need to manage your NOIs, proposals and awards.

Creating a new NOI and proposal when the forms become available

From the CAMS Researcher dashboard, you can create proposals for any CFI competition. For this competition, select "College-Industry Innovation Fund – Funding for research infrastructure."

Note that **if you initiate a new NOI**, **you will automatically become the project leader.** Once you've entered essential information like project title, applicant institution and language of proposal, you can save the NOI and return to it at a later date.

Once you've completed and submitted the NOI, you will get access to the proposal form from the Researcher dashboard. Complete the proposal form using the same process you used for the NOI.

Adding key participants and sharing the forms

You can include other key participants in the NOI provided they have created their own CAMS account (see Chapter 3 for more information on key participants). Once you've added them, the key participants will receive an email invitation to participate in the NOI. They must then sign in to CAMS and accept participation in the NOI from their Researcher dashboard. All key participants must accept participation in the NOI before the college administrators can submit it to the CFI.

Any key participant identified in the NOI will also by default be identified as a key participant in the proposal — they don't need to reconfirm their participation. You can modify the key participants and add new ones to the proposal before submitting it. Newly added participants must accept participation from their researcher dashboard before the college administrators can formally submit the proposal.

Key participants will automatically have read-only access to the NOI or proposal through their Researcher dashboard. You can also share the NOI or proposal with other CAMS account holders, such as your college administrator designated as the CFI liaison, through the project sharing module. You can give different levels of access — from read access to update access — to other users. If you share the NOI or proposal with a user who also has access to the Institutional dashboard in CAMS, they must click on "Researcher dashboard" in the left navigation bar before they can access the form that is shared with them.

Completing the NOI or proposal

Complete all sections of the NOI or proposal as outlined in Chapters 3 and 4.

Once you've completed all the sections and they are validated by the CAMS system, the NOI or proposal status will display as "Completed" (see Figure 2 for statuses). This makes it available to your college administrators who must approve and submit it to the CFI.

Once you've submitted the NOI or proposal to your college's administration, you can read it, but you will no longer be able to modify its content.

Action	Proposal status
Project leader creates NOI/proposal	In progress
Project leader completes NOI/proposal	Completed by researcher
College administrators verify the NOI/proposal	Verified by the institution
College administrator with submission privileges submits the NOI/proposal to the CFI	Submitted to the CFI

Figure 2 – NOI and proposal statuses in CAMS

Verifying and editing the NOI or proposal

This step is done by college administrators through the CAMS Institutional dashboard. They will have access to any NOI or proposal created by researchers from their college.

Once you have submitted the NOI or proposal to your college's administration, they must verify its content and edit it if necessary through the Institutional dashboard. College administrators will also have the option to return the NOI or proposal back to the project leader for modifications.

Submitting the NOI or proposal to the CFI

Once it is verified, the NOI or proposal can be submitted to the CFI through the Institutional dashboard by an administrator who has submission privileges. Once it is submitted to the CFI, administrators at your college can read it, but they will no longer be able to modify its content.

Hardcopies of the NOIs and proposals are not required. However, a **proposal submission letter** (see Appendix 1 for template) listing the proposals on which your college is the administrative institution, is required at the proposal stage. (A letter is not required at the NOI stage.) The letter must be signed by the President or an authorized signatory as per the institutional agreement. The letter can be emailed as a scanned PDF to Elaine Salmon at <u>elaine.salmon@innovation.ca</u> no later than May 15.

If infrastructure is to be located off the premises of the administrative institution, the "collaborating institutions" section must be filled out in CAMS. The collaborating institution must then send the CFI a letter signed by the authorized signatory certifying its intention to receive a portion of the infrastructure.

CHAPTER 2 – GUIDELINES FOR ATTACHMENTS

Conformance with instructions for proposal preparation

It is important that all proposals conform to the instructions provided on the electronic proposal form as well as those in this guide. We strongly recommend that you carefully review the forms before submitting them to make sure they are complete and that they comply with the guidelines.

Pagination

CAMS will automatically add page numbers to proposals. Do not add page numbers to attachments before you upload them.

Page formatting

Expert reviewers and members of the Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee (MAC) assess electronic versions of proposals. It is therefore imperative that you properly and consistently format your proposals. Format attachments in a standard, single-column layout on an 8.5" x 11" page. Avoid using a two-column or landscape format since it can make it difficult to read electronically.

When you're selecting a font for the proposal form, remember that legibility is paramount. A 12point, black-coloured font and single line spacing (six lines per inch) with no condensed type or spacing is best.

Additionally, we expect attachments to conform to the following guidelines:

- Header: Indicate the lead institution in the top left, the title of the section in the middle 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 2.5 centimetres (1 inch) around the page. The header may be within the margin.
- File format and size: You can only upload PDF files. Convert documents in other formats to PDF and make sure they are not encrypted or password-protected before you upload them. The file size must not exceed twenty megabytes (20 MB).

You must adhere to the page formatting guidelines and requirements above so that your proposal is easy for reviewers to read and so that no applicant has an unfair advantage by using smaller type, line spacing or margins to provide more text in the proposal. If your proposal does not comply with the above recommendations, we may return it to your college administrators for revision.

CHAPTER 3 – NOTICE OF INTENT STRUCTURE

We use the NOIs to plan the review process, recruit expert committee members and identify potential eligibility issues for the infrastructure items requested. So it is important that your NOI contain accurate information about the infrastructure and who will use it, the applied research and technology development activities you propose and the outcomes you expect.

The NOI consists of the following four sections:

- Project information
- Key participants
- Project description
- · Suggested reviewers



Make sure the information provided in the NOI reflects 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.

Project information

The project information section captures basic information about the project such as the title, applicant institution, keywords, and the amount you're requesting from the CFI.

Key participants

List up to eight key participants, including the project leader associated with the proposal. These participants can be private-sector partners, or associated with your college or other organizations but must be essential to the proposed activities leading to business innovation. Your college will not be able to submit the NOI before all key participants have confirmed their participation. Researchers listed as key participants automatically gain read access to the NOI and proposal.

Project description (maximum three pages)

The project description must include:

- A brief description of the major pieces of infrastructure requested;
- An overview of the applied research and technology development projects that will be enabled by the infrastructure and how these align with the needs of private sector partners;
- A list of up to five private sector partners (current or planned), indicating their roles in the planned projects; and,
- A list of past CFI awards on which this project builds, if applicable.

Use this section to clearly indicate if the proposal will include advanced research computing infrastructure components. If you plan to request substantial advanced computing infrastructure, consult with Compute Canada to discuss the scope and needs of the proposed project. Visit <u>Compute Canada's website</u> for information on the established process to facilitate collaboration with institutions.

Suggested reviewers and conflicts of interest policy

Identify a minimum of six reviewers who are especially well qualified to review the proposal and who are not in a position of conflict of interest.



Your suggestions should include experts from the college applied research community and experts from the private sector, excluding partners and collaborators.

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 project leader or one of the key participants;
- 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 project leader or one of the key participants;
- Are currently affiliated with the project leader's or the key participants' institutions, organizations or companies, including research hospitals and research institutes;
- Are closely professionally affiliated with the project leader or one of the key participants, as a result of having in the **last six years**:
 - Frequent and regular interactions with the project leader or one of the key participants in the course of their duties at their department, institution, organization or company;
 - Been a supervisor or a trainee of the project leader or one of the key participants;
 - Collaborated, published or shared funding with the project leader or one of the key participants, or have plans to do so in the immediate future; or,
 - Been employed by the lead institution; and/or
- Feel for any reason unable to provide an impartial review of the proposal.



The decision whether or not to use your suggestions for reviewers remains with the CFI.

CHAPTER 4 – PROPOSAL STRUCTURE

The proposal must clearly present the merits of the proposed CIIF project. Provide enough information so that reviewers can evaluate the proposal in accordance with the assessment criteria established by the CFI.

The proposal consists of four separate CAMS modules:

- **Project module**: Provides information about the proposed project and how it meets the objectives and criteria of the CIIF, as well as a budget justification for the infrastructure items requested in the finance module;
- **Collaborating institutions module**: Identifies other CFI-eligible institutions that will receive requested infrastructure, if applicable;
- **Finance module**: Provides information pertaining to the budgetary details of the proposal;
- **Suggested reviewers module**: Identifies individuals who are qualified to provide an informed and impartial review of the proposal.

The online forms dictate the maximum number of characters that can be included in each section and the page limits for uploaded files.

Project module

The project module consists of the following sections:

- Project information
- Plain language summary and project summary
- Key participants
- Assessment criteria and budget justification (attachment)
- Financial resources for operation and maintenance

Project information

The project information section captures basic information about the project such as the title, applicant institution and keywords. The information on this page is automatically populated with information provided in the NOI.

Note that you can't change the name of the project leader or applicant institution from those provided at the NOI stage.

Plain language summary (1,500 characters)

Our ongoing efforts to remain accountable to the Government of Canada include showing how CFI investments lead to tangible social, economic and environmental outcomes for Canada and Canadians. To do so, we need your help in providing information that will help us tell the stories about how CFI-funded infrastructure plays a key role in outcomes such as creating jobs and spin-off companies, and improving products, policies, processes and services.

Provide a short summary of the proposed project in plain language, focusing on the expected outcomes for business innovation and any additional benefits for Canada.



This summary won't be used in the review process. We may use it in our communications products if the project is funded.

Project summary (maximum one page)

Provide a short summary of the proposal including an overview of the infrastructure requested. This summary must concisely address the extent to which the proposal meets the objectives to be assessed by the Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee (MAC):

- Objective 1: Create and enhance college-industry partnerships leading to business innovation using industry-relevant, state-of-the-art research infrastructure;
- Objective 2: Build upon proven applied research capacity and a track record of partnerships with the private sector in an area of strategic priority to the institution;
- Objective 3: Generate socioeconomic benefits in the region and nationally including the development of highly skilled personnel.



Most of the proposal should be written for experts in the project's field, but this summary should use language appropriate for non-experts as it is mainly intended for the Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee.

Key participants

You can add up to eight key participants (college administrators or technical and research staff, private-sector partners, academic collaborators, etc.) and their affiliation.

Any key participant identified in the NOI will by default be identified as a key participant in the proposal. The project leader and college administrators can modify the key participants and add new participants in the proposal before submitting it. Newly added participants must accept participation from their researcher dashboard before your college administrator (with submission privileges) can formally submit the proposal to the CFI.



While the number of key participants is limited to eight, other people can participate in the project. Reviewers on the Expert and Multidisciplinary Assessment Committees will expect the roles and contributions of each participant to be clearly explained in the "Assessment Criteria" attachment of the proposal.

Assessment criteria and budget justification (maximum 20 pages)

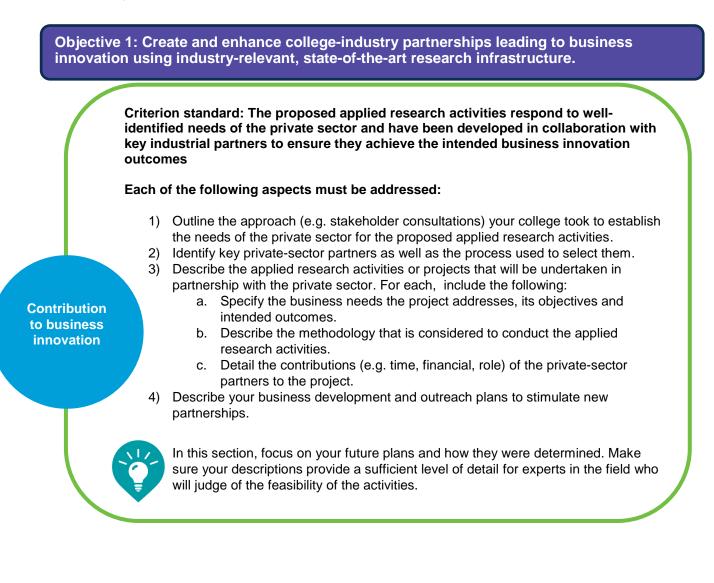
For this section of the online form, upload a PDF that contains key information on how the proposal meets the objectives, the established assessment criteria, and a budget justification for the infrastructure items requested. Make sure the document follows the guidelines on format, spacing and font use detailed in Chapter 2 of this document.



Each criterion contains a number of aspects that you must address in the proposal. Each criterion will be evaluated against a standard. Reviewers will be asked to rate the degree to which the proposal meets each standard. If you don't address all the aspects within each criterion, your proposal will be weakened. However, you may address these in the order of your choice. You must specify if

an element doesn't apply.

The attachment allows you maximum flexibility to address the criteria, including through the use of figures or diagrams where appropriate. You can choose how to allocate the allowed number of pages amongst the different sections. You may also address the aspects of each criterion in the order of your choice.



Criterion standard: The requested infrastructure plays an essential role in creating and enhancing collaborations with industrial partners. The infrastructure will be optimally used and maintained to ensure continued collaborations with, and relevance to, the partners.

Each of the following aspects must be addressed:

- Describe each item and justify why it is needed to conduct the proposed applied research activities. Use the item number, quantity, cost and location found 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.
- 2) Demonstrate how the infrastructure is industry-relevant and essential for creating and enhancing collaborations with private-sector partners.
- 3) Demonstrate the versatility of the requested infrastructure to respond to immediate and longer-term applied research needs of private-sector partners.
- 4) Indicate how the infrastructure will be efficiently used and maintained in the short term and sustained over the long term. Refer to the "financial resources for operation and maintenance" section.

For construction or renovation, detailed cost breakdown, timeline and floor plans must be provided in a separate document as part of the finance module.

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

Infrastructure and budget justification

Objective 2: Build upon proven applied research capacity and a track record of partnerships with the private sector in an area of strategic priority to the institution

Criterion standard: The proposal builds on the institution's proven applied research capacity and key investments in people and infrastructure in the area of strategic priority. Existing applied research capacity will be further enhanced by the requested infrastructure and the associated institutional commitments.

Each of the following aspects must be addressed:

Enhancing applied research capacity

- 1) Describe your college's current applied research capacity in this area of strategic priority, including:
 - a. the experience and expertise of key participants (from your college and from the private sector), administrative and business development personnel;
 - b. currently available equipment and research space; and
 - c. sources of financial support.
- 2) Describe how your college's existing applied research capacity will be enhanced by the requested infrastructure.
- 3) Specify your college's commitments in support of this proposal.



This section will provide information for reviewers to determine whether your proposal is in line with your current capacity and capabilities. Make sure to highlight the expertise of the participants regarding the operation of the infrastructure requested, including previous experience with similar equipment.

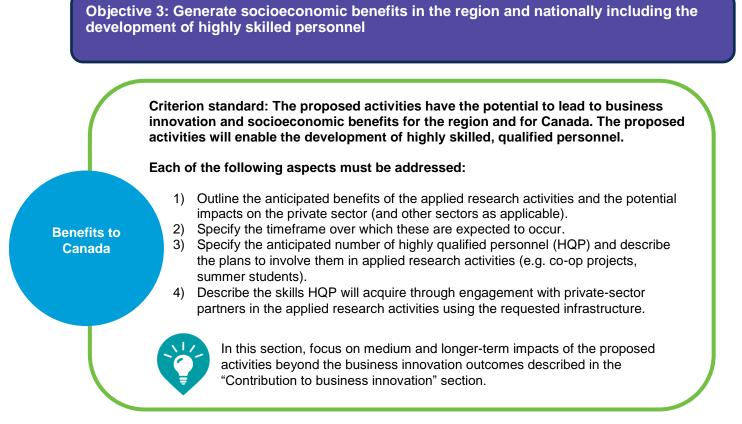
Criterion standard: The institution has demonstrated its ability to build and maintain productive partnerships with the private sector in the area of strategic priority.

Each of the following aspects must be addressed:

Partnerships with the private sector

- 1) Demonstrate your college's and research team's track record of establishing and maintaining partnerships with the private sector in the area.
- 2) Provide evidence of the business innovation outcomes enabled by these partnerships.

In this section, focus on your past and current track record of partnerships in the area of the proposal. Focus on your future plans (enabled by the infrastructure you're requesting) in the "Contribution to business innovation" section instead.



Financial resources for operation 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 life¹ of some of the infrastructure items requested is longer or shorter than five years, provide information in the "Infrastructure and budget justification" section of the proposal regarding the operating and maintenance needs for these items over their useful life.

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)², list these under the institutional contribution category.

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¹The useful life of the research infrastructure is considered to be the period of time over which the infrastructure is expected to provide benefits and be usable for its intended purpose as per the proposal, factoring in normal repairs and maintenance.



You must explain estimated costs and sources of support provided in these tables. Do so in the "Infrastructure and budget justification" section of the "Assessment Criteria" attachment.

Collaborating institutions module

If applicable, identify the institutions eligible for CFI funding collaborating in this project (other than the applicant institution). A collaborating institution is one that receives part of the infrastructure.

Finance module

The finance module consists of the following sections:

- Cost of individual items
- Floor plans (if applicable)
- Contributions from eligible partners
- Infrastructure utilization
- Overview of infrastructure project funding (generated automatically)

Make sure all requested information has been entered into the relevant fields in each section.

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

Cost of individual items

We recommend that you bundle items into functional groupings when completing the cost of individual items section. But in the "Infrastructure and budget justification" section, list and provide justification for each item within a group.

List only the eligible infrastructure acquisition and development costs as outlined in Section 4.6 of our Policy and program guide. List the full cost of each item or functional groupings. Retain documentation (price lists, quotes, etc.) so that you can provide it to the CFI upon request.



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

The total eligible costs must include taxes (net of credits received), shipping and

² The CFI contributes to the operating and maintenance costs of approved proposals through its Infrastructure Operating Fund (IOF). All eligible projects generate an IOF allocation of 30 percent of the maximum CFI amount approved at award finalization.

installation. However, taxes must not be calculated on the in-kind portion.

When preparing budget estimates, you must follow your college's existing policies and procedures. Costs included in this budget must be close estimates of fair-market value. Refer to section 6.5 of our Policy and program guide for information on how in-kind contributions must be assessed.

Floor plans (if applicable)

For this section of the online form, upload a PDF that contains the following information:

- A detailed breakdown of the overall cost of the construction or renovation project, categorized by cost component (i.e. direct, soft and contingency costs up to 10% of the construction costs);
- A timeline identifying key dates for the various stages of the proposed construction or renovation;
- Floor plans of the proposed area(s), showing the location of the infrastructure and the scale of the plans for projects involving multiple rooms. The floor plans must be legible when printed in black and white on standard letter size paper (8.5" x 11").

The floor plans are a separate attachment and not included in the 20-page maximum for the assessment criteria and budget justification attachment.



This attachment is intended for floor plans only. If any of the pages of the attachment provide information other than for the intended use, they will be removed from the proposal at the administrative review stage.

Contributions from eligible partners

List all contributions from eligible partners as outlined in Section 4.8 of our Policy and program guide. 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. If partner contributions are expected but have not yet been confirmed, outline the plans for securing these funds (e.g. proposals submitted to provincial partners).



We encourage you to bundle all expected in-kind contributions from vendors into a single line.

The total in-kind contributions from partners must equal the total in-kind portion of the costs of the items requested.

Infrastructure utilization

This section of the finance module captures the use of the requested infrastructure for CFIeligible and non-eligible purposes and any applicable prorating of costs.

If the infrastructure is used for non-CFI-eligible purposes, we expect the budget to be prorated proportionally to the percentage of use for applied research.



The requested infrastructure must be primarily used to carry out applied research and technology development activities with private-sector partners. The infrastructure may also be used for training purposes in cases where the training is articulated around an applied research or technology development project aimed at business innovation. In these cases, you may indicate that 100% is for applied research.

Suggested reviewers module

The list of suggested reviewers is prepopulated using the list provided in the NOI. You may identify additional reviewers who are well-qualified to review the proposal. Refer to the "Suggested reviewers" section in Chapter 3 of this document for conflict of interest guidelines.

APPENDIX 1: TEMPLATE – CIIF PROPOSAL SUBMISSION COVER LETTER

Mohamad Nasser-Eddine Director, Programs Canada Foundation for Innovation 450 – 230 Queen Street Ottawa ON K1P 5E4

Re: Confirmation and approval by the institution of proposals to the Canada Foundation for Innovation's (CFI) College-Industry Innovation Fund – Stream 1 competition

Dear Dr. Nasser-Eddine,

I am pleased to approve the submission of the following proposal(s):

Project number	Project leader	Project title

In signing this letter, I confirm that the institution:

- Agrees to and accepts the conditions governing CFI funding, as outlined in the *Policy and programs guide* and the institutional agreement;
- Accepts its commitment to ensure appropriate resources are provided for the operation and maintenance of the proposed CFI-funded research infrastructure over its useful life (i.e. the period of time over which the infrastructure is expected to provide benefits and be usable for its intended purpose, factoring in normal repairs and maintenance); and,
- Has previously, or as an attachment to this letter, submitted to the CFI its most recent strategic research plan.

Sincerely,

President (or authorized signatory)

Signature

Institution

Date

Research builds communities La recherche au service des collectivités

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