

Canada Foundation for Innovation  
Fondation canadienne pour l'innovation

# **2012 Leading Edge and New Initiatives Funds Competition**

Guidelines for completing a proposal


October 2011

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## Chapter 1 – Introduction

These guidelines are intended for researchers and institutional research services personnel wishing to prepare and submit a proposal to the 2012 Leading Edge and New Initiatives Funds (LEF/NIF) competition. For further information on these funds, consult the 2012 LEF/NIF Call for proposals on the Canada Foundation for Innovation's (CFI) website. Researchers and institutional research services personnel will use the CFI Awards Management System (CAMS) to prepare, share and submit notices of intent (NOIs) and proposals for this competition. Links to the technical instructions for using CAMS to create and manage NOIs and proposals to the 2012 LEF/NIF competition, and other useful resources, are listed below.



**Helpful links (PDF)**  
[\*2012 LEF/NIF: Call for proposals\*](#)  
[\*2012 LEF/NIF: Technical instructions for researchers and institutional research services personnel\*](#)  
[\*Getting started with CAMS: An overview document for researchers\*](#)  
[\*Getting started with CAMS: An overview document for institutional research services personnel\*](#)

### Deadlines

#### Notice of intent

Institutions wishing to submit a proposal to the 2012 LEF/NIF competition must first submit an NOI. The submission deadline for the NOI is **January 20, 2012**.

#### Proposals

The submission deadline for proposals to this competition is **April 26, 2012**.

#### Competition timeline

Date	Activity
<b>September 15, 2011</b>	Issue Call for proposals Online notice of intent (NOI) forms available
<b>December 2011</b>	Online proposal forms available
<b>January 20, 2012</b>	Deadline for the submission of NOIs
<b>April 26, 2012</b>	Deadline for the submission of proposals
<b>November 13, 2012</b>	CFI Board decisions

## Chapter 2 – Guidelines for attachments

### ***Electronic requirements***

The CFI does not distribute paper copies of its forms. Proposals for the 2012 LEF/NIF competition must be completed and submitted to the CFI through CAMS.

### ***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. Prior to electronic submission, it is strongly recommended that researchers and institutional research services personnel review the forms to ensure that proposals comply with these proposal preparation guidelines.

### ***Proposal pagination instructions***

CAMS will automatically paginate proposals submitted to the CFI. Attachments *should not* be individually paginated prior to upload to the electronic system.

### ***Page formatting***

Since many reviewers will be assessing proposals electronically, applicants should only use a standard, single-column on an 8.5" x 11" page layout for attachments. Avoid using a two-column or landscape format since it may cause difficulties when reading the document electronically.

The proposal must be clear and easily readable. Legibility is of paramount importance and should take precedence in the selection of an appropriate font for use in the proposal. **Applicants are strongly encouraged to use a 12-point, black-coloured font and use single line spacing (six lines per inch) with no condensed type or spacing.** Small font sizes make it difficult for reviewers to read the proposal; consequently, the use of small font not in compliance with the above recommendation may result in the CFI returning the proposal for further revision.

Additionally, the CFI expects attachments to conform to the following guidelines:

- **Header:** Indicate the applicant institution on the top left of each page and the project number on the top right of each page.
- **Footer:** Do not include any information in the bottom right side of the page as this area will be used for automatic page numbering.
- **Page margin:** Insert a margin of no less than 2.5 cm (1 inch) around the page. The header and footer may be within the margin.
- **File format:** Only PDF files may be uploaded. Documents in other formats should be converted to PDF prior to upload and should not be encrypted or password protected.

Adherence to the page formatting guidelines and requirements noted above is necessary to ensure that no applicant will have an unfair advantage by using smaller type, line spacing or margins to provide more text in the proposal.

## Chapter 3 – Proposal structure

The proposal should clearly present the merits of the proposed project. The requisite proposal preparation instructions are contained herein. Sufficient information should be provided to enable reviewers to evaluate the proposal in accordance with the merit review criteria established by the CFI (refer to *Assessment criteria*).

The proposal consists of three separate modules.

1. **Project module:** Information about the proposed project and how it meets the objectives of the competition;
2. **Finance module:** Information pertaining to the budgetary details of the proposal;
3. **Suggested reviewers module:** Recommendation of potential reviewers of the proposal.

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

### **Project module**

The project module consists of the following sections:

- Project information
- Collaborating institutions
- Plain language summary and Project summary
- Principal and Other users
- Past CFI awards (LEF-only)
- Assessment criteria
- Financial resources for operations and maintenance

### **Project information**

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

### **Collaborating institutions**

If applicable, identify the collaborating institutions that would receive part of the infrastructure requested and enter the amount to be drawn from each collaborating institution's envelope for this competition. The list of collaborating institutions should be filled out prior to completing the finance module. The choice of infrastructure location in the *Cost of individual items* section of the finance module will be populated based on this list. *Do not include* the applicant institution identified in the 'Project information' section in this list.

**Plain language summary (1500 characters)**

The CFI's ongoing efforts to remain accountable to the Government of Canada include showing how CFI investments lead to social, economic and environmental benefits to Canada. To that end, we need your help to provide information to tell the story of how CFI-funded infrastructure plays a key role in creating jobs, spin-off companies, improved products, policies, processes and services, etc.

Provide a short summary in plain language of the proposed project, focusing on the expected impacts and benefits to Canada, beyond academic accomplishments.

Note: This summary will not be used in the review process. Should the project be funded, it may be used in the CFI's communications products and website.

**Project summary (maximum three pages)**

In language appropriate for a multidisciplinary committee, provide a general description of the research or technology development to be undertaken and a general overview of the infrastructure being requested. This summary must concisely address the extent to which the proposal meets the competition objectives:

- Enables researchers to undertake world-class research and technology development in areas of regional and national strength that lead to social, economic and environmental benefits for Canada, including private-sector innovation and commercialization;
- Attracts and retains the world's top researchers and highly qualified personnel;
- Ensures the optimal use of research infrastructure within and among Canadian institutions;
- Promotes networking, collaboration and partnership among researchers, institutions and sectors as well as multidisciplinary approaches to research and technology development.

For projects recommended for funding by the multidisciplinary assessment committees (MAC), the project summary is the only section of the proposal that will be provided to the special multidisciplinary assessment committee (SMAC) to assist in its deliberations. This section of the proposal may be translated by the CFI for the SMAC's use. In such cases, institutions will be provided a copy of the translated text for the opportunity to comment and/or correct the translation prior to review by the SMAC.

**Principal and Other users**

Up to ten individuals who will be the principal users of the requested infrastructure may be included. Principal users must have a CAMS account and must accept to participate in the project before the proposal can be submitted to the CFI. The CVs of the principal users will be appended to the proposal.

Other users of the infrastructure may also be identified. These individuals will not be notified via CAMS of their inclusion in the proposal and, therefore, the institution should ensure that they have been informed and consented to their participation in the proposal.

### **Past CFI awards (LEF only)**

List the past CFI award(s) that this project is building on and include a brief list of the major pieces of infrastructure acquired with each award. The past award(s) can be at the applicant institution or at a collaborating institution. The following information for each of these awards will be included in the proposal:

- Project number
- Lead institution
- Project leader
- Project title
- Keywords
- Date awarded
- Amount awarded
- Percent of CFI funding dispersed

The applicant will be required to insert a list of the major infrastructure acquired.

### **Assessment criteria (maximum 25 pages for NIF and 32 pages for LEF)**

For this section of the online form, upload a PDF document that contains key information on how the proposal meets the objectives and established review criteria for this competition. Ensure that the document follows the guidelines on format, spacing and font use detailed in Chapter 2 of this document. Additionally, applicants should:

1. Address each criterion in the order that they appear below, and;
2. Begin each criterion on a new page.

Each assessment criterion will be evaluated against a standard. Reviewers will be asked to rate the degree to which the proposal meets each standard.

The attachment allows institutions maximum flexibility to address each criterion, including through the use of figures or diagrams where appropriate. The exact distribution of pages among sections is at the applicant's discretion, up to the total page limits noted. Based on past competitions, a typical distribution of pages among the sections for larger projects is:

- |                                      |             |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| • Performance report                 | Six pages   |
| • Research or technology development | Eight pages |
| • Team                               | Four pages  |
| • Benefits to Canadians              | Five pages  |
| • Infrastructure                     | Four pages  |
| • Sustainability                     | Five pages  |



## Criterion standard:

*Past CFI investments, on which this project builds, have given rise to particularly successful and productive activities, enabling institutions and their researchers to gain a competitive advantage internationally.*

### **Performance report (LEF-only)**

Each of the following must be addressed:

1. Describe the key CFI-funded infrastructure on which the project builds, including its implementation and operational status.  
  
Include quantitative evidence for each aspect below and directly correlate the results and outcomes described with the past CFI investments at the institution in this area of research or technology development.
2. Provide evidence of attraction and retention of world-class researchers and HQP. Include the number of HQP by type<sup>1</sup> and their career paths.
3. Describe the financial support that this project received for the operation, maintenance and sustainability of the infrastructure. Specify the nature and extent of the support provided by the various funding partners, including the federal/provincial funders, institution, foundations, private sector, etc.
4. Describe the formal collaborations<sup>2</sup> and partnerships among researchers, institutions and sectors, and with end users.

<sup>1</sup> Highly qualified personnel (HQP) include technicians, research associates, undergraduate students, graduate students and post-doctoral fellows

<sup>2</sup> Formal collaborations are based on signed research agreements, letters of intent, Memoranda of Understanding, etc.

***Performance report (continued):***

5. Describe the key research or technology development outputs (e.g. publications, technical reports, prototypes) and technology transfer activities (e.g., patents, trademarks, spin-off companies) and their relevance to their respective end users.
6. Provide examples of the social, economic or environmental benefits to Canadians (e.g. job creation, health protocols, environmental policies, etc.).

***Research or technology development***

Each of the following must be addressed:

1. Describe the proposed research or technology development programs and their potentially transformative and innovative aspects.
2. Explain why it is important to pursue the proposed research or technology programs at this time.
3. Explain how the proposed research or technology development programs complement or differ from comparable programs being conducted nationally and/or internationally.

**Criterion standard:**

*The research or technology development opportunity is timely and has the potential to lead to breakthroughs.*

*The proposed activities are innovative and at the leading edge internationally.*

## Criterion standard:

*The principal users of the infrastructure are experts in the relevant research or technology development domains.*

*The team has the necessary expertise, ability and relevant collaborations and partnerships in place to successfully conduct the research or technology development programs.*

### **Team**

Each of the following must be addressed:

1. Describe the expertise and ability of the team to lead the research or technology development programs. The team may comprise a mix of highly accomplished researchers and early-career researchers.
2. Describe the team's technical expertise to make the best use of the requested infrastructure.
3. Describe the existing collaborations and partnerships essential to the success of the research or technology development programs.

### **Benefits to Canadians**

Each of the following must be addressed:

1. Describe the expected benefits to Canadians (e.g. new products, services, practices and public policies, and job creation) as well as HQP<sup>3</sup> training, why they are significant and the timeframe over which they are expected to occur.
2. Identify potential end users of the research and technology development results. Describe the nature of any major partnerships that already exist, and that are planned, including the extent of the engagement (e.g. financial investment, exchange of researchers or students, etc.) of these partners.
3. Describe the institution's plans for knowledge mobilization, technology transfer and/or commercialization. Demonstrate that the institution has the structures in place and the team has the skills and experience to ensure the successful transfer of the research and technology development results.

### **Criterion standard:**

*The research or technology development programs lead to tangible benefits for society, health, the economy and/or the environment.*

*Appropriate measures are in place to transfer the research results and outputs of the technology development to potential end users in a timely manner.*

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<sup>3</sup> Highly qualified personnel (HQP) include technicians, research associates, undergraduate students, graduate students and post-doctoral fellows

## **Criterion standard:**

*The infrastructure is necessary and appropriate to conduct the research or technology development programs.*

*The use of the infrastructure will be maximized within and among institutions and sectors (private, public and non-profit.)*

### **Infrastructure**

Each of the following must be addressed:

1. Describe the requested infrastructure and how it will enable the proposed research or technology development programs.
2. Describe the availability of similar infrastructure within the institution, the region and the country.
3. Describe how the use of the proposed infrastructure will be maximized.
4. Identify similar facilities in the region, in Canada and internationally and describe how the proposed infrastructure compares.

### ***Sustainability***

In completing this section, applicants are asked to refer to the tables in the section entitled *Financial resources for operations and maintenance* which will be automatically appended to the end of the project module attachment for ease of reference for the sustainability criterion.

Each of the following must be addressed:

1. Describe how the institution has supported this area of strategic priority, as identified in the institution's strategic research plan.
2. Describe the management plan that will govern the implementation, access, operation, maintenance, and sustainability of the infrastructure.
3. Describe the operating and maintenance needs of the infrastructure over its useful life.
4. Describe how the institution will support the proposed project.
5. Outline sources of support for operation and maintenance costs and explain the contingency plans should any of this support become unavailable.

### **Criterion standard:**

*The institution has made, and will continue to make, tangible and significant commitments in support of this area of strategic priority.*

*The proposed infrastructure will be effectively managed, operated and maintained for its useful life.*

## **Financial resources for operations and maintenance**

This page of the project module captures the annual costs and sources of committed support to ensure the effective operations and maintenance of the infrastructure for the first five years after implementation.

### ***Finance module***

The finance module consists of the following sections:

- Cost of individual items
- Details of funding from eligible partners
- Infrastructure utilization
- Budget justification
- Floor plans (if applicable)

For each section of the finance module, the applicant should ensure that all requested information has been entered into the relevant fields.

Note: The finance module has changed from that of previous LEF/NIF competitions. Specifically, the per-year breakdown of costs and funding from eligible partners is no longer required. Recognizing that institutions must follow their purchasing and tender policies, the CFI also no longer requests the name of the contributing partner for each item in the *Costs of individual items* section.

### **Details of funding from eligible partners**

Institutions are encouraged to bundle all expected in-kind contributions from vendors into a single line in the *Details of funding from eligible partners* table. If partner contributions are expected but have not yet been confirmed, outline the plans for securing these funds.

### **Cost of individual items**

When completing the *Cost of individual items* section, the CFI recommends that researchers bundle items into functional groupings. The budget justification should, however, detail and provide justification for each item within a group. Section 4.5 of the [CFI Policy and program guide](#) outlines the eligible costs for infrastructure projects.

### **Infrastructure utilization**

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

### **Budget justification (maximum 10 pages)**

In this section of the online form, upload a PDF document that conforms to the page formatting instructions as provided in Chapter 2: *Guidelines for attachments*.



The budget justification should provide a clear and concise explanation for the requested infrastructure items. Applicants are strongly encouraged to reference items with their respective line item number and description as presented in the *Cost of individual items* section. For proposals that include renovation costs, institutions must include in the budget justification the following information (refer also to the following section regarding floor plans):

- A complete description of the entire space, including common elements (e.g., corridors, washrooms, etc.). The description should include the location(s), size and nature (wet lab, dry lab, office, greenhouse, etc.) of the space.
- A detailed breakdown of the overall cost of the renovation project, categorized by cost component (i.e., direct, soft and contingency costs).
- A timeline identifying key dates for the various stages of the proposed renovation.

Sufficient information should be provided to enable reviewers to answer the following questions:

1. Is the requested infrastructure necessary, effective and efficient in view of the research activities planned?
2. Are the cost estimates realistic?
3. If applicable, are the plans adequate for the renovations proposed?

### **Floor plans (if applicable)**

Infrastructure projects for the 2012 LEF/NIF competition may involve renovations in existing buildings only when the space is essential to house and use the eligible infrastructure. While the CFI recognizes that some projects may involve complex renovation components, institutions are expected to have completed planning and development work for such projects at the proposal stage.

Applicants must include floor plans of the proposed area(s), showing the location of the infrastructure and the scale of the plans (when renovation involves multiple rooms).

Note: Floor plans must be provided in an attachment that is clearly legible. The floor plans will be a separate attachment and *not* included in the 10 page maximum for the budget justification attachment.

### ***Suggested reviewers***

Applicants are asked to suggest at least six reviewers who they believe are especially well qualified to review the proposal. Suggested reviewers must not be current or recent (within the last six years) collaborators or supervisors of the project leader or the principal users nor should they originate from the lead or collaborating institutions.

Note: The decision whether or not to use the suggestions remains with CFI staff.

## Chapter 4 – Submission process

### ***Notice of intent submission***

Notices of intent for the LEF/NIF 2012 competition must be submitted to the CFI through CAMS. Note that the CFI does not require a hardcopy of the NOI. Rather, a list of all NOIs must be submitted to the CFI, outlining all NOIs on which the institution is the lead or a collaborator. This summary must conform to the template for submission of NOIs (refer to Appendix 1), be signed by an authorized signatory at the institution, as per the Institutional agreement with the CFI, and sent to the CFI by the submission deadline (**January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012**).

### ***Proposal submission***

Proposals for the LEF/NIF 2012 competition must be submitted to the CFI through CAMS. Note that the CFI does not require a hardcopy of the proposal. Rather, a list of all proposals must be submitted to the CFI, outlining all proposals on which the institution is the lead or a collaborator. This summary must conform to the template for submission of proposals (refer to Appendix 2), signed by an authorized signatory at the institution, as per the Institutional agreement with the CFI, and sent to the CFI by the submission deadline (**April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012**).



**Please mail the proposal cover letter to:**

Canada Foundation for Innovation  
Attn: Elaine Salmon  
230 Queen Street, Suite 450  
Ottawa ON K1P 5E4

Tel: (613) 943-0210

### ***Collaboration with provinces***

To coordinate the review processes and avoid duplication of review efforts, the CFI will provide committee reports, along with the names and affiliations of committee members, to relevant provincial and territorial funding authorities. Disclosure of committee reports will be made only in accordance with agreements between the CFI and provincial or territorial authorities, as permissible pursuant to paragraph 8(2)(f) of the Privacy Act.

## Appendix 1: Template – Notice of intent submission letter to the CFI

January 20, 2011

Guy Levesque  
Director, Programs  
Canada Foundation for Innovation  
450 - 230 Queen Street  
Ottawa ON K1P 5E4

***Re: Submission of Notice(s) of intent (NOI) to the CFI 2012 LEF/NIF competition and approval of institutional envelope.***

Dear Mr. Levesque,

In response to the CFI's *Call for proposals* for the 2012 LEF/NIF competition, I am pleased to submit the NOIs outlined in the attached document.

In addition, I approve the contribution of our institutional envelope to the proposal(s) on which we will be collaborating with other institutions, as per the attached document.

Sincerely,

---

President (or authorized signatory)

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Signature

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Institution

Proposals led by <<Insert name of institution>>:

Project #	Project leader (last name, first name)	Project title	Total project costs (\$)	Amount requested from the CFI (\$)	Amount from <<Insert name of institution>>'s envelope (\$)	Collaborating institution(s) (use a comma separated list, if applicable)	Total amount from collaborating institution(s)'s envelope(s) (\$)

Proposals on which <<Insert name of institution>> is collaborating:

Project #	Lead institution	Project leader (last name, first name)	Project title	Total project costs (\$)	Amount requested from the CFI (\$)	Amount from <<Insert name of institution>>'s envelope (\$)

## Appendix 2: Template – Proposal submission letter to the CFI

April 26, 2012

Guy Levesque  
Director, Programs  
Canada Foundation for Innovation  
450 - 230 Queen Street  
Ottawa ON K1P 5E4

***Re: Confirmation and institutional approval of proposals to the Canada Foundation for Innovation's (CFI) 2012 LEF/NIF competition***

Dear Mr. Levesque,

In response to the CFI's *Call for proposals* for the 2012 LEF/NIF competition, I am pleased to approve the submission of the proposals outlined in the attached document.

In addition, I approve the contribution of our institutional envelope to the proposal(s) on which we will be collaborating with other institutions, as per the attached document.

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

**Proposals led by <<Insert name of institution>>:**

Project #	Project leader (last name, first name)	Project title	Total project costs (\$)	Amount requested from the CFI (\$)	Amount from <<Insert name of institution>>'s envelope (\$)	Collaborating institution(s) (use a comma separated list, if applicable)	Total amount from collaborating institution(s)'s envelope(s) (\$)

**Proposals on which <<Insert name of institution>> is collaborating:**

Project #	Lead institution	Project leader (last name, first name)	Project title	Total project costs (\$)	Amount requested from the CFI (\$)	Amount from <<Insert name of institution>>'s envelope (\$)