

## **CFI UPDATE**

A periodic update from the vice presidents of the  
Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI)

September 2016

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### **Help us celebrate 20 years of supporting Canadian research and innovation**

*We have launched our anniversary celebration — and you're invited!*

Our anniversary campaign, “Research builds *my* community,” launched September 20 and will run through March 2017. It will highlight how research supported by the CFI is touching the lives of Canadians.

To do this, we've produced a number of photo galleries and videos about how research has built communities across Canada, which will be showcased on our website, Innovation.ca, and in print and online advertising.

We invite you to help us promote these stories and others like it from your institution through social media by using our campaign hashtag **#CFI20yrs**. We know you likely already have many other great stories, videos, audio and images on your website that illustrate how CFI-funded research at your institution builds communities. Starting in October, please share them with us by tagging your social media posts with this hashtag. We also ask that you help us engage researchers and students working in CFI-funded facilities to promote stories on how their research is having an impact on their varied communities.

**That's not all:** If you have visited [Innovation.ca](http://Innovation.ca) lately, you may have noticed that we have refreshed our website to help ensure you can more easily interact with the CFI and find what you're looking for. Plus, this new site embraces accessibility and responsive design, so anyone can use our content, from any kind of device. Also, check out our new [history section](#), where we have a timeline, a narrative history and a podcast series that tells the unlikely origin story of the CFI. [Subscribe to the podcasts](#) through iTunes or Android, or get notifications sent to you via email. All of our funded institutions have played a vital role in the success of the CFI — our history belongs to you.

We are always looking for feedback, so email us anytime at [feedback@innovation.ca](mailto:feedback@innovation.ca) and let us know what you think of our new site and our 20th anniversary campaign. Thank you for helping us celebrate this important milestone for Canada's research community!

### **The latest on the Review of Federal Support for Fundamental Science**

The Advisory Panel continued its work over the summer months and met with funding agencies and key stakeholders. We continue to work closely with the panel, providing them a variety of data and information on funded projects, CFI funding mechanisms, merit-review processes and practices, and areas of existing and potential collaboration with other funding agencies. In addition, we will be providing answers and advice based on the series of [questions](#) to funding agencies that were recently posted on [sciencereview.ca](http://sciencereview.ca). The information provided will enable the panel to make sound evidence-based recommendations as part of its review mandate.

### **Refreshing our 2012-17 Strategic Roadmap**

In November 2011, the CFI published a strategic roadmap designed to guide its efforts and activities over the medium term. The [2012-17 CFI Strategic Roadmap](#) laid out an ambitious vision anchored on six key strategic directions:

- Invest in the highest level of excellence
- Sustain and enhance Canada's research capacity
- Forge productive partnerships
- Build global influence
- Establish a trusted voice
- Track impacts

These directions build on our exceptional and valued assets:

- Modern governance and organizational excellence
- Rigorous decision-making and accountability
- Highly skilled human resources

The 2012-17 CFI Strategic Roadmap has served the CFI, and by extension the Canadian research community, well. But things have evolved over the last five years:

- A new government is in place;
- The department overseeing the CFI is now known as Innovation Science and Economic Development (ISED);
- We now have a Minister of Science and a Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development;
- There appears to be strong support for science and innovation, including evidence-informed policy decisions; and
- The Government of Canada has launched a number of important initiatives, including the recruitment of a Chief Science Officer, Canada's Fundamental Science Review and the development of an Innovation Agenda.

In this context, we felt the time was right to set the stage for the next chapter in the CFI story. The CFI Board of Directors held a strategic retreat on September 19 and 20 to reflect and exchange on these and other emerging trends and shifts in the environment to formulate a set of clear and concise recommendations to the Government of Canada with respect to how the CFI can best contribute to supporting research and contribute to the innovation agenda in the future. These recommendations will also serve to set the stage for a 2017-22 Strategic Roadmap refresh.

### **Innovation Fund 2017 competition**

As you may recall, the deadline for the submission of Innovation Fund proposals is October 11, 2016. We also want remind you that a signed cover letter, a list of proposals for which the institution is the administrative or a collaborating institution, along with a short description of the internal decision-making process to identify the proposals submitted to this competition must also be submitted by this date. For the details on the information to be included in this description, look for "proposal submission letter — additional information" under the "application process" tab on our [website](#).

Institutions were informed in August about projects that may require a face-to-face meeting with the expert committee. Following the submission of proposals, we will confirm if these meetings are required. For those proposals, the CFI expects a more detailed governance and management plan commensurate with the level of complexity of the proposed facility. Once confirmed, we will inform you of the relevant expert committee meeting date and meeting logistics.

The CFI has already begun recruiting members for expert and multidisciplinary assessment committees. Approximately 75 expert committee meetings are anticipated to take place between late November 2016 and mid-February 2017. Key dates for the 2017 Innovation Fund are listed below:

Dates	Activity
October 11, 2016	Deadline for the submission of proposals
November 2016 to February 2017	Expert committee meetings
April 2017	Multidisciplinary assessment committee meetings
May 2017	Special multidisciplinary assessment committee meeting
June 2017	CFI Board decisions

**The CFI @ the National Science Foundation**

Earlier this month, a CFI delegation, consisting of our Senior Advisor, Policy and Planning, and three Directors — Programs, Evaluation and Outcome Assessment, and Communications — visited the Arlington, Virginia, headquarters of the National Science Foundation (NSF) to exchange information on programs, policies and procedures, and to explore opportunities for collaboration. The CFI team met with a number of senior NSF program officials, including program and division directors in areas such as mathematical and physical sciences, geosciences and biological sciences. The day-long session included in-depth discussions on funding for cyberinfrastructure, large-scale research facilities, new approaches to evaluation and outcome assessments and communicating with stakeholders.

Coming out of these discussions, it is increasingly evident that the NSF has an ongoing interest in increasing interaction and collaboration between American and Canadian research funding agencies and, more importantly, in finding new ways to stimulate and support collaboration between American and Canadian researchers in the development and use of research infrastructure. Over the next several months, the CFI will be following up with our NSF counterparts to identify specific opportunities and continue to share information and perspectives on matters of common interest.

**Update on the Cyberinfrastructure Initiative — Challenge 1**

We are planning to launch the second competition of Challenge 1 (Competition 2) of the Cyberinfrastructure Initiative in the months ahead, with a Call for Proposals to be published in early 2017. As with the first competition, the CFI will be looking for communities to come

together to form national consortia and propose research data infrastructure projects that create tailored, shared and integrated data resources (e.g. databases and data repositories) capable of enabling leading-edge research on significant scientific, social and economic questions.

#### *Mobilizing research communities to make optimal use of research data*

A number of proposals from the first competition described initiatives that were promising but were either not quite mature enough or had a limited reach and potential impact. In other cases, some projects appeared to underestimate the technical requirements to achieve their intended objectives. Given the importance for research communities to maximize their use of existing research data, the CFI is looking at how to work with communities of researchers and interested stakeholders and organizations (e.g. SSHRC, NSERC and CIHR) to better assess and define the community's research data infrastructure needs by devising optimal ways of organizing and using collective research data resources.

For example, the University of Manitoba, along with SSHRC and the CFI, are exploring possible opportunities to organize and host a workshop in Winnipeg that would bring together a number of key researchers and stakeholders focused on Indigenous research from across the country.

### **99 percent of expected project progress reports now received**

#### *Data from the reports essential for accountability*

We are happy to report that as of the first of September, 1,597 of the expected 1,612 project progress reports (PPRs) have been submitted. This 99.1 percent submission rate is consistent with the high submission rate we experienced last year. As you know, we rely on the data collected through the PPRs to develop our annual *Report on results*, one of the key accountability tools we use to tell the positive story of the outputs and outcomes of CFI-funded research infrastructure. We are also pleased to report Institutions and provinces are increasingly seeking PPR data from the CFI to support their own performance and accountability needs.

### **Changes to the CFI's finance team**

We recently bid farewell to Christine Charbonneau who left to undertake a new career opportunity. She was with the CFI for more than 15 years, first as Manager, Finance, and since May 2006, as the Director, Finance. We greatly appreciate her many contributions over the years and are certain you will join us in wishing her the best of luck in her new job.

We are pleased to announce that Isabelle Henrie is now our new Director, Finance. Isabelle has been at the CFI for more than 13 years. She started as Financial Analyst, then became Manager, Financial Monitoring, and more recently, Manager, Finance.

Finally, we are also happy to announce that Dominique Brisebois will replace Isabelle as our new Manager, Finance. Dominique has been at the CFI for more than 10 years, during which time she has occupied various positions.

Please join us in welcoming Isabelle and Dominique in their new roles, which they took on in September.

### **List your industry liaison on the CFI Research Facilities Navigator**

From our consultations with various industry associations, we know that companies looking to form research partnerships find it useful to access industry liaison offices at institutions. Our research shows a comprehensive list of these contacts does not exist, so we are considering compiling one as an additional resource on the CFI Research Facilities Navigator. If you would like your industry liaison office to be part of this list, please submit contact information, including email, telephone number and address, to [industry-industrie@innovation.ca](mailto:industry-industrie@innovation.ca).