

CFI Update

A periodic update from the vice presidents of the **Canada Foundation for Innovation**

September 2017

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Ostensibly a visit to a few of the many extraordinary research projects funded by the CFI, Pierre Normand, Guy Levesque and I found ourselves immersed in the communities that are home to these projects: meeting fine researchers with students whose enthusiasm for their work was evident and regional leaders who attributed both economic and cultural growth to the sparks struck by CFI investments. The goal to create an environment supportive for research has extended beyond the laboratory doors and has become an integral part of the communities we visited. When taxi drivers knowledgeably extol the virtues of wind tunnels and neuroscience labs, the depth of the impact of research on the lives of all members of a community becomes apparent!

We were impressed by the many collaborations among researchers who shared equipment and labs. Partnerships were not only evidenced by the physical interchange among those using the same facilities but by team members who came from different disciplines bringing different perspectives in common efforts to solve some of the mysteries of the universe as well as specific challenges posed by health, the environment and technology in our world today.

We visited research facilities in hospitals, labs, universities and colleges in Sudbury, Montreal, Halifax, London, Kingston and Ottawa. We are looking forward to visits to Toronto and points west including Vancouver, Victoria, Winnipeg, Regina and Calgary. And if ever you are in Ottawa, please include a stop to the CFI in your visit!

We thank all who welcomed us so warmly. We thank you for your support and suggestions on which we will follow up— and we promise to keep learning about all your fine work and to continue these visits in the coming months and years!

~ Roseann O'Reilly Runte

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National announcement for the Innovation Fund

We are currently in discussions with the Government of Canada to determine a date for the national announcement of the funding results of the 2017 Innovation Fund. We will keep you informed of details as we have them. In the meantime, as usual, please keep your Innovation Fund funding under embargo until it is announced.

Internal selection process for the Innovation Fund

Institutions submitting proposals to the 2017 Innovation Fund competition were asked to provide a short description of their internal decision-making process in the selection of proposals for this competition. The CFI undertook a careful synthesis and analysis of the 81 submissions made by institutions. The enclosed report, titled Innovation Fund: Internal selection process, will be published on our website. We hope it will enhance the dissemination and sharing of good practices in all areas of CFI institutional activity. It has also allowed the CFI to gain valuable insights on how institutions set priorities and make strategic choices in the selection of their projects; we hope you will find our summary report to be useful.

New campaign featuring young researchers

By giving young researchers the tools they need to think big and innovate, the CFI builds potential in people, in institutions and in Canada. This fall, the CFI is launching a promotional campaign featuring student and early career researchers from across Canada. The #IAmInnovation campaign aims to show how the CFI plays a critical role in creating the environments where the next generation of researchers find their inspiration, their highly skilled training, their mentors and the roadmaps to their future, ultimately improving Canadians' lives.

The #IAmInnovation campaign kicks off the first week of October with a collection of stories 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 by spreading the word to your students and post-docs about our Twitter contest: we want to hear about what CFI funding helps them do. Please help us by retweeting our contest messages @InnovationCA starting in October.

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Annual reporting requirements

We would like to thank institutions and project leaders for submitting their financial and project progress reports (PPRs). Once again this year, the CFI has benefited from outstanding support from institutions, with submission rates for these reports of 80 percent and 99 percent respectively. Thank you!

The financial reports are used by the CFI to assist in the proper management of projects. We also perform follow-up procedures on issues identified in the review of the financial reports. Your response to these issues is important and we encourage you to address any outstanding issues as soon as possible. As happens every year, the majority of outstanding reports are final financial reports (submission deadline of September 30); we expect these to be submitted in early October.

We rely on the data collected through the PPRs to develop our annual [Report on results](#), one of the key accountability tools that we use to demonstrate the outputs and outcomes of CFI-funded research infrastructure.

For the few institutions where financial or project progress reports are still outstanding, please be advised that future installments for all CFI-funded projects (including new awards to be finalized, if any) will be held back if these reports are not received by November 15, 2017. Installments will resume once all reports have been submitted. Reminders will be sent to the CFI account administrator and the CFI liaison during the first two weeks of October advising them of any outstanding reports.

CFI @ CARA 2017 regional meetings and le Colloque 2017 de l'ADARUQ

As we have done for several years, we will attend all three 2017 CARA regional meetings in St. John's, Toronto and Victoria, and le Colloque 2017 de l'ADARUQ in Shawinigan. These meetings provide the CFI with unique opportunities to meet and catch up with so many of our institutional contacts, new and old. In addition to our regular CFI update session, we are planning to provide an update on the work of the working group on multi-institutional proposals, which we struck this summer.

We look forward to seeing and hearing from you!

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Annual Major Science Initiatives (MSI) workshop coming in October

The fourth MSI workshop entitled “Supporting Canada’s research communities” will be held in Ottawa on October 19 to 20, 2017. This workshop will be a great opportunity for all 17 MSI-funded national research facilities to network and share experiences on the challenges of governing, managing and sustaining the operations of such facilities.

Desired outcomes of the workshop include:

- Sharing knowledge and experience with best practices and common challenges that arise for both CFI and MSI facilities;
- Building connections and relationships across the MSI community;
- Informing MSI representatives of new policies, requirements, changes in CFI procedures under the MSI Fund;
- Looking ahead for future opportunities for the MSI Fund and supported facilities.

College-Industry Innovation Fund – Stream 2 — we’ve made a few improvements

We announced in the March 2017 issue of this newsletter that we would participate in the 15th competition of the Tri-Agency’s College and Community Innovation (CCI) Program – Innovation Enhancement (IE). As such, the CFI will accept research infrastructure requests associated with CCI Build IE grant applications submitted to NSERC. The deadline for completing both the NSERC and CFI online forms is October 26, 2017.

Since the inception of the program, the College-Industry Innovation Fund – Stream 2 application form has been an abbreviated version of the form used for Stream 1. The CFI has now completely revised the application form for the 2017 competition and future competitions. The form was modified not only to factor in the significant changes that had been made to the Stream 1 application form (in effect since the 2016 Stream 1 competition) but also to eliminate undue redundancies with the content of the CCI Build IE form. In the streamlined application to Stream 2, the number of selection criteria to be addressed by the applicants is now reduced from five to one (i.e. the “infrastructure” criterion, which focusses on and regroups all aspects pertaining to the requested infrastructure). These improvements introduce consistency between Stream 1 and 2 and allow for harmonizing the review criteria and fund objectives between the two streams. Most importantly, these improvements will certainly reduce the burden on both applicants and reviewers.

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What's next for the Navigator?

Since its launch in November 2013, the Research Facilities Navigator has helped promote Canada's research capacity to domestic and international audiences looking for high calibre expertise and infrastructure to move their projects forward. With more than 550 research facilities now profiled in the Navigator, we are enhancing the user experience of the site and making changes we anticipate will offer even greater visibility to the listed profiles.

We are excited to reveal our changes to Navigator.innovation.ca in October. If it has been awhile since you reviewed or updated your profile, now is an excellent time to get in touch. If your research facility is not yet listed, it's an even better time to get on board and take advantage of this opportunity to promote your facility to researchers, innovators, leaders and entrepreneurs at home and abroad.

And if you haven't already done so, please send along contact information for your industry liaison office so we can include them in our contact list. Get in touch for all things Navigator at industry-industrie@innovation.ca.