# 2025 Innovation Fund

**The basics**

$425M

Competition budget

$127M

Infrastructure Operating Fund

Up to 40%

Eligible infrastructure costs

- Enable internationally competitive research or technology development through the equitable participation of expert team members

- Enhance the capacity of institutions to conduct the research or technology development program over the useful life of the infrastructure

- Generate benefits for Canadians

# 2025 Innovation Fund competition timeline

## Important dates in 2024

**April 18, 2024**
CFI issues draft call for proposals

**June 4, 2024**
CFI issues call for proposals

**June 19, 2024**
Webinar for applicants (French session)

**May 17, 2024**
Deadline to submit feedback on draft call for proposals

**June 18, 2024**
Webinar for applicants (English session)

**October 2, 2024**
Deadline to submit notices of intent

## Important dates in 2025

**February 4, 2025**
Deadline to submit proposals

**September 2025**
Review by Multidisciplinary Assessment Committees

**November 2025**
Decision by CFI Board of Directors

**March to June 2025**
Review by Expert Committees

**October 2025**
Review by Special Multidisciplinary Assessment Committee

# 2025 Innovation Fund

## Streams

1. **Open:** all disciplines, same as usual
2. **Social sciences, humanities and arts (SSHA):** primary field of research must be in SSHA
3. **Core facilities:** All infrastructure must be located in a core facility and O&M personnel are now eligible.

## Envelopes

- Every institution is allowed to submit one proposal outside its envelope if the primary field of research is SSHA.
- If your institution submits or collaborates on just two proposals (at least one in SSHA), it will not be restricted by the institutional envelope.

# CFI definition of a core facility

A core facility provides access to the following, which are generally too expensive, complex or specialized for researchers to cost-effectively provide and sustain themselves:

- State-of-the-art research services and analyses
- Instruments and technology
- Expertise
- Training and education.

Also, a core facility:

- Is broadly available to many researchers to conduct their research activities, irrespective of their administrative affiliation and with no requirement for collaboration or co-authorship
- Has dedicated equipment and space serving one or more institutions, **research programs or fields**
- Is formally recognized as a core facility and supported by the research institution where it is located
- Has a clearly defined governance and management structure and a sound management plan reflective of its mandate, breadth and complexity
- Has dedicated management involving individuals with the technical and subject matter expertise necessary to oversee all aspects of the facility.

# 2025 Innovation Fund

The CFI reserves the right to withdraw its support for projects not finalized within nine months of funding decisions, or for which the final financial report is not submitted within a reasonable time frame.

| Total project costs | Deadline to submit final financial report |
|---|---|
| ≤ $2.5 million | November 2029 |
| > $2.5 million and ≤ $10 million | November 2030 |
| > $10 million | November 2032 |

# EDI in Research

We expect all applicants to consider and apply principles of equity, diversity and inclusion in their research activities.

Examples of EDI actions related to **research** activities:

- Include diverse perspectives from marginalized or underrepresented groups

- Ensure research design accounts for biases and includes measure to mitigate

- Include databases, journals and repositories from different regions and languages in your literature search

# EDI in Team

Proposals submitted to this competition are expected to **identify the systemic barriers to participation** of underrepresented groups and **demonstrate concrete, evidence-supported practices** that will help overcome them and create an inclusive team environment

Examples of concrete practices include, but are not limited to:

- Development of team culture statements
- Targeted financial support for underrepresented groups (e.g., reduced cost to access infrastructure)
- Implementation of gender equity and equality programs (e.g., Athena SWAN)
- Inclusion of early-career researchers within the leadership and advisory bodies
- Robust and safe feedback mechanisms

# Benefits

The benefits of research are wide-ranging. Examples that go beyond knowledge and publications could include:

- Health benefits could be new diagnostic tools, treatments or therapeutics

- Environmental benefits could be monitoring of climate change impacts, land and water conservation, pollution reduction, carbon emission reduction, or informing policies for environmental protection

- Sociocultural benefits could be improved wellbeing through strengthening communities, new policies or practices, increased public engagement, or improved decision-making

- Economic benefits could be new jobs, products, services or sustainable industries.

# 2025 Innovation Fund

**Want to know more?**

Information sessions:

**English**
June 18, 2024: 1 to 2 p.m. (EDT)
Register here

**Français**
19 juin 2024: 13 h 00 à 14 h 00 (HAE)
Inscrivez-vous ici

# Research security

The CFI's approach

Currently, our approach to research security is meant to mitigate two types of risks:

- Risks related to partnerships with the **private sector** (in line with the Government of Canada's National Security Guidelines for Research Partnerships (NSGRP))

- Risks related to **affiliations of concern** for projects aiming to advance a sensitive technology research area (as per the Government of Canada's Policy on Sensitive Technology Research and Affiliations of Concern (STRAC policy))

# Research security

NSGRP requirements

| Currently applies to: | Not yet in scope: |
|---|---|
| Innovation Fund (2023 and beyond)<br>CBRF – BRIF Stage 2<br>Northern Fund<br>Unaffiliated JELF (as of June 25, 2024) | College Fund<br>Affiliated JELF<br>Major Science Initiatives Fund |

The CFI requires a **Risk Assessment Form (RAF)** and a **Private-sector partner identification form (PSPID)** if the project involves a **private-sector partner** (or partners) that:

- Has an **active role in the research activities described in the proposal** (e.g., sharing of intellectual property, providing expertise, actively participating in research activities, contributing financially to the research activities); or

- **Houses part or all of the research infrastructure**; or

- Contributes **more than $500,000** to the infrastructure through a cash or in-kind contribution to any single item.

# Research security
## NSGRP requirements

### Institutional responsibility:

Institutions applying for or receiving CFI funding have research security obligations throughout the life of the project. They are required to do the following:

- **At application:** Perform open-source due diligence before submitting an RAF or PSPID (if required).

- **When finalizing:** Implement the risk mitigation plan described in the RAF.

- **Until the final financial report is submitted:** Immediately inform the CFI of changes that could affect the risk to national security (e.g., new partnership with the private sector, change of location of research infrastructure to a private-sector partner).

### The CFI's responsibility:

The CFI and our stakeholders have the responsibility to ensure that Canada's research ecosystem is safe and secure. We will:

- Assess and validate RAF

- Refer forms to the Government of Canada if:
  - The nature of the proposed research is deemed sensitive; and,
  - Partners are associated with or originating from organizations or countries that are subject to sanctions or associated with criminal and ethical concerns.

# Research security

STRAC requirements

| Currently applies to: | Not yet in scope: | Not applicable: |
|---|---|---|
| Innovation Fund (2025 & beyond)<br>Northern Fund<br>Unaffiliated JELF (as of June 25, 2024) | College Fund<br>Affiliated JELF<br>Major Science Initiatives Fund | 2023 Innovation Fund<br>CBRF – BRIF Stage 2 |

Project/team leaders and team members will be required to complete an attestation form if the proposal is in support of research that **aims to advance** any of the **areas listed** in the Government of Canada's list of Sensitive Technology Research Areas.

Proposals that support research that aims to advance a sensitive technology research area **will not be funded** if any of the project/team leaders or team members are currently affiliated with, or in receipt of funding or in-kind support from, any of the Government of Canada's Named Research Organizations.

# Research security
STRAC requirements

**The CFI context:**

Funding of **large infrastructure projects** complexifies the interpretation of the STRAC policy:

- Are all users of the research infrastructure covered by the policy?

- What about infrastructure located in core facilities with hundreds/thousands of users?

- Which research projects are "in scope"?

Given these questions, our current implementation plan is based on:

- Meeting the imperative of the policy

- Recognizing the resources available.

**Our interpretation and next steps:**

**Currently**, in the context of **CFI-funded research infrastructure projects**:

- Only project/team leaders and team members are subject to requirements under the STRAC policy

- While we encourage institutions to take adequate security measures, no other users of the research infrastructure are subject to requirements under the STRAC policy.

We will be initiating a discussion in the coming months with institutions and national security agencies to refine the scope of this implementation.

# Research security
STRAC requirements

**Institutional responsibility:**

Institutions applying for or receiving CFI funding have research security obligations throughout the life of the project.

- **When developing a proposal:** Determine if the research it supports aims to advance any of the sensitive technology research areas.

- **At application:** If it does, all team/project leaders and team members (those providing CVs/biosketches) will need to provide an attestation for the institution to be able to submit the proposal.

  **Note:** Institutions are not expected to validate the accuracy of attestation forms submitted to the CFI.

- **Until the final financial report is submitted:** Inform the CFI of any changes in project/team leaders (as per usual) and provide a new attestation if required. Inform the CFI immediately of any changes in the nature of the research activities that would result in the project now being aimed at advancing a sensitive technology research area.

# Research Security

**Want to know more?**

Information sessions for research and research security staff at eligible institutions:

**English**
May 27, 2024: 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (EDT)
[Register here](#)
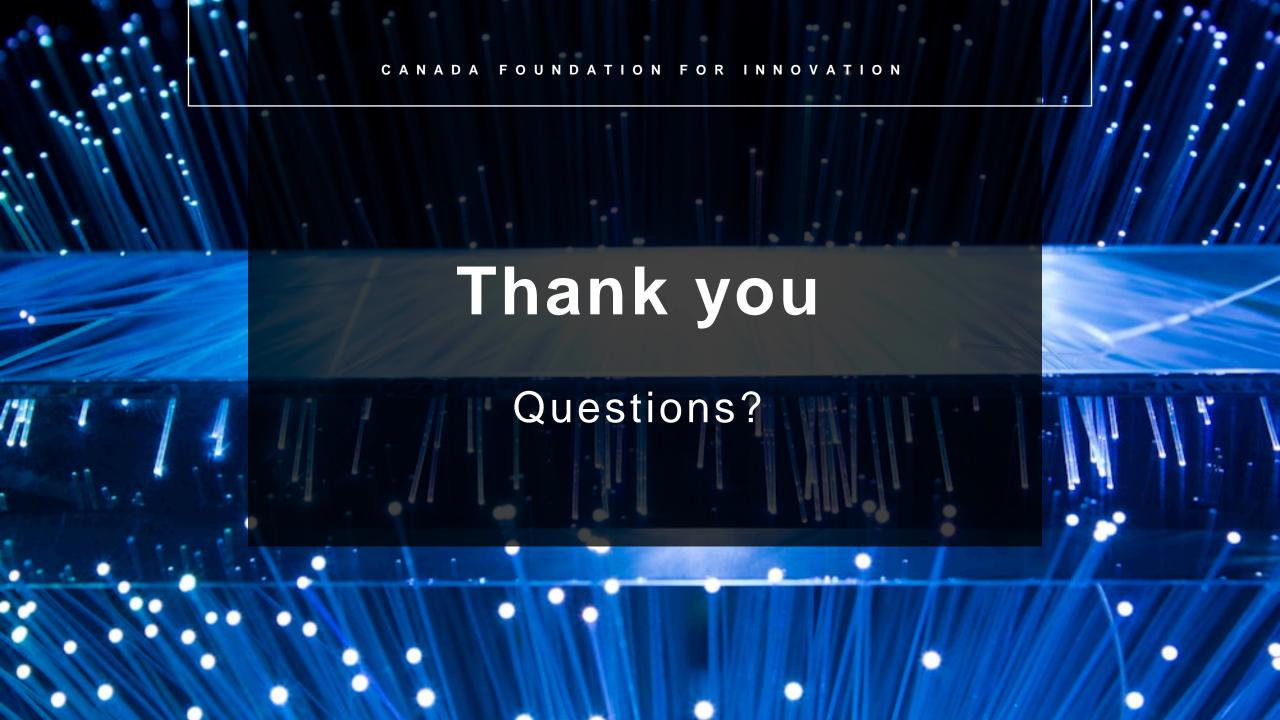May 31, 2024: 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (EDT)
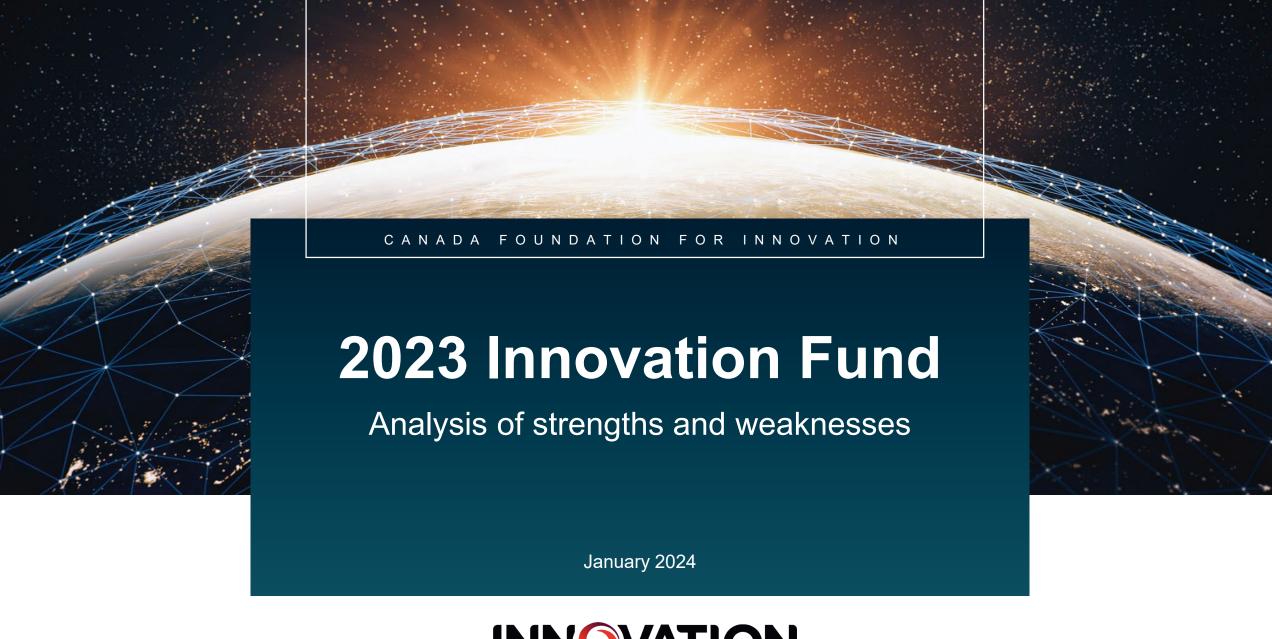[Register here](#)

**Français**
29 mai 2024: 11 h 00 à 12 h 30 (HAE)
[Inscrivez-vous ici](#)
4 juin 2024: 11 h 00 à 12 h 30 (HAE)
[Inscrivez-vous ici](#)

CANADA FOUNDATION FOR INNOVATION

# Thank you

Questions?

# Strengths and Weaknesses Analysis (Expert Committee)

## Weaknesses

- Lack of details on methodology
- Approach not feasible
- Not integrative/lack of focus
- Missing details on activity
- Missing expertise
- Plan for equity, diversity and inclusion missing or lack of detail
- Equipment wrong or not justified
- Missing user base or business development

## Strengths

- Impressive breadth and depth of expertise
- Innovative research program
- Outstanding research track record
- Breakthrough potential
- Concrete actions/tangible activities
- Outstanding justification
- Strong governance/oversight plans
- Strong operation and maintenance plan

# Strengths and Weaknesses Analysis (Multidisciplinary assessment committees)

## Weaknesses

- Lack of detail for research or technology development
- Weak evidence of action on equity, diversity and inclusion
- Suffers from comparison within the competition
- Approach is not feasible
- Weak justification for infrastructure
- Poor sustainability planning
- Underdeveloped management/governance/access plan
- Weak plan for technology transfer/clinical transfer/knowledge mobilization
- Overstated/weak benefits

## Strengths

- Leading researchers
- Leading-edge and innovative research in area of global leadership
- Unique infrastructure
- Exceptional synergies
- Pathways clearly defined
- Importance of benefit to Canada

# Expert Committee strengths

## Research or technology development

**64 %**
- Highly innovative

**43%**
- Strong breakthrough potential

**41%**
- Leads the field internationally

## Team expertise

**72%**
- Impressive breadth and depth of expertise

**63%**
- Outstanding research track record

**31%**
- Strong leadership

**31%**
- Strong track record of collaboration

**28%**
- Team includes established and emerging leaders

# Expert Committee strengths (continued)

## Team composition

**67%**

• Concrete actions and tangible activities

**41%**

• Commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion

## Infrastructure

**53%**

• Outstanding justification

**29%**

• Unique or innovative infrastructure

**16%**

• Rare facility in Canada

**16%**

• Optimal use

# Expert Committee strengths (continued)

## Sustainability

**52%**

- Strong governance/oversight planz

**48%**

- Strong operation & maintenance plan

**37%**

- Robust business model

## Benefits

**66%**

- Credible and proven pathways to benefits

**48%**

- Strong partnership with end users

**41%**

- Potential for societal impact

# Expert Committee weaknesses

## Research or technology development

**34%**
• Lack of details on methodology

**22%**
• Approach is not feasible

**22%**
• Research program is not integrated or lacks focus

**14%**
• Lack of overall details on research program

**14%**
• Research program is not innovative

## Team expertise

**22%**
• Missing expertise or critical mass of experts

**7%**
• Missing expertise on data management

**6%**
• Weak evidence of working as a team, track record or funding history

# Expert Committee weaknesses (continued)

## Team composition

**16%**

- Missing or lacking detail on equity , diversity and strategy or action plan

**9%**

- Statements on equity, diversity and inclusion and related barriers were generic

**5%**

- Relevant marginalized groups excluded from discussion

## Infrastructure

**33%**

- Not well justified / not connected to research/wrong equipment

**10%**

- Missing infrastructure development/implementation plan

**8%**

- Missing detail on similar/existing infrastructure

# Expert Committee weaknesses (continued)

## Sustainability

**14%**
- Potential user base or business development plan missing

**13%**
- Costs/revenues not detailed

**10%**
- Weak operation & maintenance plan

**8%**
- Weak governance or management structure

**7%**
- Insufficient personnel

**6%**
- Weak infrastructure or data management plan

## Benefits to Canadians

**14%**
- Missing details of benefits

**16%**
- Weak plan for technology transfer/clinical transfer/knowledge mobilization

**5%**
- Overstated impact

# Multidisciplinary assessment committees strengths

## Objective 1:
**Global leadership**

**48%** — • World-leading researchers

**47%** — • Leading-edge and innovative research in area of global leadership

## Objective 2:
**Enhance research capacity**

**21%** — • Unique infrastructure in Canada

**20%** — • Exceptional synergies

## Objective 3:
**Benefits to Canadians**

**36%** — • Pathways to benefits clearly laid out

**25%** — • Importance to Canada

**25%** — • Strong plan for technology transfer/clinical transfer/knowledge mobilization

# Multidisciplinary assessment committees weaknesses

## Objective 1: Global leadership

- **25%** • Lack of detail for RTD
- **25%** • Weak evidence of equity, diversity and inclusion activities
- **14%** • Suffers from comparison within the competition
- **12%** • Approach not feasible
- **12%** • Lack of cohesion in research program
- **11%** • Missing expertise

## Objective 2: Enhance research capacity

- **14%** • Weak justification for infrastructure
- **10%** • Weak sustainability planning
- **5%** • Weak management/ governance/access plan

## Objective 3: Benefits to Canadians

- **11%** • Weak plan for technology transfer/clinical transfer/knowledge mobilization
- **9%** • Overstated/weak benefits