

# **Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) Innovation Fund (IF) 2025 Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts (SSHA) stream**

Overview of the CFI Innovation Fund & Carleton's Internal Process

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# Agenda

- Overview
- How to Apply
- Budgeting for CFI
- EDI Considerations
- Assessment & Evaluation at CFI

*I'll take a break for questions between every section!*

# Overview

# Innovation Fund (IF) Objectives

- Enable internationally competitive research or technology development through the equitable participation of expert team members.
- Enhance and optimize the capacity of institutions and research communities to conduct the proposed research or technology development program(s) over the useful life of the infrastructure.
- Lead to social, health, environmental and/or economic benefits for Canadians.

# Competition Budget

- For the 2023 IF competition, total project costs had to be greater than \$1M
- Each institution receives an “institutional envelope” that sets the maximum total value across all projects that an institution can submit
- CFI will support up to 40% of a project’s total project costs
- In most provinces, including Ontario, the provincial government runs a parallel competition that will also support up to 40% of the total project costs
- Renovation and/or construction costs can be included in the project costs if they are required for the installation or operation of the requested equipment, and/or be essential to the research design
  - Typically, up to 20% total project cost

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# SSH in the 2023 IF

## REMINDERS

- **SSH proposals are eligible and competitive**
- **Collaborative spaces are eligible for all CFI programs**
- **Computing and digital libraries are eligible**
- **Interdisciplinary research is eligible**



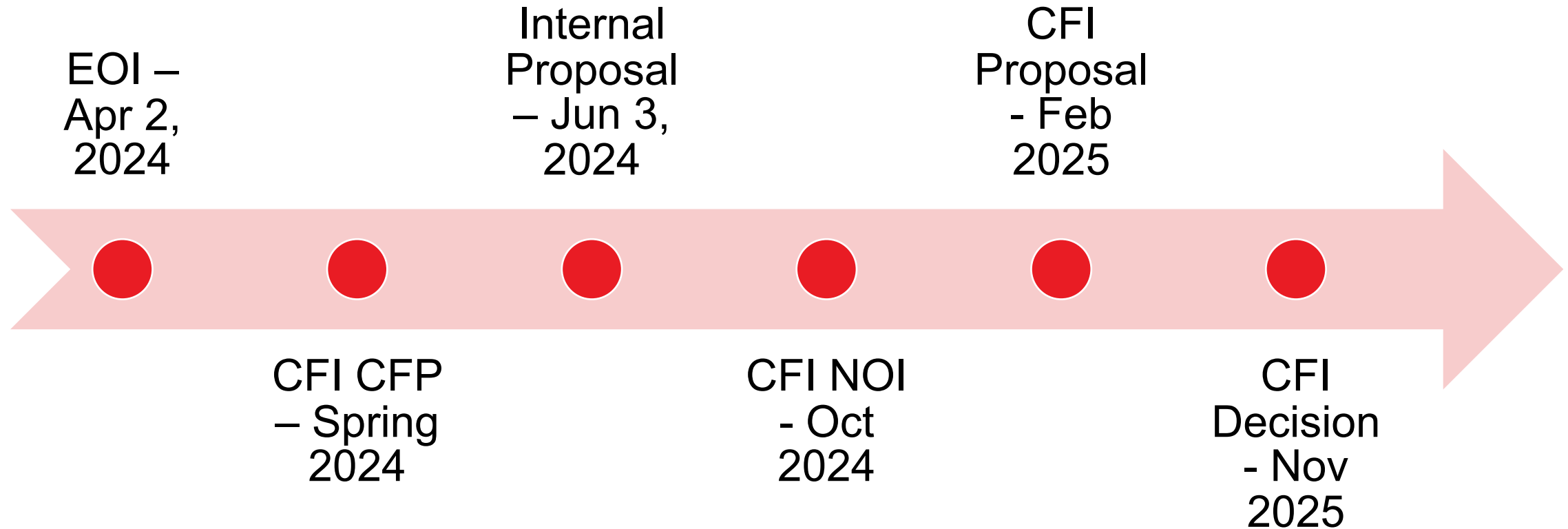
# SSHA stream (NEW for 2025!)

- Each institution can submit one proposal outside of the institutional envelope with the primary field of research in SSHA
  - *NOTE: Includes both proposals with Carleton as the lead or proposals lead by other institutions where Carleton would provide envelope under the SSHA exception*
- Establish an SSHA-specific funding stream with adapted assessment criteria
- Extend the eligibility of personnel required for the continuous development and use of databases (evergreening).
  - *NOTE: this is not funding for research assistants to conduct the proposed research, but personnel (such as technicians or database developers) needed to develop, deploy and maintain any requested technology (hardware, software)*

# How to Apply

Internal Process and CFI

# Internal Process: IF 2025 Timeline – SSHA stream



# Internal Process: Adjudication Criteria

- internationally-leading research.
- composition and expertise of the team, including
  - track record of the team in generating globally significant contributions to knowledge and/or generating impact beyond the academy;
  - evidence of international recognition of the team's leadership; and
  - integration of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) considerations.
- request for necessary and appropriate infrastructure, which leverages
  - previous investments by Carleton University, and
  - existing and sufficient operating funding held by the research team to support direct costs of proposed research.
- well-defined plan to transfer the results of the research program(s) that will lead to benefits for Canadians.

# Internal Process: Step One

Internal **Expression of Interest (EOI)** can be **submitted any time before April 3, 2024**

- Carleton and non-Carleton-led projects seeking support under the SSHA-stream
- Components: 250-word summary; list of equipment; estimated total cost and CFI request ranges; proposed team members
- EOIs may be assigned a CORIS Research Facilitator to support the development of the internal proposal

# Internal Process: Step Two

## Mandatory internal proposal due by **June 3, 2024**

- Carleton-led: 8-page proposal; budget form; CVs; written confirmation of faculty endorsement including space allocation
- Non-Carleton-led: materials submitted to collaborating institution; 4-page attachment; budget form; CVs; written confirmation of faculty endorsement including space allocation
- VPRI appointed expert panel review internal proposals
  - Final decision by VPRI in consultation with Deans
  - Feedback provided to all applicants (successful and unsuccessful)

# Internal Process: Please Note!

- OVPRI is not able to provide space allocations for selected CFI IF projects. Potential applicants should contact their Faculty(s) to identify appropriate research space.
- Other research institutions may have different requirements, processes and timelines, including EOI or internal application deadlines earlier than the Carleton deadlines; please check specific institutional websites for details, or have your collaborators contact their institutional offices.
- Carleton Faculties may have earlier internal deadlines for application review and Faculty approval. Please check with your Faculty Research Facilitator and/or Associate Dean Research for more information.

# CFI Two Stage Application Process

1. Step One: Notice of Intent (mandatory, not adjudicated)
  - Key sections: Project Summary, Collaborating Institutions, Team Members, Project Description, CV for Team Lead(s)
2. Step Two: Proposal
  - Project Module: Project Summary, Team, Users/Collaborators, Assessment Criteria (25-42 pages depending on budget and language), Plan for operation and maintenance of requested equipment, Collaborating Institutions, CVs
  - Finance Module: Cost of requested items, Construction or Renovation plans, Contributions from other partners (e.g., relevant provincial competitions), etc.

*Note: Proposal requirements in 2023; new SSHA assessment criteria 2025 are expected*

# BUDGET

# CFI Funding Model

CFI provides **40%** of infrastructure costs  
(remaining 60% provided by provinces,  
institutions and private sector)

## O&M support

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30% of CFI award through the Infrastructure  
Operating Fund (IOF)



# CFI Funding Equation

- Equation based on '**Total Project Costs**'

Total Project Costs = Cash Price + 'In-kind'

CFI + Prov. + (In-kind + other cash)  
32% + 32% + 37%

- Total Project Costs must generally exceed \$1M to be eligible for CFI IF

# In-Kind Contributions

Definition: non-monetary resources that external partners offer as a contribution

- CFI specific savings / discounts
  - **Must be noted on quote and invoice**
- Reported at fair market value
  - Training/installation
  - Donations (licensing/software)
  - Space

*Note: Carleton + other CDN research institutions cannot provide in-kind contributions to CFI*



# Partner Cash Contributions



## Eligible

- Institutional funds, trust funds, foundations
- Departments and agencies of Federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments
- Firms and corporations
- Non-profit organizations
- Individuals

## Non-eligible

- Tri-Agencies and federal program administered by Tri-Agency, e.g., CRC, CFREF, NFRF\*
- ISED Programs: Knowledge Infrastructure Program and Strategic Investment Fund (SIF)

\*Note: Waiting on confirmation from CFI on whether these funds can be used to match personnel

# Case #1: The 'Ontario-only' budget

<b>Total project cost</b>	<b>\$5,928,920</b>
Amount request from CFI	\$2,370,000
% requested from CFI	40%
Collaborating Institutions	U Ottawa

CFI - Prov.- Other  
40% - 40% - 20%

<b>Partner type</b>	<b>Cash (\$)</b>	<b>In-kind (\$)</b>	<b>Total (\$)</b>
Institutional	160,604		160,604
ORF LIF	2,370,000		2,370,000
Vendor in-kind		1,028,316	1,028,316
<b>Total Elig. Contributions</b>	<b>2,530,604</b>	<b>1,028,316</b>	<b>3,558,920</b>



## Case #2: The 'multi-province' budget

CFI - Prov.- Other  
37% - 37% - 26%

<b>Total project cost</b>	<b>\$9,050,481</b>
Amount request from CFI	\$3,350,000
% requested from CFI	37%
Collaborating Institutions	McGill, UBC, Sherbrooke

<b>Partner type</b>	<b>Cash (\$)</b>	<b>In-kind (\$)</b>	<b>Total (\$)</b>
Institutional	1,816,053		1,816,053
Provincial (ORF, BC, QC)	3,350,000		3,350,000
Vendor in-kind		534,428	534,428
<b>Total Elig. Contributions</b>	<b>5,166,053</b>	<b>534,428</b>	<b>5,700,481</b>



# Case #3: The 'international consortium' budget

<b>Total project cost</b>	<b>\$29,424,215</b>
Amount request from CFI	\$6,185,485
% requested from CFI	21%
Collaborating Institutions	McGill, SFU, U Vic

CFI - Prov.- Other  
21% - 0% - 79%

<b>Partner type</b>	<b>Cash (\$)</b>	<b>In-kind (\$)</b>	<b>Total (\$)</b>
International Consortium	23,238,730		23,238,730
Institutional/Provincial			
Vendor in-kind			
<b>Total Elig. Contributions</b>	<b>23,238,730</b>		<b>23,238,730</b>



# Eligible Cost Highlights

- Research equipment, warranties
- Installation
- Shipping, transportation, brokerage fees, excise taxes and duties
- Travel to a manufacturer, dealer or supplier to select research infrastructure
- Initial training for the main operator(s) that is typically included with purchase
- Furniture, communications, databases, etc. where justifiably linked to research
- Personnel required for the installation and set-up of the infrastructure, as well as continuous development and use of databases (evergreening).



## Prior to submission:

- When incurred before the CFI deadline, as long as within the eligible time window (usually 12 months before CFI releases CFP)
- Renovations, including external consultants that may be needed to provide estimate – costs are initially funded by Faculty/Dept and then reimbursable @ 80% from CFI/ORF

# Ineligible Costs

- Purchase or lease of real property
- Infrastructure that is primarily use for teaching and/or clinical care
- ***Office furniture and supplies***
- Internal fees for the use of CFI-funded infrastructure
- Operating costs related to the general maintenance and overhead of the research infrastructure and of the building or other facilities
- Supplies and consumables
- Trainee stipends and research salaries
- Research related costs (i.e. data collection, recruitment, publication fees)
- Conference travel
- Administrative costs



# Operations & Maintenance

## Keys for Success:

- Think about the useable life of the infrastructure
  - Personnel – lab management
  - Supplies/Consumables needed for operation
  - Maintenance – replacement parts, repairs, warranties
  - Services – electricity, security, cleaning

## How will facilities be maintained?

- Institutional Commitment (IOF)
  - CFI will provide 30% of the CFI contribution
  - Carleton uses 5% to cover utilities and space-related costs
  - Remainder can be allocated to support Operations/Maintenance
- Operating Grants
- Departmental support
- User fees



## **Sustainability**

### **Assessment Criteria:**

*The infrastructure will be optimally used, operated and sustained over its useful **life** through tangible commitments*

# Best Practices

- Think outside & inside the box!
  - Size, shape, weight, special power requirements, etc.
- Group your budget items!
- Factor in exchange rates, shipping, duty, etc.

# Common Pitfalls

- Not thinking about how an item will fit into a space
- Negotiating too hard with vendors or committing to a specific vendor
- Not including buffer for exchange rates, brokerage fees, etc.
- Forgetting to account for software licenses
- Not thinking about who will operate infrastructure as part of O&M



**EDI**

# Criterion: Team Composition (CFI IF 2023)

- Principles of equity and diversity were considered in the team composition including in its leadership. There is a commitment to create an inclusive environment where all team members are fully integrated and supported in the research team.
  - ✓ Describe challenges or systemic barriers in the context of your research program that could prevent equitable participation of underrepresented groups.
  - ✓ Describe at least one concrete practice you *have* put in place to overcome these challenges or systemic barriers.
  - ✓ Describe at least one concrete practice you *will* adopt to facilitate the ongoing inclusion of under-represented groups.
  - ✓ Provide a clear description of the EDI implementation plan, including potential obstacles to executing it.

# Important Note:

- An individual's self-identification in terms of belonging to one or more underrepresented groups is considered personal information.
- Do not in any way provide the personal information of team members in the proposal without their express written consent to do so.

# Systemic Barriers: What Are They?

- Policies or practices that result in some individuals from underrepresented groups receiving unequal access to or being excluded from participation in employment, services or programs.
- Underrepresented groups can include:
  - Women and other gender equity-seeking groups
  - Persons with disabilities
  - Indigenous Peoples
  - Racialized individuals
  - LGBTQ2S+ people
  - Early-career researchers

# Feedback on EDI in previous IF applications

- **Team composition is not representative** of the actual field and/or **not convinced of the equitable participation** of all expert team members.
- **Including just one** member of an equity group **looks like tokenism**, especially if they are not fully integrated into the rest of the project, or stand out as not having a history of collaboration with rest of team.
- **Current base numbers, not just % increases, should be provided** when talking about goals to increase representation.
- **Give stronger and more proactive examples** of EDI activities demonstrating an equitably shared burden of addressing EDI among all team members at all levels.

# EDI feedback (continued)

- **Concrete examples of the team's leadership in EDI** would have greatly strengthened the proposal.
- **Provide relevant and specific details** when referring to Carleton's foundational EDI Action Plan.
- **Important to integrate meaningful Indigenous community involvement and research ethics considerations** if project seeks to benefit Indigenous peoples/communities.
- If community engagement a key element of knowledge mobilization/transfer, make sure to **include community representatives early and meaningfully** in research design and management.

# Assessment & Evaluation

# Objectives & assessment criteria

1

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

Research or technology development

Team expertise

Team composition

2

Enhance and optimize the capacity of institutions and research communities to conduct the proposed research or technology development program(s) over the useful life of the infrastructure

Infrastructure

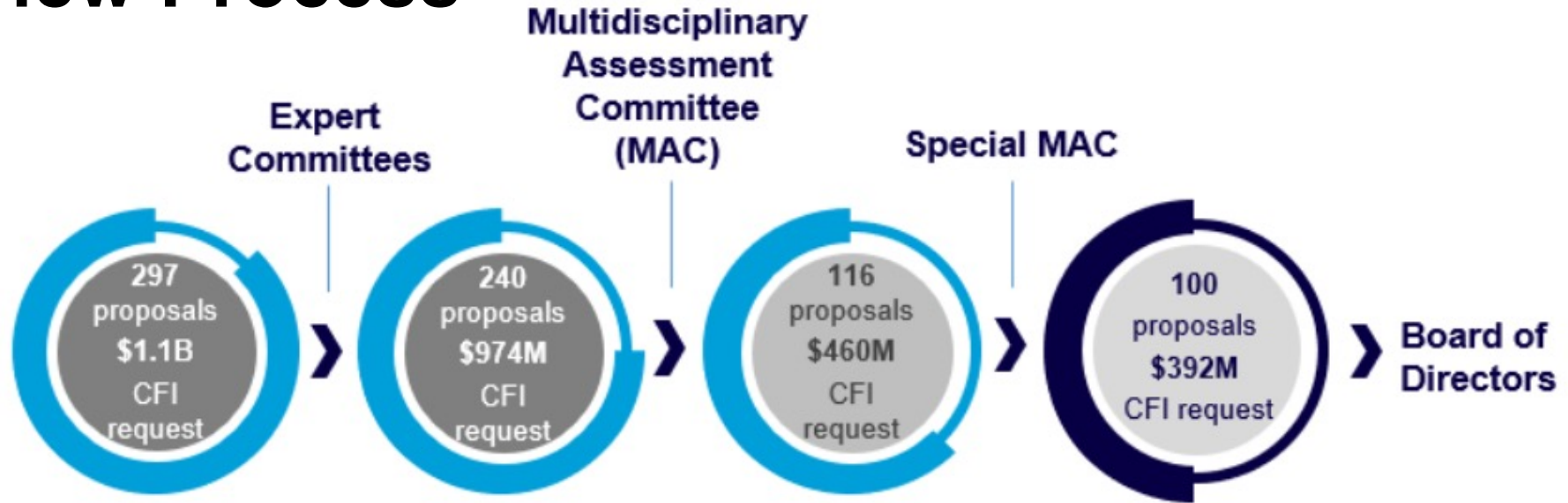
Sustainability

3

Lead to social, health, environmental and/or economic benefits for Canadians

Benefits

# IF Review Process



Proposals due to CFI  
Jun 15, 2022

**Aug-Nov 2022**

Assess the strengths and weaknesses of proposals against the assessment criteria

**Jan 2023**

Assess proposals against the three competition objectives

**Feb 2023**

Recommends proposals that best meet the CFI's mandate and competition objectives and would be the most beneficial for Canada

**March 2023**

Makes final funding decision

# Strengths & Weaknesses from Experience

- Meaningful engagement on EDI is critical
  - Suggestion: Explain under-representation as well as identify actions (taken and proposed) to address EDI, relevant goals the team will work toward, how progress will be evaluated, etc.
- Teams should: Be multi-institutional; Have demonstrable collaborations; Include a Team Lead(s) with experience leading large team projects; Reflect EDI in composition & project management
- If an obvious collaboration has not been pursued or existing similar equipment will not be included, explain
  - Suggestion: Do so in a way that emphasizes how or why your project is unique
- Propose exciting, ambitious science enabled by the requested infrastructure
- Writing has to strike a balance between reviewers with no expertise in the research area and expert reviewers who are looking for compelling science
  - Suggestion: A longer introduction (3/4-1 page) that is written for non-expert reviewers; Integrate explanatory details for non-expert reviewers
- Application must be complete

Section	Promising practices from 2023 feedback
Research and Technology Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-world-leading, bold, break-through potential</li> <li>-robust justification of methodological choices (why those methods were the best possible methods to address the proposed research)</li> </ul>
Team Expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-proposed research project and associated team’s track record must be fully aligned</li> <li>-clearly link every member of the core team to the proposed project and the requested infrastructure in clear and concrete ways</li> <li>-preference for interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary contributions</li> <li>-demonstrated concrete connections and previous engagement with wide networks of other users and stakeholders to demonstrate team’s capability to generate impact</li> </ul>
Team Composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-go beyond the basics in addressing equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI)</li> <li>-indicating barriers members from underrepresented groups face in enabling their full participation on large-scale projects is only first step</li> <li>-teams should clearly demonstrate how EDI considerations were/are central to how core team was selected</li> <li>-indicate clear plan to expand team over life of project</li> <li>-integrate EDI considerations throughout proposal (beyond team composition and student training)</li> </ul> <p><b><i>i.e., EDI considerations should start now and drive application development</i></b></p>

Section	Promising practices from 2023 feedback
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-clarify connections with and potential to leverage previous infrastructure investments (by the administering and/or collaborating institutions)</li> <li>-clear case for the innovativeness of the requested infrastructure (more than standard request)</li> </ul>
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-detailed and costed sustainability plan should extend beyond the initial five years of the CFI project and this extension</li> <li>-Operating and Maintenance budget should not be static unless there is a clear justification for this choice</li> <li>- project management and governance as a key element of sustainability and should include a clearly detailed and well justified governance model               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-key governance bodies should be at least partially identified at the time of application</li> <li>-clarify how various governance components would interact and support the overall operation and maintenance of the facility</li> <li>-for community-engaged and/or Indigenous projects: how communities and peoples were involved in the overall project design prior to application and their participation would be integrated into the project governance going-forward</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-clear plans for both training of highly qualified personnel (HQP) and for knowledge mobilization, including integration of EDI considerations</li> <li>-detailed and tangible examples of the kinds of knowledge mobilization or technology transfer activities that would occur during the project</li> </ul>

# Resources and More Information

- [CFI IF 2025 Internal Carleton Process – SSHA stream \(CORIS\)](#)
- [Innovation Fund 2023: Call for proposals \(innovation.ca\)](#)
- [CFI Update \(February 2024\) \(innovation.ca\)](#)