

CFI Innovation Fund Western Call for Proposals – Version 2.0

Research Western anticipates that the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) will release a Call for Proposals for the next round of the Innovation Fund some time in 2018.

In an effort to maximize the development time and support to potential Innovation Fund applicants, and to meet the necessary internal assessment and review processes for infrastructure proposals of this scale, Research Western has developed an internal timeline designed to engage and prepare application teams in advance of the anticipated CFI Call for Proposals.

This pre-call framework is based on estimated CFI timelines and previous Innovation Fund competitions, and is therefore subject to change as new information is provided by the CFI.

Anticipated Timeline

A tentative timeline for the various stages of Western's internal process is provided below.

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| Information Session: | January 29, 2018, 1:00 – 2:00, SSC 2024 |
| “Pitch Your Proposal” Event: | April 19, 2018, 12:30 – 3:00, FNB 1200 |
| Internal Notices of Intent Due: | May 29, 2018 |
| Internal Proposals Due: | September 10, 2018 |
| Internal Selection of Proposals: | Fall 2018 |

Internal Notice of Intent

A mandatory Notice of Intent (NOI) **must** be submitted by May 29, 2018. Applicants who submitted an NOI for the initial March 27 deadline can either (a) let their submitted NOIs stand as is or (b) submit an updated NOI at any time prior to May 29.

This NOI will be brief and collect basic information on the applicant and their research team, the proposed infrastructure, and the facility/space requirements of the proposed infrastructure. The NOI will require a signature from the Dean (or Dean's designate) of the supporting Faculty(ies); applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their proposals, and the required facility/space, with their Faculty(ies) in advance of the NOI deadline.

The submitted NOIs will not be adjudicated, and will be used only for planning purposes. The list of submitted NOIs will be published to the Western community, to address any potential overlaps and encourage collaboration between teams. NOIs will also be shared with applicants' Faculties and Facilities Management, to allow for an assessment of the facility/space needs of the requested infrastructure.

“Pitch Your Proposal” Event

To provide potential applicants with an opportunity to obtain constructive feedback on their internal proposals, a “Pitch Your Proposal” event (based on a similar, successful initiative at the University of Calgary) will be held on April 19, 2018 from 12:30 – 3:00 in the FIMS/Nursing Building, Room 1200. Applicants will provide a brief, five-minute “pitch” of their Innovation Fund proposal to a panel of experts, who will ask questions and provide suggestions and feedback in order to improve the proposal. **This event is optional, and will not impact the competitive internal review process.** The panel presentations will be open to all attendees, in order to encourage potential collaborations and share the panel's advice and insights more broadly. Further details on the event and how to participate can be found on Western's Innovation Fund website.

Internal Proposals

An internal proposal **must** be submitted by September 10, 2018.

CFI caps the maximum amount for which each institution can apply in each round of the Innovation Fund. (In 2017, Western's CFI envelope was \$41.3M, or approximately \$100M in total eligible costs.) Internal proposals must therefore be competitively adjudicated to determine which applications will be submitted to the CFI within Western's envelope.

Applicants will be asked to describe the requested infrastructure; the innovation of the proposed research enabled by the infrastructure; the excellence of the research team and how they are uniquely positioned to conduct the proposed research; how the proposal builds on areas of institutional strength and past investments; how the operation of the infrastructure would be sustained over its useful life; and how the infrastructure and the proposed research will have an impact on the research field and provide benefits to Canada.

Internal proposals will require a signature from the Dean (or Dean's designate) of the supporting Faculty(ies); applicants must discuss the required facility/space for the proposed infrastructure with their Faculty(ies) in advance of the internal proposal deadline.

Inter-Institutional Proposals: Due to differences in provincial and institutional timelines, Innovation Fund proposals which require a contribution from Western's CFI envelope but which are led by another institution will **not** follow the timelines and processes outlined above. Participation in inter-institutional proposals will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Vice-President (Research) in consultation with the relevant Faculty(ies). Further details on the process for inter-institutional Innovation Fund proposals will be forthcoming at a later date.

Review Process

Internal proposals will be assessed in a two-stage review process using CFI's Innovation Fund Assessment Criteria.

In the first stage of review, an Expert Panel comprised of Western researchers who have experience leading CFI projects and/or reviewing CFI proposals will assess the innovation and scientific excellence of the proposed research, the excellence of the team, and the benefits to Canada.

In the second stage of review, Western's Core Planning Group (consisting of the Vice-President (Research), Associate Vice-Presidents (Research), and the Associate Deans (Research)) will provide comment on the Expert Panel assessments and rankings, and additionally assess the alignment of proposals with institutional strategic priorities and areas of strength; the sustainability of the proposed infrastructure; the institutional space required to house the infrastructure; and any potential financial or operational risks of the proposed infrastructure.

Based on the recommendations of the Expert Panel and the Core Planning Group, the Vice-President (Research) will make final decisions on which proposals will be selected to proceed with application development, within Western's anticipated CFI envelope. Applicants will work with their Faculty(ies), Research Development, Procurement Services, and Facilities Management to develop a full application and proposal budget. All applications will undergo a review by Western's Core Planning Group prior to CFI submission.