



Procedures for Canada Foundation for Innovation Infrastructure Operating Fund

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Responsibility: Associate Vice-President, Academic and Research

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Purpose: To set the guidelines and regulations on the use and administration of Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) Infrastructure Operating Fund (IOF) at Cape Breton University (CBU).

Procedure:ⁱ CBU-ORGS-13

This procedure applies immediately to all CFI Projects awarded with a date of final decision made on and after January 1, 2015. For the CFI projects awarded prior to January 1, 2015 this procedure will be retroactively applied via paragraph 3.2. Application instructions for CFI projects awarded with a date of final decision made before January 1, 2015.

ⁱ The following University CFI-IOF policies were consulted in preparation of the CBU CFI-IOF procedures: StFX Internal CFI-IOF Policy and Application Form; Mount Allison CFI Infrastructure Operating Fund Institutional Allocation Policy and Procedures July 2013; The University of Saskatchewan CFI Infrastructure Operating Fund Institutional Allocation Plan; and the University of Waterloo Plan for the Operation and Maintenance of Infrastructure funded through the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) August 2017.

Background

The CFI-IOF helps cover a portion of the operating and maintenance costs to ensure optimal use of CFI-funded infrastructure at Cape Breton University. Such costs include technical personnel, maintenance and repairs, and services that are directly associated with funded infrastructure and spaces. CBU is committed to ensure that appropriate resources are provided for the operation and maintenance of the CFI-funded research infrastructure over its useful life (i.e. the period of time over which the infrastructure is expected to provide benefits and be usable for its intended purpose, factoring in normal repairs and maintenance).

An institution's IOF allocation is based on the CFI contributions for eligible projects. All projects, approved by the CFI Board of Directors after July 1, 2001, are eligible to receive funding from the Infrastructure Operating Fund, with the exception of projects funded under the Major Science Initiatives Fund, the Canada Research Chairs Infrastructure Fund, the Career Awards and the international funds. All eligible projects usually generate an IOF allocation of 30 percent of the maximum CFI amount approved at award finalization.

1. CFI-IOF ELIGIBLE COSTS

Source: [*CFI Policy and Program Guide \(2019\)*](#)

Eligible costs for operation and maintenance (O&M) of the infrastructure

The costs of operating and maintaining CFI-funded infrastructure are eligible under the Infrastructure Operating Fund. Unlike the majority of CFI's funds, no partner funding is required. An eligible operating and maintenance cost for the IOF must meet the following conditions:

- The infrastructure item to which it relates must have been funded by the CFI (i.e. it appears on the proposal or updated budget and/or the final financial report).
- The CFI-funded infrastructure project to which it relates must have been approved after July 1, 2001. However, projects funded under the Canada Research Chairs Infrastructure Fund, Career Awards and the international funds are not eligible for funding from the IOF.
- The CFI-funded infrastructure project to which it relates must have passed the stage of award finalization. An award agreement would therefore be in place for the project.
- The operating and maintenance activities are needed to ensure the infrastructure can be used to carry out the proposed research.
- The infrastructure must still be used for research purposes. There is no maximum number of years for which the IOF funding can be claimed, as long as the infrastructure is still being used for research purposes during the period claimed.
- Only the portion of operating and maintenance costs associated with research is eligible.

Please review the list of the eligible and non-eligible CFI-IOF costs in [Appendix C](#).

2. PROCEDURES & REQUIREMENTS

2.1 Guiding Principles

Cape Breton University has developed an Institutional Allocation Plan to manage the internal distribution of the CFI-IOF.

The University will allocate the CFI Infrastructure Operating Fund to eligible projects based on need relative to the availability of other sources of funding for operating and maintenance of the CFI-funded infrastructure. Prior to requesting funding from the IOF, each Project Leader, in cooperation with their respective Dean/delegate, is expected to:

- identify synergies between CFI-funded projects and submit joint proposals, when possible, to maximize the potential benefit and to avoid any inappropriate duplication of expenses; and
- attempt to identify operating funding from other sources prior to requesting funding from the IOF.

CBU has established a central CFI-IOF account that will be used to distribute IOF awards based on actual operating and maintenance needs. This allows CBU maximum flexibility to support projects with different needs and scope, while ensuring accountability to CFI. It will also enable CBU to prepare an annual plan and report on IOF expenditures, as well as management, sustainability and operations of CFI-funded infrastructure.

Project Leaders who accept IOF are responsible for:

- Complying with CFI Policy and Program Guide related to IOF.
- Ensuring that all expenditures are related to the O&M of the infrastructure funded by CFI.
- Funding over-expenditures and ineligible expenditures from other sources.
- Retaining a file of supporting documentation for expenditures for 6 years.

The CFI Advisory Committee, chaired by the Associate Vice-President, Academic and Research (AVPAR), assists with management of the IOF. The University Office of Research and Graduate Studies (ORGS) and Finance Office (FO) will administer the IOF in accordance with the CFI Policy and Program Guide and Award Agreements. The ORGS staff, where possible, will assist Project Leaders, Deans/delegates, and Department Chairs with identifying synergies between CFI funded projects and potential duplication of expenses.

In the case of inter-institutional projects, funds will be allocated according to demonstrated need, and in accordance with CFI-IOF policies. This allocation will be negotiated and included as part of the required inter-institutional agreement at the time of CFI application.

The final decision regarding the process and allocation of the central IOF account will be made by the AVPAR.

2.2 Administration

- **AT CFI APPLICATION STAGE**

When preparing CFI applications, Project Leaders must identify funding sources from which they will cover projected expenses in the Operations and Maintenance section of the application. Project Leaders can budget up to 75 percent of the IOF allocation tied to their project for five years. The remaining 25 percent of the allocation will be held in a central university account as a contingency fund. The university will determine the use of those funds based on needs of all projects.

The funding provided by IOF funds may not be sufficient to cover all costs associated with this infrastructure, and so additional sources of funds (as required) must be identified at that time.

- **AT CFI BUDGET FINALIZATION STAGE**

Along with confirmation of other costs within the CFI award, the Project Leader must confirm the Operations and Maintenance budget and secure any additional funds required to operate and maintain the infrastructure throughout its useful life.

In executing the CFI Award Agreement, the University confirms and commits to providing operating and maintenance costs. The completion of the ‘Confirmation of Award Conditions’ form indicates that all levels of the institution are committed to the maintenance and operations of the infrastructure, as described in the Operations and Maintenance budget.

- **AT CFI COMPLETION STAGE**

Applications for CFI-IOF will be submitted to AVPAR on an annual basis. Normally, these requests will be completed in Spring each year to inform an appropriate request to be made to CFI. It is expected that Project Leaders will normally apply for IOF funding within six months of the completion of the CFI project (infrastructure has been installed and is in research-ready state). There is no maximum number of years for which the IOF can be claimed, as long as the infrastructure is still being used for research purposes during the period claimed. However, the ORGS will consider number of years of IOF support, plans for use of funding, research productivity in the use of the IOF and infrastructure, as well as other Project Leaders’ demands on the use of IOF funding.

2.3 Reporting to CFI

The Finance Office Research & Project Accountant prepares and co-ordinates with each Project Leader an annual financial report on actual spending and the next year forecast. This financial report is submitted to CFI by June 15th based on the financial year ended March 31st.

[View the IOF Report](#)

Institutions must provide full supporting documentation for all actual expenditures reported in their IOF Annual Report. The Certification Form developed by CFI for tracking expenses against personnel must be completed and submitted at the end of each year.

Required documentation for salaries of highly qualified personnel (technicians or professionals) directly involved in the O&M of the CFI-funded infrastructure:

- Description of the operations and maintenance activities performed, and certification that the infrastructure cannot be operated without the assistance of the highly qualified personnel. This certification must be obtained annually and signed by the employee and approved by the supervisor. The CFI will also accept a certification of this information from another person (e.g. project leader or department head) if this person is knowledgeable of the activities performed by the employee.
- Supporting evidence for the individual's salary rate and fringe benefits (e.g. letter of hire or change in salary rate, payroll records, etc.)

[View the IOF Reporting Templates](#)

3. APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications for CFI-IOF requests will be submitted to AVPAR on an annual basis. Normally, these requests will be completed in Spring each year to inform an appropriate request to be made to CFI.ⁱⁱ It is expected that Project Leaders will normally apply for IOF funding within six months of the completion of the CFI project (infrastructure has been installed and is in research-ready state).

DEADLINE: January 15 (For projects funded after January 1, 2015)

3.1 PROJECTS AWARDED WITH A DATE OF FINAL DECISION MADE AFTER JANUARY 1, 2015.

3.1.1 Justification

The CFI Guidelines, outlining eligible and ineligible expenditures, is found in Section 4.7 of the CFI Policy and Guide - Source: [CFI Policy and Program Guide \(2019\)](#)

Please refer to these Guidelines as you complete the application. Provide a short description for each type of expenditure:

- 1) Personnel (Salaries) – Describe the type of technical support required, how it will be

ⁱⁱ The emergency CFI-IOF requests will be accepted on on-going basis throughout the year; please submit the Application Form in [Appendix B](#) when applying for the emergency CFI-IOF request.

obtained, and the projected cost.

- 2) Personnel (Training) – Describe the type of technical training required, how it will be obtained, and the projected cost.
- 3) Supplies (maximum 10% of funding) - Describe the type of supplies required and estimated cost per year.
- 4) Maintenance and repairs - Describe the nature of the maintenance and repairs required and their estimated cost per year.
- 5) Services - Describe the types of services required, how it will support the operation of the equipment, and the estimated cost per year.
- 6) Other (specify) - Use this for any expense categories not listed above.

When granted, the funds will be transferred to the individual IOF research accounts held by the Project Leader. Any unallocated funds will remain in the University's IOF account to address future operational and maintenance needs of eligible infrastructure projects. NOTE: Project Leaders will not be able to access their IOF funds if the CFI Annual Report is outstanding. At the end of the year unused funds in the individual Project Leaders research accounts will be returned to the institutional IOF account.

The IOF will be administered in accordance with the CFI Policy and Program Guide and CFI Award Agreements. The Finance Office will review individual project accounts annually in preparation of an annual report to CFI for the IOF program.

Application Form (APPENDIX A) – [LINK TO THE ONLINE APPLICATION FORM](#)

3.2 PROJECTS AWARDED WITH A DATE OF FINAL DECISION MADE PRIOR JANUARY 1, 2015. EMERGENCY REQUESTS & THE REQUESTS IN EXCESS OF 75 PERCENT OF INDIVIDUAL PROJECT ALLOCATION.

3.2.1 Justification

The CFI Guidelines, outlining eligible and ineligible expenditures, is found in Section 4.7 of the CFI Policy and Guide - Source: [CFI Policy and Program Guide \(2019\)](#)

Please refer to these Guidelines as you complete the application. Provide a short description for each type of expenditure:

Requests for Projects awarded with a date of final decision made prior January 1, 2015, Emergency Requests and Requests in Excess of 75 percent of individual project allocation will be assessed using the following criteria:

- Planned use of the funds. Do exceptional circumstances exist? (e.g. catastrophic event, unforeseen requirements).

- Amount of IOF Funds previously received (past 3 years) & number of years of CFI-IOF support.
- Needs of other Projects Leaders. Will additional IOF funding create synergy and collaboration between individual IOF applications? (efforts for collaborations among CFI funded projects, such as hiring a shared technician).
- Does the project have unique operating and maintenance requirements?
- Identification of efforts to secure funding from other sources prior to applying for CFI-IOF funding.
- Will additional funding provide greater access to the CFI-funded infrastructure for the broader University community? (research productivity in the use of the IOF and infrastructure).

The applicant should provide detailed justification (to a maximum of 2 pages) outlining how their project meets the above conditions.

Application Form (APPENDIX B) – [LINK TO THE ONLINE APPLICATION FORM](#)

APPENDIX A



**REQUEST FOR USE OF CFI INFRASTRUCTURE OPERATING FUNDS
ALLOCATION APPLICATION FORMⁱⁱⁱ**

Project Leader to complete and forward to the AVPAR Office by **January 15**

CFI Project # _____

CFI Project Lead _____

	Projected Annual Expenditures April 1-March 31	
	20__	Short Description if Applicable
Personnel (Salaries)		
Personnel (Training)		
Supplies (max 10%)		
Maintenance & Repairs		
Services		
Other (specify)		
TOTAL		

(You may provide an additional description for each expenditure category in the space below.)

ⁱⁱⁱ For CFI Projects awarded with a date of final decision made after January 1, 2015. Submission ONLY for January 15th deadline.

Personal (Salaries)

--

Personal (Training)

--

Supplies (max 10%)

--

Maintenance & Repairs

--

Services

--

Other (specify)

--

Exit Plan _____

(Provide details as to how operating funding will be obtained once the IOF funding has been exhausted)

Project Leaders must confirm that:

- the financial information is complete and accurate for annual reporting purposes
- the forecast presented in this report is realistic and takes into consideration the most recent expectations
- costs forecasted are admissible costs as per the CFI Policy and Program Guide
- costs included have not been claimed for reimbursement from another source
- costs included will be subject to the institution's usual tendering and purchasing policies and procedures
- the infrastructure for which IOF is being requested is still used for research purposes.

Required Signatures

Project Leader	_____	Date _____
Department Chair	_____	Date _____
Dean	_____	Date _____

By signing this document, you are acknowledging that you agree to the application for CFI-IOF funding and that if the application is approved, any over expenditures or ineligible CFI-IOF expenditures will be the responsibility of the Project Leader.

APPENDIX B



REQUEST FOR USE OF CFI INFRASTRUCTURE OPERATING FUNDS
APPLICATION FORM ^{iv}

Project Leader to complete and forward to the AVPAR Office

CFI Project # _____

CFI Project Lead _____

Type of Request ^{iv} _____

	Projected Annual Expenditures	
	Amount	Short Description if Applicable
Personnel		
Supplies (max 10%)		
Maintenance & Repairs		
Services		
Other (specify)		
TOTAL		

^{iv} Type of Request:

- Pre-2015: All projects with a final decision before January 1, 2015
- Standard request
- Emergency request
- Exceeds 75%: Request is >75% of CFI IOF project allocation

Justification

If required, please attach additional pages providing justification for the request. Limit of 2 pgs.

Exit Plan

Provide details on how operating costs will be supported once IOF funding is exhausted.

Project Leaders must confirm that:

- the financial information is complete and accurate for annual reporting purposes
- the forecast presented in this report is realistic and takes into consideration the most recent expectations
- costs forecasted are admissible costs as per the CFI Policy and Program Guide
- costs included have not been claimed for reimbursement from another source
- costs included will be subject to the institution's usual tendering and purchasing policies and procedures
- the infrastructure for which IOF is being requested is still used for research purposes.

Required Signatures and Date

Project Leader	_____	Date _____
Department Chair	_____	Date _____
Dean	_____	Date _____
ORGS Representative	_____	Date _____

By signing this document, you are acknowledging that you agree to the application for CFI-IOF funding and that if the application is approved, any over expenditures or ineligible CFI-IOF expenditures will be the responsibility of the Project Leader.

APPENDIX C

Eligible CFI-IOF costs

- Salaries (including benefits) of highly qualified personnel (technicians or professionals) directly involved in the operation and maintenance of the CFI-funded infrastructure. The full salary of the highly qualified personnel may be eligible if the infrastructure cannot be operated without their assistance.
- Training for the main operator(s) of the research infrastructure, not included in the infrastructure award. It is expected that the main operator(s) will train other users. Alternatively, a group training session may be provided by the vendor at the institution.
- Extended warranties and/or service contracts not included in the infrastructure award
- Extensions to warranty coverage, service contracts and software licences
- Maintenance and repairs
- Replacement parts
- Replacement of a CFI-funded infrastructure item needing repair, only if the replacement is more cost-effective than the repair (the replacement item must have similar functionality)
- Services (e.g. electricity, security, cleaning) that directly support space funded by the CFI or for space that is essential to house and use CFI-funded infrastructure, which may include common areas, if applicable
- Supplies and consumables needed to operate the research infrastructure (not to exceed 10 percent of the cumulative total IOF funding claimed by the institution)

Non-eligible CFI-IOF costs

- Purchase or lease of real property
- Cost of equipment, installation and construction or renovation deemed eligible under an infrastructure award
- Upgrades related to the infrastructure
- Telephone, internet and cable or satellite television services that are not necessary to ensure the infrastructure can be used for research
- Insurance
- Costs not directly related to the CFI-funded infrastructure
- Trainee stipends (undergraduates, graduates and postdoctoral fellows) and researcher salaries
- Administrative, secretarial or clerical personnel not directly related to the operation and maintenance of the infrastructure (e.g. research services office, library, finance services)
- Any cost to conduct research activities
- Costs attributed to the dissemination of information such as promotion, publications or conferences
- Expenditures reimbursed by another source

DEFINITIONS

CFI	Canada Foundation for Innovation
IOF	Infrastructure Operating Fund
CFI-Funded Infrastructure	Equipment, scientific collections, computer hardware and/or software, information databases and communications linkages used or to be used primarily for carrying out research. This includes housing and installations essential for their use and servicing
O&M SUPPORT	Operation and Maintenance support may include the personnel (e.g. technical support), training for the main operator, extended warranties and/or service contracts not included in the infrastructure award, extensions to warranty coverage and software licences, maintenance and repairs, replacement parts, and materials/supplies and services necessary to ensure the effective operation of infrastructure over its useful life.
USEFUL LIFE	The “useful life” of CFI-funded infrastructure is defined as the period of time that the infrastructure remains useful for the purposes described in the CFI funding application. The useful life of research infrastructure is considered to be the period of time over which the infrastructure is expected to provide benefits and be usable for its intended purpose, factoring in normal repairs and maintenance.
ORGS	Office of Research and Graduate Studies
AVPAR	Associate Vice-President, Academic and Research
RESEARCH PROJECT	a project governed by a Research Agreement
PI	principal investigator, the lead researcher at Cape Breton University who is employed in a fulltime capacity and is responsible for a Research Project
RESEARCHER	includes the Principal Investigator as well as other faculty, students and staff involved in a Research Project and may also include faculty, students and staff from other universities, student research assistants and contract researchers
FACULTY	Cape Breton University faculty as defined by either the Collective Agreement between the Cape Breton University Faculty Association (CBUFA) or the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union (NSGEU) and CBU
RESEARCH TEAM	the Researchers participating in a Research Project
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE	an individual with a doctorate degree who is employed by the Principal Investigator as part of a research team
EMPLOYEE	an individual employed by CBU either on a full-time or part-time basis
STUDENT	an individual who is registered as a student at CBU