TIPS: ONTARIO RESEARCH FUND – SMALL INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

OVERVIEW

The Ontario Research Fund – Small Infrastructure Fund (ORF-SIF) helps attract, retain and develop leading researcher talent at publicly funded Ontario research institutions through the acquisition and renewal of leading-edge technology and equipment.

The Ontario Research Fund will contribute a maximum of 40 per cent toward the total eligible costs. The research institution is responsible for obtaining at least 60 per cent from the Canada Foundation for Innovation, any private funding partners, and its own resources.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals for small infrastructure grants must demonstrate the following:

• **Quality**: The proposed research or technology development is of high quality and originality, meets international standards, and will lead to innovation
• **Expertise**: Researchers must have the expertise and commitment to conduct the world-class research or technological development proposed
• **Need**: The infrastructure is essential and appropriate for the proposed activity. Major proposals will enhance or establish a unique and important institutional capacity in the proposed research or technology development
• **Training**: Creating or strengthening an environment that attracts high quality trainees and imparts the new high-level skills to high quality professionals for research and other careers
• **Partnerships**: Any required collaborations or partnerships are appropriate and already in place or under development
• **Benefits**: Research using the proposed infrastructure will have the potential to lead to social or economic benefits

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The guidelines remind applicants of the ORF's commitment to the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion. Projects are required to "meaningfully engage members of underrepresented groups within the research team." While not assessed as its own criterion, it is strongly recommended to address how your proposed research program will support and foster greater equity, diversity and inclusion, particularly in the discussion of the Training criterion.

SECTION-SPECIFIC TIPS: FILLABLE FORM

1. PROJECT INFORMATION

Infrastructure Project Title Project title from CFI application	
CFI File Number Project number from CFI application	Institution University of Toronto
Application Date (yyyy/mm/dd) CFI sponsor deadline	CFI Program/Funding Stream John R. Evans Leaders Fund
Project Address or Location Address where infrastructure will be located	
Number of Researchers/ Collaborators Include PI + the # of researchers in "Partnerships" (section 3)	

PROJECT BRIEF: Describe for a general audience the goal of the proposed research program and summarize why this research is important. Please adhere to the three-line limit (not three sentences).

PROJECT ABSTRACT: Using simple, non-technical language, describe your central research questions and the role of the requested infrastructure in the project, focusing on how this research will benefit Ontario. Please adhere to the 250-word limit.

2. PARTNERS

FUNDING PARTNERS: Provide the names and amounts for each source of funding. For in-kind contributions, list each vendor separately. For example,

    CFI: $XXX (anticipated)
    ORF: $XXX (anticipated)
    University of Toronto: $XXX (received)

    Vendor contributions:
    Vendor 1: $YYY (anticipated)
    Vendor 2: $YYY (anticipated)
    Vendor 3: $YYY (anticipated)

RESEARCH PARTNERS: Include a list of your main collaborators/partners, which should correspond to the collaborators/partners described in the "Partnerships" section below. Include complete institutional affiliations, and briefly describe the areas of the collaborators' expertise or how they will contribute to the project.

You can divide this list into categories such as "Academic Partners" and "Industry Partners" or "Canadian Partners" and "International Partners." These collaborators should be the same as those discussed in your CFI JELF.

3. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Provide about a half-page to one full page of discussion for each of the criteria in this section.

Please note that the sponsor will have a copy of the CFI-JELF application, so there is no need to reproduce it here. Tailor your text to address the specific wording used in the ORF instructions, rephrase the text whenever possible to avoid exact duplication, and focus on the impact that this research will have in **Ontario**.

This application will be reviewed by the <u>Ontario Research Fund Advisory Board</u>, which is composed of members from various fields, including non-academic expertise. The content should be tailored for this multidisciplinary board and other potential reviewers at the Ministry.

QUALITY: The proposed research or technology development is of high quality and originality, meets international standards, and will lead to innovation.

- **Research is high quality and original:** Make the case that this is an innovative program of research that will break new ground. Emphasize the significance of the proposed research and describe the novelty of your research questions, your objectives, and/or your methodology.
- **Research meets international standards:** Describe how this research compares to other work done in the field, both in Canada and around the world.
- **Research will lead to innovation:** Discuss the potential for this research to have an impact, both in your field and in the broader context (Ontario). For example, explain how the proposed research will take the field in new directions and discuss how it will produce tangible economic/societal impacts for Ontario (to be described in more detail in the Benefits section, below) and/or make Ontario a leader in this field of study.

EXPERTISE: Researchers must have the expertise and commitment to conduct world-class research or technological development.

- Describe your key areas of expertise and discuss your experience using the requested infrastructure.
- Outline your major accomplishments and major forms of recognition including your publication record, your track record of peer-reviewed grant funding, and awards and honours.

NEED: The infrastructure is essential and appropriate for the proposed activity.

- Briefly describe what each major piece of equipment is, what it does, and how it will be used. Demonstrate that this infrastructure is essential to carry out the research and to produce the innovation you have described above. Make the case that, through this infrastructure, Ontario will gain a unique research capacity.
- Use short paragraphs or bulleted lists, and consider emphasizing the names of specific items in bold text so that the reviewers can easily identify the equipment you are requesting.

TRAINING: Creating or strengthening an environment that attracts high quality trainees and imparts the new high-level skills to HQP for research and other careers.

- **Attracts high-quality trainees:** Discuss some of the unique features of the facility that will draw highly qualified personnel (HQP) to your program. For example, describe the uniqueness of the infrastructure, the novelty of the research questions, the innovative methodology. Either in this section or in the Expertise section, briefly describe your track record of training HQP.
- **New high-level skills:** Outline the skills that HQP will learn through their participation in this research project and through your mentorship. Be as specific as possible.
- **Research and other careers:** Relate the skills to potential job markets, both in academia and in the private and public sectors. Emphasize the importance of particular industries to Ontario and identify the need for highly trained people in these fields—for example, discuss personnel shortages (providing labour market statistics) or describe the anticipated growth of this industry over the next decade.

PARTNERSHIPS: Any required collaborations or partnerships are appropriate and already in place or under development.

- This section should correspond to your list of Research Partners described in section 2. As there are few instructions differentiating these sections, we recommend using section 2 for a bulleted list and this section for a fuller, more narrative description of the nature of your collaborations and partnerships.
- **Collaborations in place:** Discuss current or ongoing collaborations related to this project. Describe previous work with these partners and, if applicable, some of the research outcomes of these collaborations. Discuss how the partnerships will contribute to the success of the proposed project (i.e., show how the collaboration is appropriate). Make the case that the requested infrastructure is essential for these proposed partnerships to flourish.
- **Collaborations under development:** Describe proposed or potential collaborations related to this project. Discuss how these partnerships will contribute to the success of the

proposed project. Briefly describe discussions with these planned partners and/or the interest from these planned partners. Make the case that the requested infrastructure is essential for these proposed partnerships to flourish.

BENEFITS: Research using the proposed infrastructure will have the potential to lead to social or economic benefits.

- It is very important to update this section from your CFI proposal to include information specific to Ontario. Do not copy and paste the "Benefits to Canadians" section into this application.

- **Societal benefits:** Outline how your research will ultimately lead to the betterment of Ontario. Describe health, environmental, educational, or other benefits to society that might arise from this research. Keep the focus on tangible and realistic benefits, identifying end users in Ontario and providing quantitative information, if possible.

  Some useful sources of information might include the following websites:

  - Statistics Canada (some information is broken down by province)
  - Canadian Institute for Health Information — Quick Stats (some information is broken down by province)
  - Ministry of Health and Ministry of Long-Term Care — Ministry Reports
  - Other publications and reports from Ontario ministries with portfolios relevant to your research outcomes: ontario.ca/page/ministries

- **Economic benefits:** Outline how your research will ultimately contribute to economic growth or job creation in Ontario. Economic benefits can also include cost savings and reduced expenditures. Keep the focus on tangible and realistic benefits, identifying end users in Ontario and providing quantitative information, if possible.

  Some useful sources of information might include the following websites:

  - Invest Ontario
  - Data about the University of Toronto: brand.utoronto.ca/toolkit/marketing-resources
  - Government of Canada — Research and business intelligence (some information is broken down by province):
  - Canadian Institute for Health Information — Health Spending (by province and territory)