TIPS: ORF – LARGE INFRASTRUCTURE FUND (ORF-LIF) 2025

This tips sheet does not replace a complete and careful reading of the [ORF-LIF program guidelines](#).

OVERVIEW

The Ontario Research Fund – Research Infrastructure (ORF-RI) program ensures that Ontario's publicly funded research institutes continue to have competitive, state-of-the-art infrastructure to engage in world-leading research and technology development.

The ORF will contribute a maximum of 40 percent towards the total eligible costs, and the research institution is responsible for obtaining at least 60 percent from the Canada Foundation for Innovation (through the Innovation Fund), any private funding partners, or its own resources.

The ORF program is a competitive, non-entitlement program. The ORF will not automatically match the CFI awards to Ontario institutions. ORF funding decisions will be based on scientific excellence and strategic value to Ontario.

ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW PROCESS

The expert review process to assess the scientific merits of the proposals will be managed by CFI. The results from CFI's expert review process will inform the Ministry's funding decisions.

In addition to the CFI Expert Review, the Ministry of Colleges and Universities will coordinate the Ontario Strategic Value Review to assess proposals against Ontario's three Strategic Value Criteria:

1. Economic Benefits
2. Societal Benefits
3. Plan for Achieving Impact and End-User Engagement

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 and development team." Underrepresented groups include, but are not limited to, the five designated groups (women, Indigenous peoples, members of visible minorities, persons with disabilities and LGBTQ2S+ persons).

- 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; your attention to EDI-related issues – including team composition – should be woven throughout the proposal (e.g., in the Strategic Value sections of the application).
- The institution must strive to put in place the right conditions for each individual to reach their full potential.

GENERAL TIPS

- Use clear, non-scientific language to describe your research program and its strategic value. Explain technical terms and avoid jargon.

- Emphasize the impact of your research in **Ontario**.

- Describe how the proposal relates to or differs from the current state-of-the-art research in the field, within the **Ontario** context as well as nationally and internationally.

FORMATTING AND STYLE

- Font type **must be Arial** and the size must be no smaller than **11pts**. Condensed type is not acceptable.

- Attachment text must be in black and of letter quality.

- All pages must be numbered.

- Character limits include spaces.

- Figures, tables, and references are not included in the character limit.

- Use headings and sub-headings that mimic the language of ORF-LIF instructions.

- Use white space extensively.

- Avoid long, descriptive narrative. Use bullet points or summary tables when possible.

TIPS FOR SELECTED SECTIONS OF THE ORF-LIF APPLICATION

The text below describes only selected sections of the ORF-LIF application. Please see the full application guidelines for a more detailed description of the application requirements.

PROJECT FUNDING

The budget table should show the project spending over the life of the award—up to five years. However, it is important to note and account for CFI's expectations on the **maximum time to implement projects** (see page 5 of the Innovation Fund 2025 Call for Proposals), which might not allow five years for your project to be finalized: please check the completion expectations for your project.

INSTITUTION CONTACT

Please fill the *Institution Contact* section with the following information:

Institution Contact			
Applicant Institution Contact			
Last Name Hamilton	First Name Kevin		Middle Initial
Title Director, Institutional Initiatives			
Institution University of Toronto			
Department Research Services			
Address			
Unit Number 3rd Fl	Street Number 12	Street Name Queen's Park Crescent West	PO Box
City/Town Toronto		Province Ontario	Postal Code M5S 1S8
Telephone Number 416-978-7605 ext.		Email Address kevin.hamilton@utoronto.ca	

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY (4000-character limit)

Describe how the IP generated from the project will be determined, if relevant.

Boilerplate intellectual property text (applicant may incorporate relevant text):

The University of Toronto welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with governments, companies, foundations, associations, and other organizations in a manner consistent with its role as a public research university.

The University recognizes the vital importance of business and industry partners in the realization of the value of inventions, innovations, and intellectual property. The University is committed to working with these organizations in a collaborative and equitable manner to achieve mutual goals.

Upon the award of funding from ORF, the University and the private sector partner(s) (PSP) will negotiate agreements to govern the collaboration, including IP ownership, protection, and commercialization.

Any IP developed during the course of the project will be disclosed to the Innovations & Partnerships Office at the University of Toronto. Unless a third-party (e.g., the PSP) has been granted rights to the invention via a formal agreement (as described above), then at the time of creation, inventions are owned jointly by the inventor(s) and the University. For unencumbered inventions, inventors can choose either to take personal ownership, or to work with the University by assigning the rights of their IP to the institution; in this case, the University will assist in protecting and commercializing their IP.

If researchers involved in the project are from different institutions and if joint IP is created between two institutions, the technology transfer offices of each institution will work together to put in place an Inter-Institutional Agreement, dealing with ownership of background IP; who will be the commercial lead; and revenue distributions between the two institutions.

Add the specifics of the agreement, if already signed, or use the following boilerplate text:

Ownership of IP arising from the project will vest with the party whose personnel create it. In the case of joint development, joint ownership may be negotiated. Participants in the project may be granted a royalty-free license to use intellectual property arising from the project for their internal research purposes. In addition, the University and the PSP(s) will enter into an agreement whereby the project IP may be commercialized by the PSP(s). The University's standard Sponsored Research Agreement allows the PSP(s) to have an option to use and/or otherwise exploit IP created from the project.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA – STRATEGIC VALUE CRITERIA (55,000-character limit for entire section)

Economic Benefits and Societal Benefits

It is very important that these two sections include information specific to **Ontario**. Do not copy and paste the "Benefits to Canadians" section from your CFI application. The anticipated benefits should address the strategic value of your research to **Ontario**.

- Be careful not to overstate or oversell your benefits. Make sure the benefits are concrete, tangible, and realistic.
- The ORF guidelines emphasize that quantitative information will strengthen your application. Be sure to include quantitative information related to your market analyses, economic benefits, and societal benefits. When you discuss economic impact, use plausible numbers rather than general statements. You might also consider using team members' prior research or technology development successes (with quantified outputs whenever possible) as evidence.
- Some useful sources of quantitative information:
    - Market data available through U of T Library's Guide to Entrepreneurship
    - Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada (provides information by sector)
    - Invest Ontario
    - Statistics Canada (some information is broken down by province)
    - Ontario Health—Ministry Reports
    - Canadian Institute for Health Information—Quick Stats (some information is broken down by province)

- o [Canadian Institute for Health Information—Health Spending](#) (includes expenditures by province and territory)
- o Relevant Government of Ontario ministry websites (some pages outline challenges facing the province and give you a sense of the language used to describe them)
- Refer to the lists of benefits on pages 11 of the ORF LIF guidelines.
- Be sure to describe *all* of the relevant benefits associated with your research, offering a description, quantitative information, and potential end users for each benefit.
- Impacts may be short- or long-term.
- Economic impact can be wealth generation or cost savings (e.g., reduced health care costs).
- Societal impacts could include, but are not limited to, positive effects on human health, environmental wellbeing, poverty reduction, education, quality of life, public policy, and/or a profound shift in understanding of a given discipline.
- Who will use the results of the research? You should be able to identify end users outside of the university and academia.
- Identify the potential for commercialization, patents or licensing opportunities, or knowledge transfer to industry.
- Employment and job creation are important for the current Ontario government. Highlight any job creation potential for your research program or employment opportunities for highly qualified personnel (HQP).
- When describing your training plan for HQP be sure to include the EDI practices you have integrated into your training program. Describe concrete steps and actions you will take and connect these practices to the systemic barriers they will address. For examples of concrete practices, please see the "Training & Mentorship Opportunities" section of the [VPRI handbook on EDI in Teams and Training](#).

Plan for Achieving Impact and End-User Engagement

This section will allow you to incorporate and even expand on some of the text from the "Sustainability" section of the CFI IF (especially descriptions related to management and governance). Use this text as appropriate, tailoring it to the specific instructions of the ORF LIF.

- Describe a clear and specific strategy for achieving your research impacts. What concrete steps will be taken to achieve your research impacts? Detailed timelines can be effective.
- Describe your engagement with partners and end-users to date. Show that you have already established a relationship with your partners.
- How will the knowledge or technology be disseminated to end users identified in the Economic Benefits and Societal Benefits sections? Describe the specific pathways that will be used to generate these economic benefits and societal benefits (e.g., plans for knowledge mobilization, technology transfer, and commercialization). Show that these users will be engaged.
- Discuss your track record of past collaboration or knowledge transfer and explain how this experience will allow you to achieve these impacts.
- Describe the commitment of your recipient partners.
- Where appropriate, describe your engagement with U of T's Innovation and Partnerships and/or Office or your work with U of T's broader commercialization network.

(NEW!)MITIGATING ECONOMIC AND GEOPOLITICAL RISK CHECKLIST

Make sure to complete the [Mitigating Economic and Geopolitical Risk (MEGR) Checklist](#), and submit the checklist as a separate document with your ORF application.

Note that the top field in the *Signature* section of the MEGR Checklist, "name of lead institution as applicant", is not a fillable field. The form will populate this field from the information in the field "Applicant Name (Lead Institution Name)" that is on the second page. Fill the *Authorized Signing Officer* information as follows and **leave the *Signature* field blank**:

Signature

E-signature is acceptable. The undersigned, on behalf of _____ (name of lead institution as applicant), confirms that, to the best of their knowledge, information and belief, and after making all the appropriate examinations and enquiries, the information set out in this Mitigating Economic and Geopolitical Risk Checklist is true and accurate.

Authorized Signing Officer

First Name		Last Name	
Kevin		Hamilton	
Title	Signature		Date (yyyy/mm/dd)
Director, Institutional Initiatives			

If you have any queries about federal or provincial research security requirements and how they might apply to your proposal, please contact the VPRI Research Security Team (researchsecurity@utoronto.ca).

SIGNATURE

Fill this section with the following information and **leave the *Signature* field blank** :

Signature

For the signature, we accept e-signatures if you have the functionality to do so. If not, we ask you print the signature page, sign and date, scan and return the page with the complete application package via email to

ORFInfrastructure.Mailbox@ontario.ca.

Authorized Signing Officer

Last Name	First Name
Hamilton	Kevin
Title	
Director, Institutional Initiatives	
Signature	Date (yyyy/mm/dd)

Last updated: January 17, 2025 (GF)