



University of Toronto Statement on Operations & Maintenance of Research Infrastructure Supported by the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI)

This document outlines the principles, decision-making and approval processes at the University of Toronto relating to the operation and maintenance (O&M) of CFI-funded infrastructure.

The CFI Program and Policy Guide states:

The eligible recipient¹ will operate and use the research infrastructure, and will assume responsibility for insuring all CFI-funded research infrastructure, including powered vehicles. It will also exercise de facto control over and hold a majority interest in the research infrastructure for a period of five years from the date of acquisition and installation of the research infrastructure, or for a period the CFI deems appropriate.

The CFI Infrastructure Operating Fund (IOF)

The CFI Program & Policy Guide further states:

The Infrastructure Operating Fund (IOF) helps cover a portion of the operating and maintenance costs to ensure optimal use of CFI-funded infrastructure. It is nonetheless the institution's responsibility to provide sufficient funds for the operation and maintenance of CFI-funded infrastructure.

A CFI-eligible institution receives IOF funding through an annual application at June 15th. IOF allocations are intended as *contributions* to approved infrastructure awards. Projects approved by CFI generate an IOF allocation of 30 percent of the maximum CFI amount approved at award finalization. Each institution is responsible for deciding how their funds will be divided among projects eligible to receive IOF. Institutions may distribute their IOF allocation based on actual operating and maintenance needs, as opposed to allocating the exact amount to the project that generated it. This offers institutions maximum flexibility to support projects with different needs and scope, while ensuring accountability. Further detail, including eligible IOF expenses, can be found in the [Infrastructure Operating Fund](#) section of the CFI Policy & Program Guide.

Developing O&M Plans

At the University of Toronto it is the responsibility of the CFI Project Leader (PL) to identify and secure all necessary and appropriate O&M resources to sustain the infrastructure for its useful life. For larger (e.g. LEF/NIF) projects, the PL's academic unit/division will have an active role in this planning. Each CFI application must contain a plan for the sustainable use of the proposed infrastructure, including projected O&M costs, for the first five years. Each plan takes account of the anticipated CFI IOF funding, as well as additional and alternative funding sources (revenue generated from user fees, institutional contributions, operating grant funds, etc.) required to maintain the infrastructure. This plan is reviewed and approved at the departmental, faculty and institutional levels prior to submission of the application to CFI and, when an award is approved

¹ For CFI, "eligible recipient" means the institution, not the Project Leader.

for funding by CFI, becomes part of the funding agreement between the University and the CFI.

Administration of IOF Funds

The University of Toronto allocates 100% of the CFI IOF awarded to the academic division (Faculty, UTM or UTSC) that is the administrative home of the infrastructure project. Academic divisions are responsible for deploying IOF funds in support of the funded infrastructure so that O&M plans set out in the successful infrastructure application can be fulfilled. Each year, an IOF plan, approved by the Faculty, is submitted to the Research Services Office (RSO) within the division of the Vice-President Research. RSO establishes restricted research funds in support of eligible infrastructure projects as directed by the academic division and Project Leaders. The funded research digest (FReD) for each fund sets out the terms and conditions associated with the use of the IOF contribution.

The Project Leader is responsible for adhering to both CFI and University of Toronto guidelines in the use of IOF funds. There is no minimum or maximum number of years over which IOF can be claimed, as long as the infrastructure is being used for research purposes during the period claimed. Annual financial reports to CFI on the use of IOF funds are assembled and submitted by the Research Financial Reporting & Analysis unit of the division of the Vice-President Research & Innovation, reflecting transactions processed by the Project Leader's administrative unit. Questions about eligibility of expenditures are raised for resolution with RSO, the Project Leader and/or the administering unit, on an ongoing basis and at the time of financial reporting.

Issues Escalation

Unforeseen circumstances that adversely impact an approved O&M plan do not relieve the institution of the responsibility to maintain the CFI-funded infrastructure in a state of readiness for research for the period agreed upon with CFI. The Project Leader should bring any issues that threaten to interfere with the effective operation of the infrastructure to the attention of the head of the administering unit who, in turn, may contact the Dean or Principal of the academic division. Given the University's budget model, academic divisions assume the institutional responsibility for ensuring that when an O&M plan is disrupted, financial and other resources are assembled to enable the ongoing operation of the infrastructure during its useful life.

Questions

The Research Services Office is available to provide further information and to consult with CFI, when appropriate.