



**UM** Vice-President (Research and International)

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**TO: Deans and Directors**  
**Associate Deans (Research) / Research Liaison Officers**

**FROM: Dr. B. Mario Pinto, Vice-President (Research & International)**

**DATE: December 4, 2025**

**RE: Call for CFI Innovation Fund (IF) – 2027 Competition**

## OVERVIEW

The Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) Innovation Fund (IF) supports major research infrastructure that enables Canadian institutions to compete globally, address critical challenges, and drive innovation.

The University of Manitoba (UM) is preparing for the next national IF competition, expected to launch in **spring 2026** with submissions due in **early 2027**. This early internal call is intended to provide sufficient time for proposal development, institutional planning, and strategic alignment.

UM's internal process will follow the framework of the [CFI 2025 Call for Proposals](#) and the [CFI Policy and Program Guide](#). Internal timelines and processes may be adjusted once the official call is released. In the 2025 IF competition, CFI introduced three distinct streams (see below) with tailored assessment criteria:

**Stream 1: Leading edge of exploration and knowledge generation (open)**

Open to proposals from all disciplines. Supports innovative, feasible, and internationally competitive research or technology development programs.

**Stream 2: Leading edge of exploration and knowledge generation in the social sciences, humanities and arts (SSHA)**

Focused on SSHA fields and their critical role in the research ecosystem. Encourages projects that leverage new technologies and large data sets to transform research practices.

**Stream 3: Creation, renewal and upgrade of core facilities**

Targets infrastructure housed in and managed by core facilities that provide shared institutional access to state-of-the-art instruments, services, and expertise. Includes expanded eligibility for personnel supporting facility operations and outreach.

UM will advance only proposals of **exceptional quality** that:

- Position the University as a global leader.
- Build on institutional strengths and innovation.
- Show strong partnerships and multidisciplinary collaboration.
- Align with [UM's Strategic Research Plan \(2024–2029\)](#).
- Offer transformative impact with clear feasibility.

**Multi-institutional** initiatives are strongly encouraged and must include at least two CFI-eligible partners beyond the lead institution.

UM participation in **non-UM-led proposals is limited to 10%** of the institutional envelope, and investigators must notify the Office of Research Services (ORS) promptly.

## ORS WORKSHOP

**Workshop Date:** Friday, January 9, 2026 (10:00am – 12:00pm)

**Workshop RSVP Deadline:** Thursday January 8, 2026

**Contact:** [Sophie.Guillas@umanitoba.ca](mailto:Sophie.Guillas@umanitoba.ca)

## STAGE 1: Expression of Interest (EOI)

EOI form (attached) + updated CVs of up to two team leaders. The *Summary of Proposed Project* must briefly address:

1. **Innovative Research or Technology:** research vision, innovation, feasibility, and global competitiveness.
2. **Diverse Expert Team:** multidisciplinary expertise and actions supporting EDI.
3. **Essential Infrastructure:** critical components, including major construction/renovation.
4. **Anticipated Benefits:** expected social, health, environmental, and economic impact.

Deans/Directors submit EOIs on behalf of investigators and must rank order multiple submissions.

**EOI Deadline:** Monday, February 16, 2026 (4:30pm) to [Birtukan.Gebretsadik@umanitoba.ca](mailto:Birtukan.Gebretsadik@umanitoba.ca).

**EOI Decisions:** by Monday, March 16, 2026

**Review:** The VPRIO will evaluate all submissions with equal weighting across criteria 1–4 (above) and will notify the respective deans regarding projects advancing to Stage 2.

## STAGE 2: Expanded EOI (E-EOI)

Teams invited to proceed will submit a five-page document addressing the same four criteria.

**Review:** CFI Advisory Committee evaluates submissions and provides recommendations to VPRIO.

**Feedback:** Written recommendations are provided to PLs and ADRs, guiding strong proposal to advance and discontinuing those deemed not competitive.

**Support Unit:** Architectural and Engineering Services (AES) provides costing and scope validation; Digital Research Alliance of Canada (DRAC) and IT Services identify infrastructure dependencies.

**E-EOI Deadline:** Monday, April 20, 2026 (4:30pm) to [Birtukan.Gebretsadik@umanitoba.ca](mailto:Birtukan.Gebretsadik@umanitoba.ca)

**E-EOI Decisions:** Friday, May 29, 2026.

## STAGE 3: Proposal Development

### *DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES:*

**MPO:** Provides assistance in scope and content development (research/technology and impact context, team composition, benefits to Canada, integration across sections), writing support, and CV reviews.

**ORS:** Provides non-subject-matter review, compliance oversight, budget and sustainability analysis, and institutional benchmarking across proposal sections.

**Timelines:**

**First project team & MPO consultations:** June 05, 2026

**Initial Draft to MPO & ORS:** September 8, 2026

**Feedback to PLs:** by October 9, 2026

**Final Draft to MPO & ORS:** November 16, 2026

**Final Draft Feedback:** by December 14, 2026

*PLs refine the final version*

**FINAL VERSION DUE TO ORS: MONDAY JANUARY 11, 2027**

**Additional documentation: by July 01, 2026**

- **Letters of Support:** official confirmation letters emailed.
- **Quotes:** attached as one file.
- **AES:** finalize scope, costs, floor plans, as required.
- **DRAC/IT:** infrastructure commitments and costing, as required.

For questions, contact Research Grants Specialist (CRC, CFI) [Birtukan.Gebretsadik@umanitoba.ca](mailto:Birtukan.Gebretsadik@umanitoba.ca).