

**UM**Vice-President (Research and
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TO: Associate Deans (Research)/Research Liaison Officers
FROM: Dr. B. Mario Pinto, Vice-President (Research & International)
DATE: November 20, 2023
RE: Call for CFI Innovation Fund (IF) to the February 2025 competition
(Note: Virtual workshop date on December 11th, 10:00am – 12:00pm)

The [Innovation Fund](#) provides continued investments in infrastructure, from the most fundamental to applied through to technology development. This program helps Canada remain at the forefront of exploration and knowledge generation, while addressing global challenges.

UM INTERNAL CALL

The next Canada Foundation for Innovation's (CFI) Innovation Fund (IF) competition is expected to be announced in spring 2024, with a [February 2025](#) submission date. The University of Manitoba (UM) is issuing an internal call well in advance of the CFI Call, as successful applications require considerable time to develop and committed Project Leader(s) to champion. As such, the early stages of the internal process will follow the [CFI 2023 Call for Proposals](#) and [CFI Policy and Program Guide](#).

The UM will be highly selective, submitting only exceptional proposals capitalizing on clear strengths and partnerships. These proposals aim to establish the UM as a global leader in the proposed area of research or technology development, incorporating innovative concepts that are high risk and/or high reward. Emphasis is placed on projects showcasing robust connections among team members (both within and outside the institution), demonstrating the utmost potential for transformative impacts, and aligning closely with the Institution's [Strategic Research Plan](#). *Note: New SRP will be available shortly.*

Multi-institutional initiatives are also highly encouraged. This requires two or more CFI-eligible collaborating institutions (in addition to the administrative institution) that will each house part of the infrastructure and/or pool resources. **Investigators engaging with other lead institutions must promptly inform the Office of Research Services (ORS).** All non-UM led proposals will be limited to within 10% of the UM's CFI institutional envelope.

Workshop: Investigators and their research staff are encouraged to attend the ORS virtual workshop. Microsoft Teams calendar invites will be distributed to registered attendees.

- **ORS Workshop Registration Deadline:** Friday, December 08, 2023 (12:00pm)
- **Workshop Date 1:** Monday, December 11, 2023 (10:00am – 12:00pm)
- **Contact:** Jocelyne.Orem@UManitoba.ca

First stage review - EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

To prepare for this competition, the UM invites **Expression of Interest** (EOI) for ground-breaking infrastructure projects. The EOI must include the provided **cover page** (see attached) and a concise **one-page** overview outlining:

- Innovative Research or Technology:** Briefly describe the proposed program(s). Showcase the innovation, feasibility, and global competitiveness. Demonstrate a bold approach to tackling pressing challenges.
- Diverse Expert Team:** Briefly explain how the diverse team (listed on the cover page) encompass a wide range of expertise necessary to drive forward the innovative program(s). Highlight the synergy between different fields of expertise and, as appropriate, emphasize UM's commitment to multidisciplinary collaboration.
- Essential Infrastructure:** Briefly summarize the substantial components vital for the proposed program(s). Emphasize how these elements are not just necessary but ground-breaking, underscoring UM's willingness to take significant risks in pursuit of transformative research. Include any anticipated major construction and/or renovation plans.
- Anticipated Benefits:** Briefly highlight the expected outcomes, emphasizing the need for impactful social, health, environmental, and economic benefits to improve the lives of Canadians and beyond.

Deans/Directors must submit EOIs on behalf of the Investigator(s). If submitting multiple EOIs, indicate the **rank order** in terms of their importance to the unit's strategic advancement of research, technology, and innovation. Units should establish internal review deadlines, in advance of ORS submission.

- **ORS EOI Deadline:** Thursday, February 01, 2024 (4:30pm)
- **Contact:** Birtukan.Gebretsadik@UManitoba.ca

PITCH PRESENTATION

Following the submission of an EOI, Investigators will be invited to deliver a **Pitch Presentation** to UM CFI Advisory (Ad Hoc) Committee members (herein referred to as the "Committee"). Presentations will be held mid-February to mid-March, and will be **10-minutes**, followed by 10-minutes of Q&A. The presentation should explore and elaborate on the information presented within the EOI. The ORS will coordinate the presentation times with the Lead Investigators.

Second stage review - EXPANDED EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

For proposals selected to proceed to the **Expanded Expression of Interest** (E-EOI) stage, Investigators are asked to elaborate on the initial proposal in greater detail. The E-EOI must include the provided **cover page** (see attached) and an expanded **four-page** overview, including the four internal criteria specified within the EOI. The lead investigator may submit E-EOIs directly to ORS:

- **ORS E-EOI Deadline:** May 01, 2024
- **Contact:** Birtukan.Gebretsadik@UManitoba.ca

First and Second stage review process - RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROCEED

The Committee will review all submitted materials and make recommendations to the VPPIO for submission to the CFI. The assessment grids will be based on the four internal criteria listed above.

- Following pitch presentations, select EOIs will advance to the next stage, with decisions communicated to Deans/Directors offices by **April 01, 2024**.
- Following E-EOIs, final projects will be selected to proceed to the full proposal stage, with decisions communicated by **June 03, 2024**.

Proposals recommended for submission to the CFI, investigators will refine their applications with support from their unit's research facilitators, the Major Projects Office grant facilitators, and ORS.

For questions regarding the IF program or the application process, please contact:
Birtukan.Gebretsadik@UManitoba.ca (ORS).