



Response to the Overall Performance Evaluation of the Canada Foundation for Innovation

The Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) is pleased to note that the report of the Overall Performance Evaluation of the CFI prepared by KPMG is extremely positive. Even though no significant issues were raised in this report, the following three areas are worthy of further consideration:

Implications of the facility and organizational effects

KPMG consideration: The data suggest that the “facility effect” and the “organization effect” have not been fully recognized by the institutions (and until recently by the CFI itself). This has implications for outreach and, possibly, application review.

The CFI will explore the implications for the design of its programs and review process of applications in terms of:

- the facility effect where there was a dramatic collective impact from integrated suites of infrastructure and
- the organizational effect in cases where deliberate planning of diverse activities around these facilities played a key role in achieving outcomes.

Improving strategic planning

KPMG consideration: There may be some room for improvement in strategic planning done collaboratively with other research institutions and other funding organizations. The study team notes that such external planning would require specific resources devoted to it.

The CFI will build on institutional strategic planning by actively encouraging planning at the regional, national and supra-institutional levels. The CFI has traditionally been an enabler, pulling communities together: an example of this is the National Platforms fund, where the CFI worked collaboratively on developing a strategic plan with key stakeholders. The CFI will continue to foster this successful approach.

Support for operations and maintenance of infrastructure

KPMG consideration: Long-term support for operations and maintenance of infrastructure remains worrisome for the institutions and provinces, although it is unclear that the CFI should increase its support here.

The CFI recognizes the challenges of sustaining research infrastructure and the related operational requirements, particularly for large-scale science facilities, and is exploring ways to address those challenges.