

Strategic Science Fund Merit Review Evaluation Grid for the Letter of Intent						
Principle / Rating	Element	High Rating	High-Medium Rating	Medium Rating	Medium-Low Rating	Low Rating
Strategic Value aligned with core federal responsibilities and priorities	The proposed objectives are clearly linked to federal priorities and responsibilities.	<u>All objectives</u> are <u>directly</u> linked to Federal Priorities (e.g. stated in Speech from the Throne, Mandate Letters, Departmental Plans, other) and/or responsibilities	<u>Most (but not all)</u> objectives are <u>directly</u> linked to Federal Priorities and/or responsibilities	<u>All or most</u> objectives are <u>indirectly</u> linked to Federal Priorities (e.g. 'Improving Health') and/or responsibilities	<u>Some</u> objectives are <u>indirectly</u> linked to Federal Priorities and/or responsibilities	There is <u>no clear</u> link to stated federal priorities and/or responsibilities.
	Key linkages between different federal priorities have been considered.	<u>All key linkages</u> between different priorities have been considered and the cross-cutting role of the organization is <u>clearly defined</u> .	<u>Most (but not all)</u> linkages between different priorities have been considered and the cross-cutting role of the organization is <u>defined</u> .	Linkages between different priorities <u>have been considered</u> , but the role of the organization in linking them is <u>not clearly defined</u> .	There is an <u>indirect</u> link between different priorities but the extent to which they have been considered is unclear	It is <u>unclear</u> that linking different priorities has been considered
	Successful execution would significantly advance priorities.	Successful execution of this proposal would <u>significantly advance</u> federal priorities	Successful execution of this proposal would <u>advance</u> federal priorities	Successful execution of this proposal would <u>make a meaningful contribution to advancing</u> federal priorities	Successful execution of this proposal would <u>somewhat advance</u> federal priorities	Successful execution of this proposal <u>would not significantly advance</u> federal priorities
Added Value to Federal ST&I Investment	There is clear added value to existing Federal ST&I investments.	The application <u>clearly outlines a unique value proposition</u> , and <u>effectively leverages</u> other organizations and programs in the ecosystem	The application <u>clearly adds value</u> and leverages organizations and programs in the ecosystem <u>to an extent</u>	The application <u>adds value</u> to the ecosystem but <u>may not effectively leverage</u> other Federal ST&I investments	The application <u>adds some value</u> to the ecosystem but <u>does not leverage</u> other Federal ST&I investments	There is <u>no clear added value</u> to existing Federal ST&I Investments
	It is clearly outlined why no alternative federal sources of funding can be accessed.	The application <u>clearly demonstrates that all possible federal sources</u> were considered and <u>explains why they were not accessible</u>	The application <u>demonstrates that most sources of federal funding</u> were considered and <u>explains why they were not accessible</u>	The application <u>demonstrates that some sources</u> of federal funding were considered, with some explanation	The application includes a limited list of programs considered with <u>minimal explanation</u>	The application <u>does not speak to alternative sources of funding considered</u>
	The organization is better placed to directly deliver the proposed programs or activities rather than a federal department or agency.	The application <u>clearly explains why specific departments and agencies (via current or potential programs)</u> are unable to deliver activities of the proposed scope and scale	The application <u>explains why specific departments and agencies (via current programs)</u> are unable to deliver activities of the proposed scope and scale	The application <u>explains in general terms why departments and agencies</u> are unable to deliver activities of the proposed scope and scale	The application <u>explains in general terms why the federal government generally</u> is unable to deliver activities of the proposed scope and scale	The application <u>does not explain why the federal government</u> would be unable to deliver activities of the proposed scope and scale
Presence at the National Level	The organization will have reach across the country (including in both official languages) and will incorporate viewpoints from across Canada into its operations.	The proposed activities will be <u>accessible to all relevant populations across Canada</u> and the organization will incorporate <u>viewpoints from across Canada into its operations</u> (e.g. with regionally diverse staff or other means).  If not already established nationally: there is <u>strong evidence</u> of support to expand nationally (e.g. concrete national commitments in Letters of Support)	The proposed activities will be accessible to <u>most relevant populations across Canada</u> and the organization will incorporate <u>some viewpoints from across Canada into its operations</u> .  If not already established nationally: there is <u>evidence</u> of support to expand nationally (e.g. some concrete national commitments in Letters of Support)	The proposed activities will be accessible to <u>many relevant populations across Canada</u> .  If not already established nationally: there is <u>some evidence</u> of support to expand nationally (e.g. soft commitments in Letters of Support)	The proposed activities will be accessible to <u>some relevant populations across Canada</u> .  If not already established nationally: there is <u>some limited evidence</u> of support to expand nationally (e.g. general statements of support in Letters of Support)	The proposed activities will only be accessible to a <u>limited segment of relevant populations across Canada</u> .  If not already established nationally: there is <u>no clear evidence of support to expand nationally</u> (e.g. only regional support within Letters of Support)
	Key stakeholders are engaged in the setting of objectives and delivery of activities.	It is clearly outlined <u>how</u> key stakeholders (including clients/end-users) have been meaningfully engaged in setting objectives and clear <u>how</u> they will be meaningfully engaged in the delivery of activities (e.g. as evidenced within Letters of Support)	It is clearly outlined <u>that</u> key stakeholders (including clients/end-users) have been engaged in setting objectives and clear <u>that</u> they will be engaged in the delivery of activities (e.g. as evidenced within Letters of Support)	It is stated <u>in general terms</u> that stakeholders have been engaged in setting objectives and that they will be engaged in the delivery of activities	There is <u>some suggestion</u> that stakeholders have been engaged in setting objectives and that there are plans to engage them in the delivery of activities	It is <u>unclear</u> that stakeholders have been engaged in setting objectives, and whether there are plans to engage them in the delivery of activities
	Regional diversity of the Board of Directors has been considered.	The Board of Directors <u>has significant regional diversity</u> , or <u>clear plans</u> to reach significant regional diversity <u>within a reasonable time frame</u>	The Board of Directors has <u>a reasonable mix of regional diversity</u> , or <u>plans</u> to become regionally diverse <u>within a reasonable time frame</u>	The Board of Directors has <u>some regional diversity</u> , or plans to become <u>regionally diverse within a reasonable time frame</u>	The Board of Directors has <u>limited regional diversity</u> , and <u>no specific plan</u> to increase it within a reasonable time frame	The Board of Directors <u>is centred around one region</u> , with <u>no plans</u> to increase regional diversity

ST&I Capacity, Sound Governance, Operational Efficiency	The organization will have expertise present to deliver on the proposed objectives.	The type of expertise necessary to deliver on the proposed objectives is <u>clearly outlined</u> , as is <u>the extent to which it is already present</u> (or the extent to which there is a <u>clear plan to secure this expertise</u> if not already present)	The type of expertise necessary to deliver on the proposed objectives is <u>outlined</u> , and there is <u>some mention of the extent</u> to which it is already present (or <u>some mention</u> of a plan to secure the expertise if not already present)	The type of expertise necessary to deliver on the proposed objectives is <u>outlined</u> (but <u>not the extent to which expertise is present or whether there is a plan to secure it</u> )	The type of expertise necessary to deliver on the proposed objectives is <u>passively mentioned</u> (but <u>not the extent to which expertise is present or whether there is a plan to secure it</u> )	The type of expertise necessary to deliver on the proposed objectives is <u>not mentioned</u> .
	Appropriate advisory structures, policies, guidelines and training will be integrated (e.g. research management, research ethics, research security, equity diversity and inclusion).	The organization <u>has put in place</u> or planned with a <u>specific timeline</u> (e.g. by July xx, 20xx) the necessary organizational policies, guidelines and training for the proposed activities.	The organization has <u>identified and planned with a notional timeline</u> (e.g. within the first 6 months of funding) the necessary organizational policies, guidelines and training for the proposed activities.	The organization has <u>identified and planned some</u> of the necessary organizational policies, guidelines and training for the proposed activities.	The organization has <u>identified some</u> of the necessary organizational policies, guidelines and training for the proposed activities.	The organization <u>has not identified or planned</u> the necessary organizational policies, guidelines and training for the proposed activities.
	The organization has made a clear commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.	The organization has appropriately considered <u>all areas of activities</u> where an EDI lens should be applied, and has <u>established a plan and timeline</u> to reach the goals of 50% Gender Parity and 30% Significant representation of other under-represented groups within its Senior Management and Board of Directors (or is already meeting those goals).	The organization has appropriately considered <u>most areas of activities</u> where an EDI lens should be applied, and has <u>committed to reaching the goals</u> of 50% Gender Parity and 30% Significant representation of other under-represented groups within its Senior Management and Board of Directors.	The organization has considered EDI in <u>some areas</u> , and has made general commitments to EDI representation within its Senior Management and Board of Directors.	The organization has <u>made general commitments to EDI</u> , without specific details.	The organization <u>has not made</u> a clear commitment to EDI.
Critical Role of Federal Funding	The application outlines a clear need for federal funding as an anchor to secure financial and in-kind commitments from partners.	There is a <u>clearly articulated need</u> (e.g. anchor function) for federal funding of the proposed activities; partner funding alone <u>would not</u> be able to sustain proposed activities (e.g. due to scale or jurisdiction)	There is an <u>articulated need</u> (e.g. anchor function) for federal funding of the proposed activities; partner funding would <u>likely not</u> be able to sustain proposed activities	There is a <u>general statement of need</u> for federal funding of the proposed activities; partner funding <u>may or may not</u> be able to sustain proposed activities	The importance of federal funding of the proposed activities <u>can be generally inferred</u> ; partner funding <u>could reasonably</u> be able to sustain proposed activities	The application <u>does not outline</u> a clear need for federal funding in relation to other commitments from partners.
	The proposed budget explains high-level assumptions (e.g. level of expected level co-funding).	Assumptions are <u>clearly explained and appear reasonable</u> .  The level of co-funding <u>meets or exceeds</u> ratios in the context of previous federal funding (and/or is <u>appropriate for the activities proposed</u> )	Assumptions are <u>explained and appear generally reasonable</u> .  The level of co-funding <u>generally aligns</u> with ratios in the context of previous federal funding (and/or is <u>generally appropriate</u> for the activities proposed)	Assumptions are <u>explained</u> , but not to the extent necessary to judge reasonableness.  The level of co-funding is <u>somewhat below</u> ratios in the context of previous federal funding for similar activities (and/or is <u>somewhat below</u> what is expected for the activities proposed)	There is a <u>general statement</u> that general assumptions were made without specific explanation.  The level of co-funding is <u>far below</u> ratios in the context of previous federal funding for similar activities (and/or is <u>far below</u> what is expected for the activities proposed).	High-level assumptions for the budget <u>are not explained</u> .  The level of co-funding is <u>at an unacceptable level</u> for the activities proposed.
Demonstrable Impact	There is a convincing rationale for selecting the Key Performance Indicators and related targets.	Indicators and targets are <u>convincingly linked</u> to the proposed objectives and <u>are likely to measure</u> the overall success.	Indicators and targets are <u>linked</u> to the proposed objectives and <u>will give reasonable measure</u> of the overall success.	Indicators and targets are <u>somewhat linked</u> to the proposed objectives and <u>will give some measure</u> of the overall success.	Indicators and targets have a <u>limited link</u> to the proposed objectives and <u>will give some limited measure</u> of the overall success.	<u>No convincing rationale</u> was given for selecting the Key Performance Indicators and related targets.
	For organizations with a track record of federal funding: There is an indication of success at reaching past objectives.	There is <u>strong evidence</u> (e.g. from previous funders or independent evaluations) that the organization has had <u>significant success</u> in reaching its past objectives.	There is <u>evidence</u> that the organization has had <u>success</u> in reaching its past objectives.	There is <u>evidence</u> that the organization has had <u>some success</u> in reaching its past objectives.	There is a <u>general statement</u> that the organization has had success in reaching its past objectives.	There is <u>no indication</u> of success at reaching past objectives.