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Strategic Science Fund

Program guide

May 2025

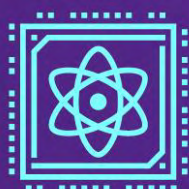


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Summary of updates

May 2022: Added SSF glossary; Clarified situations where individuals can receive funds under section 2.3 ; Added reference to participation in the SSF Community of Practice ; Added reference to the new definition of matched funds under section 2.5, including ineligible sources of matched funds; Clarified that the Reserve Fund relates only to the SSF-supported operations in 2.11.7; Clarified that incremental salary costs can be included under Mobilization of Knowledge and Networking, and expanded on support for indirect costs of Ultimate Recipients in section 3.2.

May 2024: Added further clarity to program expectations with regards to Recipient management of Ultimate Recipients under section 2.3; Added new guidance on the use of host agreements in section 2.4 and Appendix B; Clarification added for historical and SSF matched funding rates 2.6; Added more precise requirements on reporting in section 2.7 and Appendix D; Clarified several requirements for recipient policies / processes and/or training in section 2.11 (COI policy, EDI policy, Security Plan, and Intellectual Property); Clarified certain eligible and ineligible costs in section 3.2 (including major research equipment, hospitality, severance, maximum rates of pay with SSF funds) and the reasonableness of costs); Added details on the program expectations with regards to management of cash flow and payments in section 4.1 and Appendix E; Updated Appendix A to align with contribution agreement requirements; Significantly expanded the SSF glossary in Appendix F to provide clarity and consistency for SSF reporting.

May 2025: Clarification provided on the distribution of funds to international collaborators in section 2.3; added examples to the Conflict of Interest policy which can be found in the Glossary and is referred to in section 2.11.2; Removal of recipient requirement to seek approval from SSF program officials with respect to IP exploitation by a foreign company in section 2.11.8, adequate language exists within Contribution Agreements; Addition of a travel and hospitality policy to align with updates made to Contribution Agreements in section 2.11.9; Elaboration around eligible and ineligible costs providing a principles-based approach; Guidance on what qualifies as a minor renovation as well as the role of honorariums and the merging of both Travel and Hospitality costs have been added to section 3.2; Appendix D Reporting Requirements has a precision added to the Annual Report section, providing flexibility to recipients to submit draft audited financial statements and has added guidelines on what to include in the public version of the annual report; Appendix F Glossary has updates to Conflict of Interest, Honorarium, Equity deserving groups and Interdisciplinary research; An ISED Glossary on intersectionality related terms has been added.

1. Program Overview

1.1 Goals and objectives

The Strategic Science Fund (SSF) aims to mobilize the expertise and resources of independent science and research not-for-profit organizations to enhance Canada's science, technology and innovation (ST&I) excellence. SSF investments will achieve results for Canadians by addressing critical needs, such as supporting Canada's knowledge economy, in areas or in ways that advance federal objectives. The SSF program is jointly administered by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) and Health Canada, via a Program Management Committee and Steering Committee.

By supporting a diverse portfolio of organizations, the SSF will achieve the following objectives:

- **Research:** Increase the quality of internationally competitive leading-edge research in areas critical to health, economic, and social and well-being of Canadians;
- **Talent:** Develop, attract and retain world-class research and innovation talent in scientific areas that are aligned with Canada's priorities;
- **Knowledge Mobilization:** Accelerate the exchange of research results and the translation of this knowledge into action in Canada and abroad; and,
- **Culture:** Strengthen evidence-based decision-making, innovation skills development, and science culture.

1.2 Expected outcomes

Targeted funding to the eligible recipients of the SSF will contribute to achieving the following outcomes:

Immediate:

- Interdisciplinary and equity-focused research, training and learning is conducted;
- Increased collaboration among academia, research institutes, non-profit, private and public sector, and diverse international and community organizations;

Intermediate:

- Scientific knowledge is produced and disseminated to diverse end users;
- Scientific literacy and scientific skills are developed among diverse target populations;

Ultimate:

- Scientific research and innovation produce economic, societal and health benefits; and
- Skilled, diverse people fulfill industry and societal needs.

1.3 Application process

Regular SSF competitions will support organizations for 5-year funding cycles. They will use a 2-phase application process: letters of intent (LOIs) and full applications.

Letter of intent

The LOIs will be reviewed and assessed by the SSF Secretariat, with input from other governmental departments and agencies, as appropriate, to confirm the extent to which each LOI responds to the merit-review criteria. Based on assessments and advice at this stage, applicants will be invited to submit a full application. The SSF Program Management committee will review assessments and present advice to the SSF Steering Committee who will make the final decision on organizations to be invited to submit full applications.

Full application

The review and assessment of full applications will include:

- a technical review by at least 2 subject matter experts; and
- a multidisciplinary expert panel that will consider technical reviews and provide recommendations on a strategic portfolio of proposals to support.

The expert panel may be supported by sub-committees, tasked with evaluating priority cross-cutting elements such as Governance, Finance, Equity Diversity and Inclusion, Intellectual Property and Security.

Based on the advice of the expert panel and the SSF Program Management Committee, the SSF Steering Committee will make funding recommendations to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry and the Minister of Health.

1.4 Criteria

Applications from eligible applicants will be evaluated using a principles-based approach against the following criteria:

- Strategic value aligned with core federal responsibilities and priorities;
- Added value to federal science, technology and innovation investments;
- Presence at the national level;
- ST&I capacity, sound governance and operational efficiency;
- Critical role of federal funding; and
- Demonstrable impact.

More information about the elements considered within the criteria will be provided in the context of each funding opportunity.

2. SSF requirements for funded Recipients

2.1 Eligible recipients

Eligible Recipients are not-for-profit organizations, which are incorporated in Canada, undertaking activities, as generally described in section 3.1.

2.2 Contribution agreement

Prior to receiving funds under the SSF, a successful applicant is required to enter into a contribution agreement with the appropriate authority (ISED or Health Canada).

Non-repayable contributions will be the minimum amount required, in the opinion of the Ministers of ISED and Health, to allow a successful applicant to proceed with its approved proposal.

2.3 Further distribution by Recipients

In certain cases, the contribution agreement may allow the SSF Recipient to further distribute funds to Ultimate Recipients using separate agreements, with the intent of furthering the Recipient's objectives. This further distribution is separate than the acquisition of goods and services by or for the Recipient (i.e. procurements).

Ultimate Recipients eligible for further distribution may include:

- Post-secondary institutions;
- Research hospitals;
- Not-for-profit organizations;
- Indigenous organizations and governments;
- Municipalities;
- Research networks;
- Public engagement networks;
- Companies that deliver public engagement activities; and
- Start-up companies (including those housed in Canadian post-secondary-linked incubators).

Where Ultimate Recipient awards can be considered low-value and low-risk, the SSF Recipient may further distribute funds to individuals through the use of separate agreements. Such individuals may include:

- Canadian and international students, post-doctoral fellows;
- Canadian researchers

Eligible Ultimate Recipients do not include federal departments, agencies or crown corporations of the Government of Canada.

2.3.1 International collaborations

SSF funding should be used for eligible activities undertaken by SSF Recipients and Ultimate Recipients based primarily in Canada. In terms of international collaborations, SSF funds should generally support Canadian researchers to collaborate with international partners, with the SSF funds going to support the Canadian researcher in this international partnership.

In exceptional cases, SSF funds may be further distributed to international collaborators, however, planned arrangements must be shared and reviewed with the SSF Secretariat beforehand. In its review of eligibility, the Secretariat will consider Canadian interests, benefits to Canada, alignment

with the recipient's planned activities, the SSF Program's overall goal of "to enhance Canada's science, technology and innovation (ST&I) excellence", and potential risks and mitigation strategies.

2.3.2 Merit-based decisions

Where the Recipient further distributes funds to another entity or individual (Ultimate Recipients), it must ensure that this decision is based on merit. Specific provisions regarding the Recipient's further distribution of funding will be set out in the contribution agreement. Guidelines on requirements for separate agreements to further distribute funding are also available in **Appendix A**.

2.3.3 Administration

All Ultimate Recipients (URs) are required to complete spending of all SSF funds by the Project Completion Date as outlined in the Contribution Agreement.

Recipients who further distribute funds to URs must develop systems and controls to monitor the costs of the UR to ensure funding is being utilized for project-related activities within the specified timeframe and will be required to certify that all funds have been fully expended and/or returned by URs through the Final Report.

Any amount of the Contribution unspent by the Project Completion Date may be considered an overpayment to be returned to the Receiver General. Further guidance can be found in sections 1.5 Survival, 5.9 Overpayment and 10. Default and Recovery of the Contribution Agreement.

2.4 Host agreement

Recipients may choose to be associated with a host organization. Host organizations could include Canadian post-secondary institutions and their affiliated institutions (e.g.: hospitals, research institutes and other not-for-profit organizations), or a private sector consortium.

Where the association to a host is being proposed, the strong support of the host's president/CEO, and vice-presidents will be critical for the effective operation of the SSF Recipient. The specific needs and expectations should be detailed within a formal agreement between the host and the SSF Recipient, a copy of which should be provided to the SSF Secretariat upon request. Guidelines for elements to consider within such agreements are available in **Appendix B**. Should the host institution also be a potential Ultimate Recipient of funds, refer to the guidelines in **Appendix A** for further elements to include.

2.5 Governance and management requirements for Recipients

Recipients should be governed by a Board of Directors with the breadth of expertise necessary to oversee the functions of SSF-funded activities. At least one third of the Board should be composed of independent members. The Chair should be independent (including from other Directors).

The Board of Directors should be responsible for:

- ensuring that the Recipient is managed according to the rules and regulations of governing a not-for-profit organization (activities specific to an incorporated Recipient, such as reports to the Canada Revenue Agency, are not under the purview of the SSF Program)

- developing strategy and ensuring that strategic goals have been translated into measurable objectives and benchmarks that can be monitored by the Board;
- hiring and setting the compensation of the President / CEO, as well as conducting their performance evaluation; and
- ensuring that the right policies, guidelines and training have been established to allow the organization to meet the highest standards of governance.

The Board should conduct annual self-evaluations to identify areas of possible improvement.

The President / CEO is responsible for building the overall team and managing day-to-day operations. This should include ensuring access to the specialized expertise required to support the SSF activities. For example:

For organizations that support research:

- Establishing an independent advisory structure to conduct peer-review of research proposals, and ensuring that all appropriate policies (e.g., conflict of interest, as detailed in 2.11.2) are appropriately established and followed;
- Recruiting a body of international, diverse and independent advisors to advise on the overarching research program;
- Putting structures and mechanisms in place to receive and respond to feedback from the community of key stakeholders (including those with lived experience).

For organizations that support knowledge mobilization and commercialization:

- Ensuring the presence of knowledge brokers with specific expertise in the creation of products and tools for specific groups of end-users and receptors;
- Hiring staff with specialized expertise in Knowledge Mobilization, IP or commercialization that will enable the creation of spin-off companies or products.

For organizations that support training and talent development:

- Creating an advisory structure of diverse trainees and experienced advisors to advise on the training program offerings.

They should also be responsible for ensuring their organization contributes to the broader Science, Technology & Innovation ecosystem, including participation in the SSF Community of Practice, whose goal is to improve coordination by strengthening the ecosystem of science and research organizations through promoting regular dialogue and a culture of system-level thinking.

2.6 Matched funds

Matched funds are new, incremental contributions (of cash or in-kind) to be spent on **Eligible SSF Costs**, which would not exist in the absence of an SSF award (see the definition [in the glossary](#) for further details). They do not include the *leveraged funds* (see definition), representing existing investments in the ST&I ecosystem.

- When reviewing full applications, the Expert Panel provided recommendations on an appropriate target ratio for matched funds (cash / in-kind contributions) for the proposed activities given the individual context considering factors such as:

- o the type of organization and the work it undertakes;
 - o past experience with matched funding, and
 - o individual context including whether the benefit of matched funding would outweigh the burden imposed upon the organization.
- Unless specified (e.g., for organizations who fund activities in areas where there is a limited base of potential co-contributors) by the Ministers, the Recipient will secure a minimum of matched funds from sources other than federal government to fund eligible activities.

It is recognized that in certain cases, historical matched funding ratios may have combined leveraged funds and matched funds, and in those cases would not be considered the established SSF matched funding ratio.

In the case where a material portion of matched funds are expected to come from donations, a specific fundraising strategy must be established and maintained, and the Recipient must have a plan detailing how they are positioned to meet their fundraising objectives.

The method for calculating the value of in-kind contributions must align with the guidelines outlined in **Appendix C**.

2.6.1 Ineligible sources of matched funds include:

- Contributions from co-funders where an analysis of partner risk has not been conducted. For more on this topic, see section [2.11.4 Security](#).
- All federal sources of funds, including all federal funds that flow through separate entities (e.g., Tri-Agency funding to universities, federal funding to other organizations). While these sources of funds cannot count as matching, collaborations with the holders of those funds and with Federal Science-Based Departments and Agencies are encouraged; and
- Funds that have been reported as matching funds for another federal program.

2.7 Reporting

Recipients will be required to provide an Annual Report and a Corporate Plan on an annual basis. In addition, Recipients will be required to provide Progress Reports. Progress Reports will include quarterly financial reporting, and may require additional requirements (on a quarterly, bi-annual or annual basis) that will be established using a risk-based approach. Requirements are outlined in **Appendix D**.

Recipients will implement a data collection and management strategy (see [2.11.5 Data Management](#)) to enable the capture of necessary information, in accordance with templates and procedures provided by the SSF Secretariat. Recipients will be expected to report on project-level indicators to ensure the effective delivery of their proposed plans, as well as on program-level indicators linked to the [SSF program outcomes](#).

The information reported by Recipients may be assessed by an external Monitoring Committee (see [4.3 Monitoring, Guidance and Support](#)). In addition to reports submitted as part of the regular reporting cycle, the SSF Secretariat may also request supplementary information, data, and reporting on an ad-hoc basis to support oversight and due diligence in areas such as financial management, costs, funding and investments, and performance measurement.

2.8 Communications

The Recipient's activities, results and accomplishments should be conveyed to external audiences, including potential participants from all sectors, public policy makers, the media, and the public. Communications are subject to official language requirements (see section 2.11.6 Official Languages for details).

The Recipient will give prior notice of funding announcements to the SSF Secretariat so that the Minister or a designated representative has an opportunity to participate.

For the duration of the contribution agreement, the Recipient's communications activities and messages must acknowledge the contribution of the federal government to SSF-funded activities.

2.9 Requirements for certain types of research

Recipients must ensure compliance with the federal [Framework for Responsible Conduct of Research](#), which includes requirements for certain types of research:

- Research involving human subjects shall meet the requirements of the [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans](#).
 - In particular, the provisions of [Chapter 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada](#) should be well understood by all individuals involved in a component of research involving Indigenous Peoples of Canada.
- Research requiring the use of animals shall be conducted in accordance with the policies and guidelines of the [Canadian Council on Animal Care \(CCAC\) Guide to the Care and Use of Experimental Animals](#) and hold a valid Certificate of Good Animal Practice.
- Research involving biohazards or infectious agents must adhere to the standards outlined in the latest edition of the [Canadian Biosafety Standards and Guidelines](#) prepared by the Public Health Agency of Canada.
- Research involving radioactive materials must comply with all Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) [Acts and Regulations](#), including recommended procedures and safety precautions governing the use of such materials in Canada.
- Research activities having potential effects on the environment must adhere to the [Impact Assessment Act](#) (see [Practitioner's Guide to the Impact Assessment Act - Canada.ca](#) for further details).
- Research involving controlled information must comply with all laws and regulations regarding Controlled Information, including but not limited to the *Defence Production Act*, *Export Control Regulations*, and the *Controlled Goods Regulations* before, during or after the tenure of the contribution. The Recipient will ensure that information reported to the SSF will not include information subject to restrictions or controls under the *Export and Import Permits Act* or its regulations, the *Export Control Regulations* or the *Controlled Goods Regulations* (see [Controlled goods: Examining, possessing or transferring – Canada.ca \(tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca\)](#) for details).
- Research performed in the Yukon; the Northwest Territories and Nunavut must be accompanied by the appropriate licences for all researchers. Research in the North should be governed by a set of ethical principles as described in the publications by the Association of

Canadian Universities for Northern Studies titled - [Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North](#).

2.10 Open access and research data management

Where activities include research, Recipients must ensure compliance and alignment with the federal [Open Access Policy on Publications](#) and the [Research Data Management policy](#). The Recipient should adopt Open Science principles that maximize the value of all research activities, including by making negative research findings accessible where possible.

2.11 Recipient policies, processes and/or training

The Recipient must develop policies, processes and/or training in the following areas:

2.11.1 Privacy and protection of personal information

Recipients are required to meet the applicable federal, provincial and/or territorial privacy legislative requirements to safeguard any personal information resulting from the activities funded by the contribution agreement.

Recipients are also required to have comprehensive internal privacy policies which address how they collect, use, and disclose personal information to safeguard any personal information resulting from the activities funded by the contribution agreement.

2.11.2 Conflict of interest policy

Achieving the objectives of the SSF involves various types of interactions, some of which may place individuals in positions of potential, apparent or actual conflict of interest (see the [glossary definition](#) for more details). The Recipient must adopt a conflict-of-interest policy for directors, officers, employees, and committee members (including individuals participating in review processes) designed to prevent real or perceived conflicts of interest. At a minimum, the following elements must be included:

- **Disclosure of potential conflicts** - An obligation for individuals to:
 - o disclose in writing any direct or indirect financial interest and/or positions of influence that could lead to a potential, apparent or actual conflict of interest, and to update this written disclosure whenever the individual's circumstances change.
 - o actively disclose any potential, apparent or actual conflict of interest when it arises during committee or board meetings, so that the committee or board are aware of the situation and can take appropriate action.
- **Management of conflicts** – An obligation for the Board and Management to:
 - o evaluate each disclosure as appropriate, decide on the appropriate course of action (e.g., recusal), and to document each case.

2.11.3 Equity, diversity, and inclusion policy

The participation of diverse individuals, inclusive of members of under-represented groups and Indigenous peoples, is essential to create and mobilize Canada's best research, technological development, and entrepreneurial expertise to create excellent, innovative, and impactful results.

Recipients are expected to support the inclusion and advancement of under-represented groups (e.g., Indigenous Peoples, racialized Canadians, 2SLGBTQI+ individuals, persons with disabilities) and must develop an EDI policy alongside practices that ensure the use of an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion lens in all its activities. Recipients must ensure:

- The presence of a plan and timeline to move towards gender parity (50%) and significant representation (at least 30%) of under-represented groups on its Board of Directors and Senior Management.
- That the overall organizational make-up reflects Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion goals (e.g., within the organization as a whole / within advisory committees)
- The direct involvement and participation of Indigenous peoples in activities whenever possible.

The Government of Canada is committed to a relationship with Indigenous peoples based on recognition of rights, respect, cooperation, and partnership, including in the way that research, knowledge mobilization and training are funded and conducted.

2.11.4 Security Plan

As noted in the Government of Canada's [policy statements](#), Canada's world-class research, and its open and collaborative research environment, are increasingly targeted by espionage and foreign interference activities. In line with these statements, the Recipient must create a plan and related processes respecting the applicable policies. This plan must be created and/or regularly updated and submitted to the SSF Secretariat within timelines prescribed by program officials.

Research Security Plan

Recipients who conduct research or further distribute funds to research projects must demonstrate how they will exercise research security due diligence by developing and implementing a Research Security Plan that outlines a process for the identification, assessment and mitigation of national security risks in a systemic, consistent, and documented manner.

To do so, the Recipient must:

- Follow the [Guidance for Research Organisations and Funders on Developing a Research Security Plan](#) (science.gc.ca). This document provides directions on how to conduct an analysis and develop the Plan in relation to the Recipient's areas of operation and risks.
- Describe in their plan the way in which they will assess how the Ultimate Recipient's application for funding will exercise research security due diligence and meet research security requirements, described in the [Guidance](#).
- Describe how they will ensure that the Ultimate Recipient implements research security due diligence applicable to the project through applicable safeguards, plans and policies.

For meritorious projects deemed to have risks, the analysis must be reported to the Government of Canada before projects commence.

Contribution agreements will reserve the right of the Government of Canada to decline the participation of any partner and to review activities on national security grounds, and to require that the Recipient undertake security audits.

Security Plan

Recipients that do not conduct research must conduct an analysis and develop a Security Plan in relation to their areas of operation and risks, which considers:

- Physical Security;
- Personnel Suitability and Reliability;
- Information Management and Cyber Security; and
- Incident and Emergency Response

Additional guidance and resources

- For additional practices to mitigate potential research security risks, tools are available on the [Safeguarding Your Research](#) portal and [Safeguarding Science](#)'s workshops.
- Where relevant, Recipient's partners are encouraged to apply for the [CyberSecure Canada certification](#). CyberSecure Canada is a federal cyber certification program that aims to raise the cyber security baseline among SMEs in Canada. The CyberSecure Canada certification gives those certified official recognition by the federal government for demonstrating their compliance to the baseline security controls.

2.11.5 Data management

The Recipient must implement a data management strategy that will respect principles of data management (i.e., data governance, ownership, collection, sharing, integrity) in its operations. The strategy should be mindful of the requirement outlined in [2.10 Open Access and Research Data Management](#).

2.11.6 Official languages

The Recipient's specific obligations related the *Official Languages Act* will be specified within their contribution agreement. Recipient's annual reports will be made available to the public in both official languages. Any nation-wide communications or announcements aimed at the general public (e.g., main portions of the Recipient's website) will be provided in both official languages. Additional official languages requirements will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

2.11.7 Reserve for the wind-down of SSF supported operations

The SSF is geared to support initiatives closely aligned with federal priorities. Given that these priorities are subject to evolve over time there is no guarantee of any support beyond the current funding term. As such the Recipient is required to establish a reserve fund to ensure the availability of enough unrestricted (non-SSF) funds to support the wind-down of the operations supported by the SSF. Alternatively, the organization may opt to develop a sustainability plan in order to continue the initiative without federal support.

2.11.8 Intellectual property and benefits to Canada

Recipients must implement policies, processes and/or trainings that ensure that the IP benefits resulting from the SSF-funded activities adequately accrue to Canada and Canadians. All Recipients must hold sufficient Intellectual Property (IP) Rights to permit the SSF-funded activities.

ISED and Health Canada make no claim to ownership of IP resulting from activities funded.

Additional obligations on Intellectual Property may be imposed in the contribution agreement, depending on the model proposed and the likelihood of IP generation. These could require the Recipient to:

- Provide the respective Minister an acceptable plan for IP education and awareness of researchers, firms or others supported.
- Take appropriate steps to protect their foreground IP and enforce their IP Rights.
- Attest that the activities funded would not infringe IP rights of others.
- Grant to the Government of Canada a non-exclusive, unconditional, fully paid and royalty-free, perpetual, worldwide, and irrevocable licence to use and exercise all rights in the Intellectual Property that vests in the Recipient under this Agreement, for any public purpose except commercial exploitation, including for the purpose of conducting research, policy development, or to publicly share program results and impacts.
- *For Recipients conducting research:* Provide the respective Minister an acceptable IP strategy which includes at least the following elements:
 - o Training plans to improve IP education and awareness of employees; and
- A plan to ensure that the foreground IP stemming from activities is exploited in Canada, with the objective of maximizing benefits to Canada
- *For Recipients conducting research:* Own the foreground IP resulting from the activities funded, unless otherwise agreed to by the respective Minister.
- *For Recipients funding Ultimate Recipients:* Provide the respective Minister an acceptable IP policy that shall set out the principles, rules and regulations of the Recipient related to matters of intellectual property (e.g., when to require an IP Strategy for a funded Ultimate Recipient project), including:
 - o confidential information and trade secrets
 - o information on governance
 - o ownership of intellectual property and rights of use
 - o publication
 - o non-disclosure
 - o research collaborations
 - o commercialization supports
 - o dispute resolution process; and
 - o education and awareness.
- *For Recipients funding Ultimate Recipients:* Ensure that foreground IP is owned by the party that generated it, or in accordance with their respective IP policies and agreements and by applicable Canadian law, provided that such policies and agreements:
 - o Permit exploitation of the foreground IP within Canada including for carrying out SSF activities
 - o Do not prevent the Recipient from fulfilling its obligations as stipulated in the contribution agreement
 - o Maintain confidentiality of sensitive and proprietary information

Recipients funding Ultimate Recipients must also ensure that agreements with these entities include requirements consistent with the obligations outlined in their contribution agreements.

2.11.9 Travel and Hospitality

See the [Program Definitions](#) for the definition of travel and hospitality.

The Recipient must develop a Travel and Hospitality Policy, an annual Travel and Hospitality Plan as well as a method to ensure Travel and Hospitality requirements apply to Ultimate Recipients, when there are Ultimate Recipients.

The policy and plan should be consistent with *Schedule B Eligible Activities and Costs*, and in line with the [Modern Travel Practices of the National Joint Council Travel Directive \(NJC\)](#). Eligible hospitality costs will follow the standards set out in the current [Treasury Board Directive on Travel, Hospitality, Conference and Event Expenditures \(THCEE\)](#).

As part of the Annual Report submitted to the SSF, recipients will report against a travel plan on an annual basis and the report will include a breakdown of the travel and hospitality expenses of the Contribution incurred by both the Recipient and the Ultimate Recipients (if applicable).

The Recipient's Board of Directors must approve the Policy as well as the annual travel Plan that is consistent with the *Travel and Hospitality Policy*. The Recipient may periodically amend the travel plan as needed.

International travel should be avoided unless necessary and related to activities and objectives set out in the contribution agreement and the mandate of the Recipients. Virtual meetings should first be considered in all instances as a matter of cost efficiency. Travel and hospitality costs can be claimed, to the maximum reasonable allowance, as determined, documented, and approved by the Recipient Travel and Hospitality Policy.

3. Eligible activities and costs

3.1 Eligible activities

The Eligible activities are those that will contribute to attaining the objectives of the SSF Recipient. Eligible Recipients must clearly outline how their proposal's activities will meet the objectives and expected results of the SSF. Eligible activities specific to each recipient will be included in their respective Contribution Agreement, and may include:

- Research and the translation of research in critical areas of science and technology for the development of products and services, including treatments, technologies, interventions, as well as for informing public policy development and decision-making;
- Communication, dissemination and exchange of research results;
- Collaborative activities, including participation of Canadian researchers in international projects;
- Stakeholder engagement and efforts to convene the research community;
- Activities to support the creation, growth and retention of companies;
- Training and delivery of work integrated learning;
- Internships;
- Activities to attract, retain and develop highly qualified and industry-ready personnel;
- Development and delivery of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) learning activities;
- Public education and communications related to science;

- Fundraising efforts designed to generate awareness and interest in research activities and help to secure additional financial resources; and,
- Day-to-day operations as they relate to the fulfilment of the terms of the contribution agreements.

3.2 Eligible and ineligible costs

Eligible costs are those incurred by the Recipient and which, in the opinion of the respective Minister, are reasonable and required to carry out the eligible activities to which they relate.

In principle, eligible costs under the categories of Research, Mobilization of knowledge or technology transfer and Networking must be **direct and incremental costs** of advancing SSF-funded objectives. Costs indirectly advancing SSF-funded objectives would fall under the Operations category. For example:

- Salary costs for Highly Qualified Personnel to conduct research would typically fall under the scope of “Research”, if this research would directly advance an SSF-funded objective.
- Salary costs for an individual organizing a conference hosted by the Recipient would typically fall under the scope of “Networking”, if the delivery of the conference directly advances an SSF-funded objective.
- Salary costs related for Recipient staff conducting internal administrative functions would typically fall under “Operations”, as the SSF-funded objectives would not be directly advanced by this activity.

Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the following costs are eligible:

Research includes expenses related to:

- Incremental research costs, including salaries* of researchers and research staff, related costs of students, highly qualified personnel (HQP), trainees;
- Operations of core research facilities;
- Equipment (except for Major Research Equipment, as described under *Ineligible Costs*); scientific collections; costs of computer hardware or software (except where the scale of costs falls within the mandate of the Digital Research Alliance of Canada); information databases;
- Direct cost of knowledge creation;
- Professional and technical services;
- Material and supplies; and
- Research-related travel and accommodation costs**.

Mobilization of knowledge or technology transfer includes expenses related to:

- Incremental knowledge mobilization and technology transfer costs, including salaries of staff, related costs of students, highly qualified personnel (HQP, trainees);
- Policy development;
- Tool development and evaluation; Intellectual property protection;
- Market study; and
- Prototype development.

Networking includes expenses related to:

- Incremental networking costs, including salaries of staff, related costs of students, highly qualified personnel (HQP, trainees);
- Seminars and workshops;
- Networking meetings;
- Conferences**; and
- Communications.

Operations: The maximum amount of expenses related to operations is expected to be 15% of the total SSF Award, and Recipients will be encouraged to reduce this over time as efficiencies are established. In exceptional circumstances, the SSF Secretariat will consider on a case-by-case basis the need for Recipients to surpass this rate. Includes expenses related to:

- Administrative salaries*, benefits (e.g., workplace safety insurance, pension benefits, medical, vision and dental care benefits, parental leave – the costs of the benefits package should be in the average market range), non-discretionary severance, and management fees;
- Goods and services of contractual personnel*;
- Consulting and/or technical services (including translation) *;
- Office supplies/services;
- Hospitality**;
- Insurance (e.g., liability);
- Staff travel and accommodation***;
- Rent and utilities;
- Audits; and
- Honorarium****

Other: Any other expenses. Use of this category requires additional justification through reporting to the SSF. Includes expenses related to:

- Support for overhead costs (indirect costs) of Ultimate Recipients to which funds have been redistributed for projects. This type of expense is eligible provided that the rate is established considering the scale of the project (i.e., not using a general flat-rate charge which does not consider context) and does not generally surpass 15% of project costs. Funding from the SSF is not part of the calculation for the Research Support Fund.
- Minor renovations. These refer to limited-scale improvements or modifications to a facility or space that are typically aimed at improving functionality and safety. The absence of the renovation would significantly impede the recipient's ability to achieve its SSF approved objectives. Minor renovations must directly contribute to one of the recipients' SSF funded objectives and must not impede the achievement of other SSF approved objectives. Anything outside the scope of minor renovations would fall under the major renovation category and would be ineligible.

* **Salaries:** Maximum remuneration costs paid with SSF Funds (including all salaries and rates charged by contractors) cannot exceed the current Full-Time Equivalent [rates of pay](#) for public service employees for similar function and classifications (e.g.: SE Scientific Research; AS Administrative Services; CM Communications; EX for leadership positions). Recipients are encouraged to use the GC Jobs [‘Search Archives’](#) feature to find appropriate comparisons. The organization may decide to pay above these scales but cannot do so with SSF funds. Except for the EX-category, SSF Recipients cannot apply the rates of pay of [Governor in Council](#) appointees.

*****Travel and Hospitality Costs:** Costs must be aligned with the travel Policy outlined in Section 2.11.9.

****** Honorarium:** Honorarium refers to monetary payments made on a one-time or non-routine basis to an individual as a “thank you” for a service for which fees are not traditionally paid (i.e., speeches, lectures, seminars, etc. by a guest lecturer/speaker). Honorariums should not be used if a service contract exists or would be more appropriate and are not an entitlement, as there is no expectation of payment or gift in exchange for the service rendered.

For guidelines on the calculation of in-kind contributions, refer to **Appendix C**.

Ineligible costs include the following:

- Costs associated with the construction of, or major renovation to building and structures;
- Flat-rate charges for overhead costs (indirect costs);
- The purchase or lease of land;
- Alcoholic refreshments;
- Hospitality costs for meetings only attended by Recipient staff;
- The acquisition of major research equipment (with a net federal cost above \$250,000). In exceptional circumstances, the SSF Secretariat will consider on a case-by-case basis the need for Recipients to surpass this amount, provided that there is a clear rationale explaining how the cost would not be considered major research equipment in the area of activities;
- Costs associated with the lobbying of federal officials or public office holders (including by hiring outside firms or consultants);
- Any costs that cannot be deemed reasonable, as described below:

Determination of reasonable costs: A cost is reasonable if the nature and amount do not exceed what would be incurred by an ordinary prudent person in the conduct of regular business. In determining the reasonableness of particular cost, consideration will be given to

- Whether the cost is of a type generally recognized as normal and necessary for the conduct of the Recipient’s business or performance of activities;
- The restraints and requirements of such factors as generally accepted sound business practices, arm’s length bargaining, federal, provincial and local laws and regulations and Agreement terms;
- The action that prudent persons would take in the circumstances, considering their responsibilities to their constituents, their employees, the Government and public at large;
- Significant deviations from the established practices of the Recipient which may unjustifiably increase the Eligible Costs;
- The specifications, delivery schedule and quality requirements of activities as they affect costs; and
- Eligible Costs claimed must reflect actual costs incurred by the Recipient and not include any allocation for profit (i.e., mark-up) or any allocation of general and administrative expenses.

4. Program administration

4.1 Amount and payments

Funding delivered through the SSF will be provided in the form of non-repayable contributions. The contribution amount is the amount of assistance that, in the opinion of the Ministers, is the minimum level of support required by the Eligible Recipient to ensure the attainment of the stated SSF program objectives and expected results. Payments will be made in the form of either advance payments or reimbursements of eligible costs, which will be subject to a risk assessment of the funding and to the Recipient's annual cash flow requirements to be provided to the respective Minister by the Recipient as part of its reporting outlined in [Appendix D](#).

Payments will be reconciled with cash flow requirements.

- Upon approval by the SSF Secretariat, the Recipient may carry-over SSF funds advanced that are unexpended (unspent) and uncommitted up to a maximum of 10% of that fiscal year's allocation to the next fiscal year (and not beyond the Project Completion date of the Contribution Agreement).
- In addition to the above, for recipients further distributing funds to Ultimate Recipients, an additional carry-over of advanced funds unexpended (unspent) but committed to specific ultimate recipients may be allowed on a case-by-case basis upon approval by the SSF Secretariat, provided that these funds have been unexpended for reasons of good fiscal management (e.g. the Ultimate Recipient has not yet demonstrated adequate cashflow needs).

Any excess from advance payments may be deducted from further payments and/or may be considered an overpayment which would require a repayment of the excess amount.

Investments of SSF funds prior to their use and disbursement is restricted to the activities outlined in [Appendix E](#).

At any time, Recipients may be requested to provide satisfactory evidence to demonstrate that eligible costs claimed have been incurred.

Provisions on requirements for document retention will be detailed in contribution agreements.

4.2 Stacking provisions

Total Canadian government assistance to the eligible activities is not to exceed 100% of eligible costs. The assessment of required funding levels will take into consideration the total Canadian government assistance (federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal) towards the eligible costs supported by the contribution. For contributions that support research activities that take place within industry and primarily benefit an industrial partner, the maximum amount of total Canadian government assistance is 75% of the total eligible costs.

Recipients may choose to involve federal or other public organizations in the execution of their plans (e.g., as part of funded projects). Seeking other funding to expand the scale or scope of activities to further the objectives of the contribution agreement is encouraged.

All Recipients will be required to inform the Ministers on a continuous basis of any other government (federal, provincial, territorial, municipal) financial assistance they have requested and/or received.

4.3 Monitoring, guidance and support

4.3.1 Staff liaison: The respective Ministers may designate a public servant to liaise with the Recipient, monitor its progress to date and offer guidance on relevant policies.

4.3.2 Annual monitoring process and monitoring committee: Each Recipient will be reviewed by the SSF Secretariat on an annual basis and may be assisted in this review by a Monitoring Committee, which is an external advisory committee of experts appointed by the SSF Secretariat.

4.4 Use and protection of information

Confidential information submitted as part of the review process or administration of the SSF will only be used by the federal government for the purpose for which it was collected, namely: reviewing applications, administering the SSF Program (including program evaluations, required by the Treasury Board Secretariat's [Policy on Results](#)), and monitoring Recipients, or otherwise as required by law.

Applicants and Recipients must mark any commercially confidential information as such and may also wish to become familiar with the terms of the [Access to Information Act](#) and the [Privacy Act](#).

Any qualified third parties reviewing applications (e.g., expert reviewers) will be required to sign Non-Disclosure and Conflict of Interest Agreements and are required to uphold the confidentiality of privileged information accessed in the assessment of applications, including trade secrets, proprietary business information or information that is commercial or financial.

4.5 Official languages

The SSF's call for proposals and its related funding decisions will be announced to the public in both official languages in accordance with the [Official Languages Act](#). Other products and services related to the SSF, including website and reference material, templates, and assistance to Recipients, will also be available in both official languages.

The federal departments will be responsible for assessing the extent to which each resulting contribution agreement from the SSF's decisions falls under specific parts of the [Official Languages Act](#) and whether it should include the standard required language clauses.

4.6 Lobbying Act

Recipients must comply with the [Lobbying Act](#) throughout the application process and the life of any SSF-funded project. Prior to communicating about an application, please review the provisions of the Act. For more information on lobbying and the [Lobbying Act](#), consult the [Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying of Canada](#).

5. Contact us

If you have any questions or require additional information, you can reach the program at:

Email: strategicsciencefund-fondsstrategiquedessciences@ised-isde.gc.ca



Appendix A – Guidelines for agreements to further distribute funds

The SSF Recipient is the steward of SSF funds and related co-funding and is responsible for the delivery of specific commitments to the federal government. In certain cases, the contribution agreement may allow the SSF Recipient to further distribute funds using separate agreements. The SSF Recipient should solicit independent legal advice as necessary before entering into such agreements.

At a minimum, agreements must incorporate all relevant terms of the contribution agreement, including:

General elements:

- roles and responsibilities of each of the Recipient and the Ultimate Recipient;
- description of the eligible project;
- default and remedies in case of breach by the Ultimate Recipient;

Acknowledgements, representations and warranties:

- compliance with all federal, provincial, territorial, municipal and other applicable laws governing the Ultimate Recipient and the Eligible Project including without limitation, statutes, regulations, by-laws, rules, ordinances and decrees;
- federal visibility requirements consistent with the contribution agreement.
- evaluation, audit, accountability and reporting requirements, including the provision of information necessary to enable the Recipient to assess the ongoing performance of the Ultimate Recipient and to determine from time to time whether the funding to the Ultimate Recipient should be continued with respect to the Eligible Project; and
- the consent by the Ultimate Recipient to being contacted by the Minister in relation to success stories;

Audit rights:

- the right of the Minister to audit, or cause to have audited, the accounts and records of the Ultimate Recipient and to have a right of access to the books and accounts and premises of the Ultimate Recipient;
- the release by the Ultimate Recipient to the Recipient, upon request and in a timely manner, for the purpose of releasing to the Auditor General of Canada, all records held by the Ultimate Recipient, or by agents or contractors of the Ultimate Recipient, relating to the relevant Eligible Project and the use of funds; and such further information and explanations as the Auditor General, or anyone acting on behalf of the Auditor General may request relating to any part of this Agreement or the use of funds;

Specific clauses:

- clauses relating to ownership of assets and intellectual property consistent with the contribution agreement;
- clauses ensuring that membership or board of directors of the Ultimate Recipients are not controlled by representatives or agents of the federal government;

- clauses ensuring that the funding provided to Ultimate Recipients contribute to the objectives of the contribution agreement.
- clauses ensuring that expected results, performance expectations and indicators are measurable;
- the indemnification by the Ultimate Recipient of the Recipient and the Government of Canada;

Additional elements

In addition to the above, Recipients may consider including the following where applicable:

- The processes to invite, identify, select and fund projects;
- Details on the approach to dealing with potential and real conflicts of interest;
- Clauses considering the possibility of extension depending on the results of a renewal;
- The mechanisms and process for dispute resolution and withdrawal from the agreement;
- A detailed description of SSF-Supported Intellectual Property, including a general overview of how Intellectual Property is identified, who are the owners, the process of protection and the mechanism of access available to the various participants across the organization;
- A description of the benefits/rights of organizations providing funding for the activities as a result of their participation and contribution;
- The rights and limitations of access to the results of funded activities, as well as the maximum period that publications can be delayed when such a delay will interfere with the graduation of an individual;
- Requirements around the ethical conduct of research and inclusion of the requirements for certain types of research as it applies to the areas of research;
- Requirements around security (physical security, personnel suitability and reliability, information management and cybersecurity, and incident and emergency response);
- Where a significant demand exists for services in either official language, a clause requiring the communications to the public meet the linguistic demand.

Appendix B – Guidelines for negotiating a host agreement

Strategic Science Fund (SSF) Recipients are not-for-profit organizations who may be associated with a host organization. Host organizations could include Canadian universities and other post-secondary institutions and their affiliated institutions (including hospitals, research institutes and other not-for-profit organizations), or a private sector consortium.

Where the association to a host is being proposed, the strong support of the host's president/CEO, and vice-presidents will be critical for the effective operation of the SSF Recipient. The specific needs and expectations should be detailed within a formal agreement between the host and the SSF Recipient, a copy of which should be provided to the SSF Secretariat upon request. Guidelines for elements to consider within such agreements are provided below.

Should the host institution also be a potential Ultimate Recipient of funds, refer to the guidelines in [Appendix A](#) of the SSF Program Guide for further elements to include.

Potential elements of a host agreement

Critical elements

- Formal confirmation of the resources outlined in the host's letter of support in the SSF Full Application (including cash and in-kind commitment)
- Specific details regarding the following elements
 - o the actual accommodations to be provided (including furniture, space for offices, storage, meeting rooms);
 - o the critical systems and services that will be provided (including computers, communications, financial, recordkeeping);
 - o expectations on the representation of the host on the board of directors of the SSF Recipient (note, however, that the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act does not allow for ex-officio appointments – i.e., being a director by virtue of holding another office or position)

Employee-related elements

- Who do employees work for? Outline of responsibilities should be clear (payroll, benefits, occupational health, and safety)
- What are the host commitments in terms of: teaching release (if applicable), actual staff commitment (number of full-time equivalents), stipends?
- Who will be responsible for providing liability insurance?
- What will be the overall staffing and space requirements?
 - o This element should not be underestimated, and consideration should be given to the potential growth over time (i.e., requiring more employees) and how the need for space will be determined.
 - o It is recommended that the SSF Recipient obtain official statements and commitments regarding the quality and quantity of current and future space for all employees.

Facility-related elements

- Who is responsible for paying for specific facility costs (including ineligible costs under the SSF)? Potential costs could include utility costs; maintenance & janitorial services; security; future construction costs
- What will SSF Recipient staff have access to? (e.g., Library, Parking, Other host facilities)

Administrative needs

To what extent can the SSF Recipient draw from the following services of the host, and what service standards are to be expected?

- Human resources services
- Procurement and contract services
- Administrative assistance and administrative supplies
- Financial administrative services (e.g., eligible cost oversight in compliance with Section 3 of the SSF Program Guide; distribution of funds to eligible Ultimate Recipients, if applicable)
- Technical administration (e.g., provision and maintenance of internet, telephones, computers, printers, and other technical equipment required; access to IT, website, and/or database support);
- Mail services
- Communications (website support, annual meetings / workshops, announcements, translation)
- Industry liaison office / Technology transfer office
- Legal services

Other elements to consider

- How will non-SSF (i.e., partner) funds will be managed, including any minimum/maximum overhead charges?
- Is there a clear indemnification between the host and the SSF Recipient?
- What will be the process for dispute resolution?

Appendix C – Guidelines for calculating the value of in-kind contributions

In-kind contributions are defined as cash-equivalent goods or services that represent an **incremental expense** that would not otherwise be incurred, and which would have to be paid for with cash if not provided.

In-kind contributions:

- Must be relevant and central to the activities or mandate of the Recipient;
- Must be eligible expenses as per the program guidelines; and
- Cannot have been used to fulfill the matching requirements of other federal programs.

The nature of an in-kind contribution and its valuation must be detailed. It is the responsibility of the Board of Directors to ensure that a proper accounting framework is created to ensure that the reported value for all items is reasonable. In-kind contributions should clearly support the activities at hand; partners may also state their own in-kind eligibility requirements. Justifications may be requested in the case of questionable valuations.

Calculation table

The table below is a non-exhaustive list of in-kind contributions, with an indication of how to calculate their value. If in doubt about a particular item, please contact program staff.

Category	Acceptable valuation method	Not acceptable
Access to unique databases	Incremental cost of access	Cost of developing or maintaining database
Analytical and other services	Internal cost of services	Commercial cost of access
Equipment	Donated (used) -Fair market value -Company book value Donated (new) -Selling price to most favored customer (if stock item) -Cost of manufacture (if one of a kind) Loaned -Rental equivalent based on depreciation -Rental equivalent to highest-volume rate	List price or discounted list price Rental equivalents exceeding accepted values had the equipment been donated or sold Development costs
Hospitality	Cost	Alcoholic refreshments

Materials	• Unit cost of production for commercial products • Selling price to most favoured customer • Price for internal transfers • Cost of production of prototypes and samples	Development costs
Intellectual property	Fair market value of licencing and royalties	• -Cost of maintenance and litigation • Licensing fees paid to partners
Professional and technical service contracts	Cost	
Salaries (General)	Actual salary cost (including benefits).	Salary overheads, external charge-out or consultant rates, cost of benefits outside the average market range.
Salaries (Academic researcher)	Actual costs to the institution for release time from teaching duties (e.g., the cost of hiring a sessional instructor for course release may be counted).	Academic faculty salaries
Salaries (Clinicians)	Portion of their salary for time devoted to working on SSF projects that are additional to their routine (including teaching or service work) activities	Remuneration already received for teaching or service work
Student stipends	Cost of the stipend equivalent to the portion of their time working on SSF work	The portion of time dedicated to non-SSF work
Software	-Most-favoured-customer cost for 1 licence per software package -Cost of equivalent commercial product (where donated software is not commercially available) -Cost of training and support (at the university/college site) for software by industrial partner personnel	Development costs
Travel costs	Travel and accommodation costs (generally aligned with the National Joint Council's Travel Directive or similar institutional directive)	
Use of facilities	-Cost of access to the facility -Internal rates for use of specialized equipment	

	-Internal rates for value of lost production, resulting from downtime	
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Appendix D – Reporting requirements

The Recipient shall provide the following reports to the satisfaction of the respective Minister using templates and procedures provided by the SSF Secretariat, which will be reviewed in accordance with section [4.3. Monitoring, guidance and support](#):

- **Annual reporting** consists of the following, which must be approved by the Board of Directors:
 - A **Corporate Plan** for the upcoming fiscal which will include:
 - o a statement of objectives for the upcoming year;
 - o expected short-term and medium-term outcomes;
 - o a description of the proposed activities to be undertaken in the upcoming year, including anticipated results of those activities, planned expenditures for the activities by source of funding, and how the activities will advance the program outcomes and federal priorities;
 - o associated annual cash flow requirements for proposed expenditures/costs, including, but not limited to, the amount requested for disbursement in the upcoming year;
 - o risk assessments and mitigation strategies;
 - o ongoing performance monitoring strategies;
 - o planned activities designed to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI);
 - o an analysis of the potential for funding lapses or accelerated spending; and;
 - o justification for any proposed updates to the Recipient's logic model and/or Key Performance Indicators, and updates to targets for the SSF program's performance indicators (linked with the program's [expected outcomes](#)).
 - An **Annual Report** reporting on results of the previous fiscal year which will include:
 - o a description of the extent to which the Recipient has met its objectives and progress achieved to date*;
 - o a description of eligible activities undertaken (detailed by expenditure type) *;
 - o a statement of eligible expenditures/costs incurred and paid*;
 - o statistical information (e.g., number of publications, number of trainees) *;
 - o any update of Recipients' investment policies, standards and procedures (where relevant);
 - o a summary of the result of audits and evaluations carried out during the year, if any*;
 - o a summary of funds leveraged and matched from other sources*;
 - o an account of activities undertaken to advance EDI;
 - o details regarding travel and hospitality;
 - o audited financial statements*, prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles in Canada**; and
 - o program-level performance indicators.

*Recipients must release a public version of the **Annual Report** (referenced as the Corporate Annual Report in the Contribution Agreement), which must be accessible on the Recipient's website in both

official languages. The format and content are at the discretion of Recipients, however it must include, at a minimum, information related to the points denoted by an asterisk above.

** Audited financial statements may be submitted in draft format if they cannot be finalized by July 15th. The finalized audited financial statements should be submitted by September 30 at the latest (or six months after the recipient's fiscal year end).

- **Progress reporting** will include a quarterly financial report (a payment form that includes an update to forecasts, and reconciliation of the advance payment immediately preceding the last payment) and an affirmation of the accuracy of the information submitted. Progress reports will also include, on a frequency to be determined based on Recipient risk (quarterly, bi-annual or annual), updates to Recipient key performance indicators (actuals and targets), narrative descriptions of deviations and/or emergent risks and risk responses (such as updates to strategies, policies and performance monitoring).
- **Final reporting** will include a final claim no later than 60 days following the Project Completion Date, a certification that all funds have been fully expended by Ultimate Recipients (if applicable) and any unexpended amounts have been returned to the Receiver General for Canada by the Recipient. It will also include a final report that details the extent to which the Recipient has met the objectives of the contribution agreement, and information which identifies, demonstrates, and quantifies the success of the Recipient, including the direct and indirect benefits resulting from the SSF Funding.

Reports will be provided in accordance with the deadlines submitted below, which are subject to formal confirmation each year by the SSF Secretariat:

Reporting Calendar – Year One

Report	Due Date
Progress Report 1 * (forecast for Q2)	June 1**
Progress Report 2 (Q1 actuals, forecast for Q3)	September 1
Progress Report 3 (Q2 actuals, forecast for Q4)	December 1
Corporate Plan	January 20
Progress Report 4 (Q3 actuals, forecast for Q1 of next FY)	March 1

*Year One Progress Report 1 does not require reconciliation of actual costs/expenditures (payment form / cash flow update only)

**Progress reports are due 30 days before start of the next payment period to ensure a prompt payment.

Reporting Calendar – Standard Year (i.e., Year two to five)

Report	Due Date
Progress Report 1 (Q4 Last FY Actuals, forecast for Q2)	June 1
Annual Report to ISED	July 15
Annual Report made public	September 30
Progress Report 2 (Q1 Actuals, forecast for Q3)	September 1
Progress Report 3 (Q2 Actuals, forecast for Q4)	December 1
Corporate Plan	January 20
Progress Report 4 (Q3 Actuals, forecast for Q1 Next FY)	March 1

Appendix E – Management of funds received

If the Recipient invests any portion of the Contribution prior to its use or disbursement, this must be overseen by the Recipient's Board of Director's Audit and Finance committee (or another committee deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors).

Statement of Investment Policy.

A "Statement of Investment Policy" must be reviewed and approved by its board of directors no less frequently than annually, and will include the following components:

- Long-term investment return objectives and expectations;
- Diversification policy of the investment portfolio, including various quantitative limits on investments;
- Asset allocation strategy including specific range for short-term fluctuation for each asset class and the long-term targeted asset mix;
- Permitted investment instruments and trading activities;
- Prohibited investment instruments and trading activities;
- Liquidity policy outlining how The Recipient's liquidity needs will be addressed;
- Risk-management policies outlining procedures to manage and mitigate various types of risks faced by the Recipient;
- Policy on the lending of cash or securities; and
- Performance measurement and monitoring procedures.

The Committee for each Recipient:

- approve the Recipient's investment strategy, describing the means used by the Recipient to best implement the Statement of Investment Policy.
- ensure that there is in place one or more independent, external investment advisors to provide investment advice in relation to the Recipient's funds, including any portion of the Contribution.
- recommend to its board of directors the appointment of one or more professional portfolio managers to manage the Recipient's funds, including any portion of the Contribution, in a manner consistent with the approved Statement of Investment Policy and the investment strategy.

Conflict of Interest Concerning Investment Management.

The Recipient must:

- ensure that all investment advisors or portfolio managers who are involved in the investment management of the Contribution disclose in writing, on a timely basis, the nature and extent of his/her interest, including any material interest in any entity that is a party to a transaction with the Recipient.
- ensure that the Recipient's conflict of interest policies and procedures cover, among others, voting, prohibited transactions, continuing disclosure and avoidance standards.

- disclose to the Minister without delay any actual or potential situation that may be reasonably interpreted as either a conflict of interest or a potential conflict of interest.

Borrowing.

The Recipient cannot encumber the Contribution in any way, including, but not limited to, encumbrances in any way connected to (i) borrowing money; (ii) issuing any debt obligations or securities; (iii) guaranteeing any debt or other obligation of a person, mortgagor or other entity; or (iv) pledging all or any portion of the Contribution by way of security for payment to any creditor.

Quantitative Limits on Investment Holdings.

- Investments of the Contribution prior to its use or disbursement by the Recipient in the securities of any one issuer, or two or more affiliated entities shall be limited to no more than ten percent (10%) of the investment portfolio's assets. However, this does not apply in respect to:
 - o investments in securities issued by the Government of Canada or the government of a province, or securities that carry the full faith and credit of either; and
 - o any indexed, segregated, mutual or pooled fund.
- Investments of the Contribution prior to its use or disbursement in securities with a credit rating of "A" (including all sub-classifications of this rating category), by at least one of the recognized credit rating agencies, shall be limited to no more than twenty percent (20%) of the investment portfolio's assets.
- Investments of the Contribution prior to its use or disbursement in securities with a credit rating of "AA" (including all sub-classifications of this rating category), by at least one of the recognized credit rating agencies, shall be limited to no more than seventy percent (70%) of the investment portfolio's assets.
- Investments of the Contribution prior to its use or disbursement in securities that are not issued by or carry the full faith and credit of either the Government of Canada or the government of a province shall be limited to no more than eighty percent (80%) of the investment portfolio's assets.
- Where external credit ratings are applied in respect of investments of the Contribution prior to its use or disbursement, investments or counterparts shall have a credit rating from at least two of the four following rating agencies: Moody's Investors Service Inc., Standard & Poor's Ratings Services, Fitch Rating Ltd., and DBRS Ltd. When there are two or more ratings for an entity or security, the lower of the highest two ratings should be used to determine eligibility, in accordance with Basel II rules. When there is an assumption of government support in the rating, standard-alone ratings should be used where available; otherwise, the official rating should be used.

Investment Holdings in Foreign Currencies.

The Recipient will not invest the Contribution prior to its use or disbursement in securities that are not denominated in Canadian dollars.

Maturities of the Securities.

The maturities and terms of investments shall match the profile of The Recipient's forecasted disbursements of the Contribution. In cases where the timing of disbursements is unknown, investments shall be held in securities with term to maturity of one year or less.

Permitted Investments.

The following constitute permitted investments or the Contribution prior to its use or disbursement:

- Bank certificates of deposit;
- Banker's acceptances;
- Treasury bills, commercial paper and other short-term securities, bonds and notes issued by the federal government, provincial governments, municipal governments, and corporations; and
- Other fixed-income securities that carry the full faith and credit of the Government of Canada.

Prohibited Investments and Trading Activities.

The Recipient cannot invest the Contribution prior to its use or disbursement in the following:

- Equities or shares issued by any corporation;
- Hedge funds or funds of hedge funds;
- Fixed-income instruments rated below A- by DBRS, Standard & Poor's or Fitch Ratings, A3 by Moody's;
- Derivatives or any instruments that have derivative holdings or features;
- Non-marketable securities;
- Commodities;
- Repurchase agreements against securities which are not permitted to be held in the portfolio;
- Margin transactions or any form of leveraging; and,
- Exchange traded funds, segregated, mutual or pooled funds.

Appendix F – Glossary

The following definitions of terms aim to inform Recipients of the meaning attributed by the program which should be referenced when providing all reports.

SSF Program Definitions
“Collaborators” are individuals who contribute to the delivery of activities. “International Collaborators” are individuals contributing from outside of Canada.
“Companies Enhanced” means companies that recorded a growth in revenue and/or science & technology related jobs attributable to SSF activities
“Conflict of interest” means a situation where, to the detriment or potential detriment of the Recipient, an individual (including Recipient contractors, advisors, partners, directors, officers, employees, agents and volunteers) is, or may be, in a position to use knowledge, authority, or influence for personal or family gain (financial or other) or to benefit others. It includes a situation where anyone associated with the Recipient owns or has an interest in an organization that is carrying out work related to the Project. The following examples, although not comprehensive, illustrate situations that <i>may</i> lead to a conflict of interest: • an individual being employed in any capacity by another employer, including self-employment. Situations that may require management in this context could include any conversations/decisions linked to the other employer. • holding an office that puts the individual in a position to affect decisions, such as manager with executive powers, within a company, or member of a board of directors. • owning equity or other financial participation in a corporation (including stock options and shares) – individuals should abstain from activity in which they would have inside advantage (e.g. purchase of shares) based on information they are privy to through the SSF Recipient. • accepting gifts (other than some minor hospitality) or special favours from organizations with which the Recipient does business • influencing the purchase of equipment or materials from a company in which an individual has a financial or other interest.
“Digital Knowledge Platforms” are internet-based services where knowledge can be disseminated among various communities. Includes, but is not limited to: Social media platforms, online repositories, discussion forums.
“Early Career Researcher” (ECR) is a researcher within five years of the date of their first independent research-related appointment. Given that career progress for an ECR is particularly vulnerable to normal life circumstances, the eligibility window may be adjusted as follows: • eligible leaves (e.g., maternity, parental, medical, family medical, bereavement) will extend ECR status (i.e., will not be counted towards the maximum) and credited as twice the amount of time taken; • no adjustments are provided for professional leaves (e.g., training, sabbatical, administrative).

No adjustments are provided for time spent on non-research related duties or for the pursuit of non-research related career activities.
“End Users” are individuals who use a particular product (including a knowledge product) or service. They can be, but are not limited to, a practitioner, policymaker, educator, decision-maker, health care administrator, community leader, or an individual in a charity, patient group, private sector organization, or media outlet.
“Equity” is about fairness. It is about deliberate efforts to ensure processes for allocating resources and decision-making are fair and do not discriminate on the basis of personal characteristics. Equity is a summative concept that is the outcome of deliberate efforts to create more diverse and inclusive approaches to organizational practices and to program delivery, including research. Equity results in parity of outcomes for members of under-represented groups or for those who face discrimination. “Diversity” is about representation. It brings a focus to the representation of groups that have traditionally been under-represented and have faced systemic discrimination in spheres as varied as employment, participation in clinical research, or in attracting research funding. Diversity is a dynamic concept. Some individuals may identify in ways that do not change over time. For others, the ways in which they identify may evolve over time. For example, sexual identity may change over time. “Inclusion” is about belonging. It is socially constructed. It brings into focus the climate or culture that fosters belonging in workplaces or when participating in activities or programs. Belonging cannot be mandated; it is experienced. While diversity is measured more objectively, inclusion relies on qualitative metrics.
“Equity Deserving Groups” means women, racialized persons (including Black Canadians), persons living with disabilities (including invisible and episodic disabilities), Canadians who identify as 2SLGBTQI+, and First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples as founding peoples of Canada who are under-represented in positions of economic influence and leadership.
“Fair Market Value” means the price that would be agreed to in an open and unrestricted market between knowledgeable and willing parties dealing at arm’s length, who are fully informed and not under any compulsion to transact.
“Highly Qualified Personnel” includes specialized staff, research staff, technicians, interns involved in research and other projects and trainees (undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, research associates, research assistants, researchers at all stages of their career).
“Honorarium” refers to monetary payments made on a one-time or non-routine basis to an individual as a “thank you” for a service for which fees are not traditionally paid (i.e., speeches, lectures, seminars, etc. by a guest lecturer/speaker). Honorariums should not be used if a service contract exists or would be more appropriate and are not an entitlement, as there is no expectation of payment or gift in exchange for the service rendered.
“Hospitality” consists of the provision of meals, beverages or refreshments in events which are necessary for the effective conduct SSF recipient activities.

“Host Organization” means the (host name), that provides services (e.g., infrastructure, staff, administrative services, etc.) to the Recipient.

“Independent Member” means a member of the Board of Directors that does not directly benefit from the Recipient’s activities and has no material relationship with Ultimate Recipients that could, either directly or indirectly, in practice or appearance, impair that individual’s ability to act in the Recipient’s best interests. For the purposes of this definition, “material relationship” means any of the following relationships: (a) a director, officer or employee of an organization funded by the Program or occupying any such position within the last three years that is receiving or that has received at any time payments from the Recipient for services; (b) a director, officer, employee, partner of an organization doing business with the Recipient; (c) a current or former director, officer, employee, or partner of, or having been, a partner, executive, officer or employee of an organization that has performed audit services for the Recipient within the last three years; or (d) an immediate family member of a person in (a) through (c).

“Interdisciplinary Research” means research that involves the interaction among two or more different disciplines and occurs at the interface between disciplines.

“Intellectual Property” means all inventions, whether patented or patentable, all proprietary technical information, whether constituting trade secrets, and all copyrightable works, industrial designs, integrated circuit topographies, and trademarks, whether registered or registrable.

“Intellectual Property Rights” means all rights recognized by law in or to Intellectual Property, including but not limited to Intellectual Property rights protected through legislation. These shall include patents, copyrights, industrial design rights, integrated circuit topography rights, rights in trademarks and trade names, all rights in applications and registrations for any of the foregoing, and all rights in trade secrets and confidential information.

“Background Intellectual Property” means any pre-existing Intellectual Property that is developed prior to, or independent of, the project but is necessary to carry out the funded project.

“Foreground Intellectual Property” means any Intellectual Property conceived, produced, developed or reduced to practice in carrying out the project by the Recipient.

“International Collaborators” means an individual, organization, or entity that engages in cooperative efforts or partnerships across national borders to achieve common goals, solve problems, conduct research, or advance mutual interests. International collaboration often involves sharing resources, expertise, and knowledge among participants from different countries or regions.

“Knowledge Mobilization” means the reciprocal and complementary flow and uptake of research knowledge between researchers, knowledge brokers and knowledge users—both within and beyond academia—in such a way that may benefit users and create positive impacts within Canada and/or internationally.

“Learning Event” means an event that facilitates the acquisition or enhancement of science-focused knowledge, skills, behaviours, or attitudes. Broadly covers any educational event/activity/instance that exposes learners to knowledge.

“Leveraged Funds” means existing investments in the ST&I ecosystem being leveraged to further the objectives of the SSF Recipient. Includes cash or in-kind from federally funded entities (e.g., CFI, organizations primarily funded by the federal government) and from federal departments and agencies.

Examples of leveraged funds:

- Existing NSERC, SSHRC or CIHR projects with work that will be complimentary to the SSF activities.
- The rental value of CFI-funded equipment that is essential to the delivery of SSF activities.
- Projects funded in collaboration with other SSF-supported Recipients

“Matched Funds” means new, incremental contributions (of cash or in-kind) for [Eligible SSF Costs](#), which would not exist in the absence of an SSF award (i.e. that can be directly attributed to SSF funding). Eligible sources include non-federal partners or revenues (including donations). Ineligible to be considered matched funds:

- Leveraged Funds (see definition)
- funding from federally funded entities (e.g., CFI, Digital Research Alliance of Canada, SSF Recipients, and organizations primarily funded by the federal government) and from federal departments and agencies.
- funding already used to meet a matching requirement for a federal program.

Examples of matched funds:

- Private-sector contributions earmarked to advance specific SSF-funded activities
- Provincial awards to support the advancement of SSF-funded activities or research projects in that province

“National and International Forums” means events where individuals from a broad national or international geography confer around specific topics. Includes but is not limited to conferences, symposiums, and presentations that reach more than an immediate local audience.

“Partner” means an organization that helps the SSF-funded organization carry out its mandate. Includes, but is not limited to **Ultimate Recipients** of SSF Funds (see definition), and entities involved in the delivery of programs or projects.

An analysis of partner risk must be conducted for partners to be considered eligible. See the program guide for more detail.

“Partnership” means an active partnership in the current fiscal year, including new partnerships and partnerships maintained as a direct result of SSF Funding.

“New Partnership” means a partnership that did not exist in previous fiscal years that is created as a direct result of SSF funding.

“Partner Funding”, depending on the nature, can be considered either:

Leveraged Funds (see definition)

Matched Funds (see definition)
“Products” means any physical or digital items created to serve an individual's needs. This includes commercial products (e.g., goods offered for sale) and non-commercial products such as knowledge products (e.g., information brochures on specific topics).
“Projects” means the combination of all types of SSF-funded projects (including research projects, knowledge mobilization projects, types of training opportunities, types of learning opportunities, and other projects) “Research Project” means a focused investigation aimed at exploring, understanding, or discovering new information or solutions within a specific area of study. The ultimate goal of a research project is to contribute new knowledge, insights, or solutions to the field of study and to disseminate findings. “Knowledge Mobilization Project” means a project with the primary goal of Knowledge Mobilization (see definition)
“R&D Collaborations” means partnerships between business, government, not-for-profits and/or academics on research and development and commercialization opportunities.
“Sectors” means distinct categories or divisions within society or the economy, each characterized by its own unique set of organizations, activities, and goals (e.g. academia, private sector, NGO).
“Seminars and workshops” are structured educational events designed to facilitate learning and discussion on specific topics or skills.
“Services” means useful work that does not produce a tangible commodity.
“Spin-Off Company” means a company created when the division of a company or organization becomes an independent business or when a group of employees leaves an existing entity to form an independent business. A spin-off company generally takes assets, intellectual property, technology and/or existing products from the “parent organization.”
“Training” means a structured event/instance of 'learning while doing' that develops or enhances the professional skills of research and innovation talent. It is intentionally designed to impart specific skills or knowledge to individuals in a science-focused setting. The most common instances of training anticipated in SSF are via internships and HQP* involved in a research project.
“Travel” means the movement of an authorized individual for purposes linked to operational activities, engagement with key stakeholders, supporting sound governance, training, or other reasons.
“Ultimate Recipient” means a [person, entity, business, SME] approved for funding by the Recipient The SSF Recipient further distributes funds to Ultimate Recipients through the use of separate agreements, described in section 2.3.
“Uptake and use” means the process by which individuals or entities acquire and employ a particular product, service, technology, or concept for their intended purposes or benefits. It encompasses the

adoption, implementation, and utilization of the entity in question, often indicating the degree to which it has been integrated into routine practices or behaviors.

“Youth Direct Interactions” means in-person reach such as through community-based outreach activities, participation in action projects and use of online resources.

“Youth Indirect Interactions” means engagement achieved through teachers participating in professional learning and teachers accessing online resources.

Glossary of Intersectionality Related Terms (Source: ISED Intersectional Data Standards, March 2024)

Term	Definition
Indigenous Peoples	An Indigenous person is someone who belongs to one of the three Indigenous Peoples in Canada and refers to the original peoples of North America and their descendants. Indigenous Peoples in Canada refers to individuals identifying themselves as First Nation Peoples, Métis or Inuit. Indigenous Peoples are distinct peoples with unique histories, languages, cultural practices, spiritual beliefs and legal status, and should not be categorized with any other group.
Black	A person identifying as Black, belonging to any of various population groups, sometimes of African ancestry. It is often used in conjunction with citizenship, such as Black Canadian. Examples: People identifying as: African, Afro-Caribbean, African Canadian descent, and others.
East/Southeast Asian	A person identifying as being of East/Southeast Asian descent. Examples: People identifying as: Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Taiwanese descent; Filipino, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Thai, Indonesian, other Southeast Asian descent, and others.
Latino	A person identifying as being of Latino descent. Examples: People identifying as: Latin American, Hispanic descent, and others.
Middle Eastern	A person identifying as being of Middle Eastern descent. Examples: People identifying as: Arab, Persian, West Asian descent, e.g. Afghan, Egyptian, Iranian, Lebanese, Turkish, Kurdish descent, and others.
South Asian	A person identifying as being of South Asian descent. Examples: People identifying as: East Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, Indo-Caribbean descent and others.
White	A person identifying as being White; being a person belonging to one of the population groups of especially European ancestry that are often considered as having light pigmentation of skin.

Youth	Persons who identify as a Youth, generally between the ages of 15 -30. (Note: This ISED Departmental definition and EDI sub-indicator is not applicable to SSF STEM / Science Culture focused recipients)
Immigrant	Immigrants include the following categories: <u>Immigrant</u>: This category includes persons who are, or who have ever been, landed immigrants or permanent residents. Such persons have been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. Immigrants who have obtained Canadian citizenship by naturalization are included in this category. <u>Non-permanent resident</u>: This category includes persons from another country with a usual place of residence in Canada and who have a work or study permit or who have claimed refugee status (asylum claimants). Family members living with work or study permit holders are also included, unless these family members are already Canadian citizens or landed immigrants/permanent residents.
Woman	This category includes persons whose reported gender is female. It includes cisgender (cis) and transgender (trans) women.
Man	This category includes persons whose reported gender is male. It includes cisgender (cis) and transgender (trans) men.
Non-Binary	This category includes persons whose reported gender is not exclusively male or female. It includes persons whose reported gender is, for example, agender, pangender, genderqueer, genderfluid, or gender nonconforming. It also includes persons whose reported gender is Two-Spirit, a term specific to some Indigenous peoples of North America. It includes persons whose reported gender is both male and female, neither male nor female, or either male or female in addition to another gender.

2SLGBTQI+	A person who identifies as being part of the 2SLGBTQI+ community. This includes: <u>2-Spirit (Two-Spirit)</u>: Referring to an Indigenous person in North America who embodies both female and male spirits or whose gender identity, sexual orientation or spiritual identity is not limited by the male/female dichotomy.
	<u>Lesbian</u>: Referring to a woman who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to women. <u>Gay</u>: Referring to a person who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to people of their gender or sex. <u>Bisexual</u>: Referring to a person who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to people of their gender or sex and people of a different gender or sex. <u>Transgender</u>: Referring to a person whose gender does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth. <u>Queer</u>: Referring to a person whose sexual orientation or gender differs from the normative binary vision of gender and sexuality. <u>Intersex</u>: The term "intersex person" is used to describe a person whose anatomical and physiological characteristics do not meet the medical criteria of the male or female sex. Anatomical and physiological characteristics include chromosomes, gene expression, hormones, and reproductive or sexual anatomy. The term "intersex person" does not refer to sexual orientation or gender. <u>±</u> : The symbol "+" represents the wide spectrum of gender identities, sexual orientations and romantic orientations not explicitly named.
Members of official language minority communities	Persons whose first official language is the minority official language in the province or territory of residence – that is, Anglophones in Quebec and Francophones outside of Quebec.
Persons with disabilities	Persons who identify as having a disability. A disability is any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment — or a functional limitation — whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person's full and equal participation in society. Disability can occur at any time in a person's life; some people are born with a disability, while others develop a disability later in life. Disability can steadily worsen, remain the same, or improve. It can be very mild to very severe. It can be the cause, as well as the result, of disease, illness, injury, or substance abuse.
Another category	A person who identifies which group they identify with, which does not appear in the above picklists.