

**DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY,
CAPITAL HEALTH DISTRICT HEALTH AUTHORITY AND
IWK HEALTH CENTRE**

**Operations & Maintenance (O & M) Plan
including use of Infrastructure Operating Fund (IOF)
for Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI)-funded research projects**

November 2012

Introduction

The following is the Operations and Maintenance (O & M) Plan for Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI)-funded research projects at Dalhousie University (“Dalhousie”), Capital District Health Authority (“Capital Health”) and the IWK Health Centre (“IWK”). This Plan applies to all CFI projects at Dalhousie, including CFI projects undertaken at and administered by Capital Health and the IWK.

The O & M Plan replaces the Institutional Allocation Plan for the Infrastructure Operating Fund at Dalhousie. The O & M Plan was developed to more adequately address O & M support for CFI projects, respond to changes in the CFI IOF allocation system, and address the underutilization of IOF funds at Dalhousie.

O & M Operating Period

When Dalhousie applies for and is awarded a CFI project, it is understood by CFI that the research project will be undertaken for a minimum of five years. The five-year period begins “from the date of acquisition and installation of the research infrastructure, or for a period the CFI deems appropriate.” (*CFI Policy and Program Guide, section 4.2, March 2012*)

Similarly, there is an obligation to ensure that the CFI-funded research infrastructure is operated and maintained during the research project period. CFI expects that “appropriate resources are provided for the operation and maintenance of existing and future research infrastructure over its useful life. The useful life of research infrastructure is considered to be the period of time over which the infrastructure is expected to provide benefits and be usable for its intended purpose, factoring in normal repairs and maintenance.” (*CFI Institutional Agreement, May 2012*)

O & M Sources of Funding

The O & M Plan recognizes three possible sources of funding for operations and maintenance costs associated with CFI projects.

1. Infrastructure Operating Fund (IOF), CFI

(excerpts from the CFI website)

The Infrastructure Operating Fund (IOF) helps cover a portion of the operating and maintenance costs to ensure optimal use of CFI-funded infrastructure.

An institution's IOF allocation is based on the CFI contributions for eligible projects. All projects, approved by the CFI Board of Directors after July 1, 2001, are eligible to receive IOF, with the exception of projects funded under the Canada Research Chairs Infrastructure Fund and the international funds. All eligible projects generate an IOF allocation of 30 percent of the maximum CFI amount approved at award finalization.

Each institution is responsible for deciding how their funds will be divided among projects eligible to receive IOF. Institutions can distribute their IOF allocation based on actual operating and maintenance needs, as opposed to allocating the exact amount to the project that generated it.

More information on the IOF can be found in the CFI Policy and Program Guide:
<http://www.innovation.ca/en/programs/cfi-policy-and-program-guide>

Since IOF funds are awarded by CFI to Dalhousie, Dalhousie has discretion on how IOF funds will be distributed.

Dalhousie has agreed to offer IOF support to all eligible CFI projects. There will be two levels of support:

- All eligible CFI projects funded under CFI programs excluding the Leaders Opportunity Fund (LOF) will receive 30% of the amount previously approved by CFI;
- All eligible CFI projects funded under the CFI Leaders Opportunity Fund (LOF) will receive 20% of the amount previously approved by CFI.

Note that for space renovations/construction, Dalhousie and/or the hospital(s) may apply a portion of the project's available IOF to facilities charges (e.g., electricity, security, cleaning).

2. Researcher's External Research Funding

Accepting that CFI provides funding for research infrastructure and not for the research itself, and that Dalhousie provides access to IOF support to all eligible CFI projects, there is an expectation by Dalhousie that the researcher apply for and secure other external funds to support research operating costs of the CFI project as well as additional operating and maintenance costs associated with the CFI research infrastructure.

3. O & M Response Fund

Dalhousie recognizes that exceptional O & M challenges may arise from time to time. Dalhousie has established, therefore, an O & M Response Fund to respond to these O & M difficulties. The O & M Response Fund will:

- be available to all CFI projects. CFI projects eligible for IOF will have committed or exhausted its IOF allocation and have no other means to support the O & M expense;
- give priority to “emergency” O & M issues, e.g., equipment breakage. Other external funds should be sought to address ongoing O & M costs;
- support expenses that are IOF eligible;
- give priority to projects in the active five-year phase.

Operating Procedures

Infrastructure Operating Fund (IOF)

- Eligible CFI projects will be contacted in May of each year to prepare five-year O & M budgets in the active project phase;
- All allocated IOF spending must be completed within six years from the opening of the IOF account by Dalhousie’s Financial Services;
- Eligible CFI projects will have three years to activate IOF accounts. If projects do not access the IOF in this time period, it will be assumed that the project is not in need of IOF support and the IOF funds originally designated for the project will be reallocated;
- Unspent IOF funds in IOF project accounts at the end of six years will be returned to Dalhousie for reallocation.

Dalhousie and/or the hospital(s) intend to claim and recover facilities charges or a portion thereof incurred as a result of space renovations/construction.

Multi-institutional Projects

For projects involving other partners, IOF funds will be allocated in proportion to the CFI contribution attributed to each participating institution. This allocation and IOF spending timeframe will be stated as part of the Inter-Institutional Agreement with the participating institution as required by CFI.

For Dalhousie-led multi-institutional projects, IOF funds not used by partners will be offered for use to the Dalhousie Project Leader. If the Dalhousie Project does not require all of the

unclaimed IOF, Dalhousie will reallocate.

O & M Response Fund

- All CFI projects will be eligible to apply to the O & M Response Fund;
- applications to the O & M Response Fund may be made in the Fall and/or Spring of each year;
- researchers will submit applications to the Dean and/or hospital VPR who will prioritize the Faculty's and/or hospital's applications and submit them to the Dalhousie Vice-President Research office;
- the Dalhousie Vice-President Research office will form a small committee to review and approve applications.

Dalhousie reserves the right to allocate funds to CFI projects according to the highest priority/merit.

For all CFI projects, and in particular, large-scale projects funded under CFI's Leading Edge Fund/New Initiatives Fund program, Dalhousie will discuss long-term O & M costs and resources with the Project Leader at the application stage so that an appropriate O & M strategy is initiated at the beginning of the research project to ensure its long-term viability.

When necessary, the Vice-President Research, Dalhousie, will provide the final decision on all IOF matters at Dalhousie.