



# INNOVATION SUPERCLUSTERS

APPLICANT GUIDE: PHASE II  
FULL APPLICATION

INNOVATION  
FOR A **Better** CANADA

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## 1. Introduction

The Applicant Guide was developed to assist in putting together an application for funding for the Innovation Superclusters Initiative (ISI). This document includes instructions for preparing a Full Application and provides guidance on the information to be included.

The goal of the ISI is to drive growth and prosperity by generating new and improved employment opportunities, increasing skills and specialized knowledge in the Canadian workforce and growing globally competitive Canadian-based firms and technologies. Applicants to the ISI are expected to demonstrate in their applications how their Entity will build a supercluster advantage that will create high-quality, resilient jobs for Canadians, reinforce Canada's highly innovative industries (e.g., advanced manufacturing, agri-food, clean technology, digital economy, health/biosciences, clean resources, infrastructure and transportation), enable the growth of innovative firms, and support the development of strong brands that attract investors and mandates. Funding allocated by the ISI is expected to grow and enhance internationally competitive ecosystems in areas of strength, resulting in global leaders. This leadership will be achieved by increasing private sector investments in R&D and fostering collaboration between private sector organizations, post-secondary institutions, and innovation intermediaries, to build on the clusters' strengths and address existing gaps. Applicants are required to explain how their efforts will enhance the competitiveness and productivity of Canadian firms and create positive commercial outcomes (e.g., job creation, value chain integration, increased exports) that will drive economic growth.

To be considered for ISI funding, applications must be complete and provide all the required information, as stated in this guide. The onus is on the Applicant to provide proof of financial commitment from private sector participants to satisfy the matching requirement for program funding.

Applicants are advised to read the [Program Guide](#) in conjunction with this Applicant Guide to obtain more information on the Innovation Superclusters Initiative, including program objectives, selection criteria and the application and assessment process. Applicants with additional questions are encouraged to visit Frequently Asked Questions and invited to contact Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada at [info.isi@canada.ca](mailto:info.isi@canada.ca).

## 2. Submission details and deadline

Application for funding under the Innovation Superclusters Initiative is based on a two-phase process that includes a Letter of Intent (LOI) and a Full Application (invitation only). This guide focuses on Phase II: Full Application.

Applicants who have been invited to submit a Full Application must provide a complete application consisting of one electronic version of the ISI Application Form together with a written proposal and required appendices. See Appendix A for instructions on completing the ISI Application Form.

Written proposals must be filled out using the provided template and must not exceed 27 500 words, approximately 55 pages (8 ½ x 11 paper, single-spaced, with 12 point font), excluding appendices.

When submitting a Full Application, include your Application Reference Number on the ISI Application Form. The reference number can be found in the Acknowledgement- Receipt of Application email

received following the submission of a Letter of Intent in Phase I or in your invitation to submit a Full Application.

All **Full Applications** must be submitted online through the ISED website. **Email, mail, in-person and facsimile (fax) submissions will not be accepted.** Applications must be received by the deadline posted on the ISI website (click here to apply). Applicants are encouraged to submit their Full Application in advance of the specified date to ensure that applications are successfully transmitted and received prior to the deadline. Late submissions will not be retained for consideration. **Only proposals put forward by Applicants who have received an invitation to submit Full Applications will be accepted.**

Details on how to submit the application and the required attachments are available in Appendix A *Instructions for Completing the Innovation Superclusters Initiative Application Form*

### 3. Applicants

An eligible Applicant is an industry-led consortium representing large, small and medium-sized firms, post-secondary and research institutions, not-for profit organizations, non-federal Crown corporations, etc.) In each phase of the application process, the industry-led consortium must include a minimum number of large firms, small and medium-sized enterprises, and a post-secondary institution. Participants in the industry-led consortium must be incorporated in Canada and active in Canada (see [section 4.1.2 The Applicant of the Program Guide](#) for details on Applicants).

#### 3.1 Lead Applicant

For the purposes of submitting an application to the ISI, the industry-led consortium must be represented by a **Lead Applicant**. The Lead Applicant must be identified in the mandatory field on the ISI Application Form. The Lead Applicant will be responsible for submitting the application and will be the main point of contact for Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) during the application and assessment process. The Lead Applicant can be the not-for-profit Entity proposed to carry out the Supercluster Strategy, a large, small or medium-sized firm, or another organization (e.g., not-for-profit) taking a leading role in the application process, excluding municipal, provincial or federal governments, post-secondary institutions, and individuals.

#### 3.2 Partner Applicants

Partner Applicants are committed participants in the applicant consortium and proposed members of the Supercluster Entity. Private sector Partner Applicants must commit to providing industry matching funds or in-kind contributions as part of the Full Application, and must set out this commitment in a signed letter. Partner Applicants must be identified in the mandatory fields on the ISI Application Form. Any organization incorporated in Canada and active in Canada is eligible to be a Partner Applicant (with the exception of individuals).

#### 3.3 Minimum requirements for Applicants

For a proposal to be eligible at the Full Application phase, Lead and Partner Applicants must include, at a minimum, ten (10) private sector enterprises, including at least two (2) large firms (500 employees or more), one (1) medium firm (100-499 employees), four (4) small firms (1-99 employees), one (1) other

small or medium-sized enterprise (1-499 employees), and two (2) other private sector enterprises, as well as one (1) post-secondary institution.

**The minimum required number of Lead and Partner Applicants must be identified on the ISI Application Form, along with employment numbers to demonstrate whether participating firms are small, medium or large.** Lead and Partner Applicants from the private sector, along with other participants from industry committing cash and/or in-kind contributions, must provide Letters of Commitment to demonstrate that they have reached the industry matching threshold for eligibility purposes. Financial or in-kind contributions obtained from sources other than the private sector are encouraged but will not count toward the industry match requirement. Post-secondary institutions involved as Partner Applicants must also provide a Letter of Support explaining their role within the Entity, involvement in its activities, and, if applicable, any financial or in-kind contributions.

## 4. Application Process

Applicants are required to fill out all mandatory sections of the ISI Application Form. The form provides buttons that allow Applicants to attach their completed Full Application proposal template and required supporting documents. Applicants must include the unique Application Reference Number that they received during the Letter of Intent phase. Upon submitting the form Applicants will receive a PDF confirmation of submission as well an email confirming receipt of the application which include a new Application reference for the Full Application phase.

## 5. Eligibility Requirements for the Full Application

1. Eligible Applicants are those who participated in phase one of the application process and have been invited by the Minister of ISED to participate in phase two.
2. Full Application is received no later than the specified due date.
3. The Lead Applicant is a Canadian private sector enterprise, or not-for-profit organization carrying on activities in Canada.
4. The Partner Applicants are Canadian private sector enterprises, post-secondary institutions, or not-for-profit organizations carrying on activities in Canada.
5. At least ten (10) private sector enterprises, including a minimum of two (2) large firms (500 employees or more), one (1) medium firm (100-499 employees), four (4) small firms (1-99 employees), one (1) other SME (1-499 employees) and two (2) other private sector enterprises incorporated pursuant to the laws of Canada and carrying on business in Canada, are among the Lead Applicant and Partner Applicants.
6. At least one (1) post-secondary Institution (accredited Canadian universities, colleges, polytechnics, or affiliated research institutes) is among the Partner Applicants.
7. Alignment of proposal with ISI program objectives.
8. Evidence, provided through signed Letters of Commitment, that private sector funds have been committed to achieve, at a minimum, the mandatory 1:1 match for federal funding required under the program. Funds can include a combination of cash and in-kind (up to a maximum of 25% of industry cost-match) contributions.\*

9. A minimum of ten (10) Letters of Commitment from private sector enterprises making up the Lead and Partner Applicants that are signed by a senior executive with signing authority for the contribution (“C-level executive”), and provided on official letterhead. The ten (10) letters provided must include at least:
  - Two (2) large firms (500 or more employees)
  - One (1) medium firm (100-499 employees)
  - Four (4) small firms (1-99 employees)
  - One (1) other small or medium-sized enterprise (1-499 employees)
  - Two (2) other private sector enterprises
10. A minimum of one (1) Letter of Support from a post-secondary institution, among the Lead or Partner Applicants, signed by a senior executive with signing authority for the contribution .

***\*Please note: Financial or in-kind contributions obtained from post-secondary institutions, other levels of government, or any other organization that is not from the private sector are encouraged, but will not count toward the industry match requirement.***

## 6. Application Requirements for the Full Application

### 6.1 Contents

All applications must include the following elements:

1. ISI Application Form
2. Written proposal that contains the following sections:
  - a. Executive Summary
  - b. Impact and strategic importance
    - i. Vision and mission for supercluster
    - ii. Economic and industrial benefits
  - c. Capabilities and Assets
    - i. Innovation ecosystem potential
    - ii. Collaboration and Engagement
  - d. Implementation and Governance
    - i. Implementation plan
    - ii. Organization model and capacity
3. Appendices\*
  - a. Organizational charts (no template)
  - b. Resumes and biographies (no template)
  - c. Participants List (must use template)
  - d. Letters of Commitment and Letter(s) of Support from the Lead Applicant, Partner Applicants and all other organizations contributing funding (no template)
  - e. ISI Financial Workbook for Lead Applicant (must use template)
  - f. ISI Financial Workbook for Project Funders (must use template)
  - g. Financial statements (no template)
  - h. Detailed Project Listing (must use template)

***\* Please note that only the appendices noted above will be considered during the assessment of proposals. Additional attachments included as part of the full application will not be reviewed. ISED reserves the right to seek additional information that is required from Applicants for the assessment of proposals.***

## 6.2 Templates

A Microsoft Word template is provided for the Full Application written proposal, and Microsoft Excel templates are provided for some of the required appendices. The available templates must be used and submitted in the format provided (e.g., using the same columns or headings, not saved as another file format). All templates to be used by Applicants are accessible from the [Application Toolkit](#).

## 6.3 Formatting

- **Document Type:** All applications, including the ISI Application Form, must be typed.
- **Font:** Must be easy to read (12-point minimum). Smaller type may be used in figures and tables but must be clearly legible.
- **Line Spacing:** Single
- **Margins:** One (1) inch top, bottom, left and right.
- **Word Count Limit:** The word count limit specified under each section cannot be exceeded. The total word count limit for the Full Application is 27 500 words or approximately fifty-five (55) pages, single-sided print, excluding requested Appendices. **PLEASE NOTE: Any section that exceeds the specified word count will only be read up to the maximum number of allocated words; additional content will not be reviewed.** Word count limit includes tables, graphs, and figures.
- **Tables, Graphs, Figures and Images:** Must be of a size that is easily readable or viewable and may be landscape orientation.
- **Page Numbering:** all pages must be numbered sequentially
- **Paper Size:** Letter (8 ½ inches by 11 inches)
- **Application Language:** Official language (English or French) of choice. Applications will not be accepted in any other languages.

## 7. Written Proposal for the Full Application

Written proposals for the Full Application **must be completed by providing information that corresponds to each of the sections listed below, beginning with “Applicant must”**. Relevant information to be considered and assessed must be included in each of the appropriate sections of the application template (e.g., information pertaining to *B1.1 Cluster description and strategic need* must be presented in the corresponding section B1.1. of the Full Application Written Proposal Template).

The Full Application Written Proposal Template containing the required information must be submitted as an attachment to the ISI Application Form. The Template is available from the [Application Toolkit](#).

## SECTION A) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### **Applicants must:**

Include an executive summary that:

- Provides details on the Entity's proposed vision, including rationale for the supercluster and an overview of key aspects of the proposal, including, among others, cluster focus, geographic location, core technologies, sectors of activity and main elements of the Supercluster Strategy.
- Provides an overview of the proposal's projected benefits for the cluster and relevant sectors, as well as its overall economic impact for Canada.

**(Maximum 500 words, approximately 1 page)**

## SECTION B) IMPACT AND STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE

Applicants to the Innovation Superclusters Initiative must explain the importance of the ISI contribution for their cluster and make the case for how the funding can generate transformative results and lead to the growth of a world-leading supercluster. Applicants are required to set out a strategy, which builds upon and accelerates innovation in Canada, to expand a competitive advantage for their cluster and achieve strong commercial outcomes and real economic impact (e.g., job creation). The strategy must set out the themes and related activities that will be undertaken to result in growth and the development of globally competitive, export-oriented innovation ecosystems, by addressing the gaps and enhancing strengths that exist in regional innovation ecosystems.

Entities are not required to pursue projects across all five themes set out in the Program Guide (see [section 2.2.2 What activities are eligible? of the Program Guide for details](#)). Applicants should propose the appropriate mix of activities that align to the five themes of activity eligible for co-investment that they wish to pursue and that best reflect the needs and objectives of the cluster. However, at a minimum, Entities must demonstrate how their strategy includes technology leadership activities (research, development, demonstration and commercialization) for the development of one or more platform technologies that will create beneficial outcomes for firms and for the cluster itself. Entities will be expected to demonstrate sustained activity and investment in technology leadership activities throughout their operation.

### **B1. Vision and Mission for Supercluster**

#### ***B1.1. Cluster description and strategic need***

This section focuses on the case for investment in a particular innovation ecosystem, describes its strategic importance, and sets out the needs and ambition of the cluster.

### **Applicants must:**

- Describe the cluster by providing a clear overview of its:
  - geographical delimitation
  - key sectors

- technology assets
  - innovation ecosystem (i.e., types of active organizations)
  - research infrastructure
  - talent and skills
  - trade linkages and export orientation
  - access to capital (e.g., VC, growth equity)
  - international branding
  - importance for the region
- Explain the focus of the cluster (i.e., what creates alignment between organizations, such as common technology expertise, mutual sectoral priorities, shared outcomes, etc.).
  - Explain the attributes that make the cluster unique within Canada and describe area(s) of specific expertise that allow(s) the cluster to compete internationally.
  - Discuss the importance of the cluster and explain why the investment is required at this moment in time (e.g., particular urgencies or opportunities that can be leveraged).
  - Provide an overview of key strengths\* within the regional innovation ecosystem that can be leveraged to advance the supercluster strategy, as well as key gaps that the strategy will address. Overview must contain a description of the sectors of strength for which industrial challenges will be addressed.  
***\*(Please note, an in-depth description of cluster strengths and capabilities is to be provided under section C1.)***
  - Present the vision for the development of the cluster and explain how it is projected to grow and become a globally competitive innovation supercluster, drawing comparisons with two leading competing clusters located abroad.
  - Explain how the Entity's vision for the development of the supercluster is aligned with the objectives of the ISI (see [section 1.1 of the Program Guide](#) for details on objectives).

***(Maximum 2500 words, approximately 5 pages)***

## ***B1.2. Supercluster Strategy***

This section sets out the applicants' unique, high-ambition strategy to build a world-leading cluster, and explains in concrete terms how the federal and industry matching funds will be used to achieve targeted objectives.

### **Applicants must:**

Describe the proposed Supercluster Strategy, explaining how the Entity and its members will leverage the investment provided by the ISI, industry matching funds and all other participant contributions to enhance the cluster's strengths, address existing gaps and fulfill program objectives, including building a shared advantage, addressing industrial challenges, and delivering new products and processes to create market leaders and stimulate economic growth. In describing the Supercluster Strategy, applicants must:

- Outline the key objectives the Entity is setting out to achieve within the duration of the program. The objectives must be concrete means of achieving the vision and mission for the supercluster, as well as fulfilling program objectives.
- Identify the **themes** of activity (i.e., technology leadership, partnerships for scale, diverse and skilled talent pools, access to innovation, and global advantage) and **associated specific activities** (e.g., prototype development, supply chain development or integration, investment attraction to cluster region, workforce development program; see [section 2.2.1 What activities are eligible? of the Program Guide](#) for additional examples) that are being pursued through the Supercluster Strategy, addressing how each selected theme and related activities will contribute to the development of the cluster, address the gaps and challenges within the ecosystem, strengthen key sectors, and enable the Entity to achieve its key objectives.
- Provide detailed examples of sample projects\* that will be undertaken/implemented during the lifecycle of the ISI under each of the selected activity themes pursued by the Entity, using the **Template 5: Detailed Project Listing**. Applicants are not required to provide an exhaustive list of all projects to be undertaken during the lifecycle of the ISI as it is expected that Entity will conduct calls for projects or other mechanisms to solicit projects aligned to its strategy that respond to industry needs and to the ongoing developments of the cluster. **Applicants are encouraged to provide a thorough list of projects, up to a MAXIMUM of twenty (20) sample projects, but must provide, at a MINIMUM, reference to two (2) technology leadership projects and one (1) project under each of the other themes that are pursued by the Entity.** Include a detailed description of each project, the challenges and/or needs that are addressed, expected results and benefits, as well as participants involved and their roles.

***\*If the application is retained, these activities will be included in the Contribution Agreement with the Entity and are to be carried out within the duration of the ISI.***

- Discuss how the Strategy will result in incremental activities and benefits within the cluster. Explain whether the Strategy is linked to recent or ongoing projects undertaken by participating organizations (or taking place within the cluster); if so, set out how the Strategy will enhance those efforts as well as support activities that are new to the cluster. Note that the strongest proposals will clearly demonstrate how the Strategy and its funded activities will be incremental to existing and expected activity in the cluster and from its member firms.
- Explain how the Strategy will lead to the development of a cluster that is recognized as a global leader in the proposed area of focus.
- Describe how the Strategy is poised to provide Canadians with the job knowledge and skills that will be essential for the sustained growth of the cluster. Description should include emphasis on making technological and industrial topics and opportunities accessible to a wide variety of audiences, including women and underrepresented groups, and positioning more Canadians to succeed in highly innovative industries.
- Explain the proposed approach to making the Supercluster Strategy relevant to, and reflective of, Canada's diversity. Applicants should include a description of specific projects and approaches that will help to increase gender diversity and the participation of under-

represented groups in the participating industries, and that promote awareness and abilities related to cutting-edge technologies.

- Discuss if the Entity has any plans to pursue its activities beyond the duration of the program and identify any related long-term targets and objectives.

***(Maximum 3000 words, approximately 6 pages, excluding required Template 5: Detailed Project Listing)***

## **B2. Economic Growth and Industrial Benefits**

The ISI seeks to create world-leading innovation superclusters by supporting clusters that have a strong potential to accelerate economic growth, create high-quality, resilient jobs, and enhance the competitiveness of highly innovative industries such as advanced manufacturing, agri-food, clean technology, digital technology, health/biosciences, clean resources, infrastructure and transportation. By fostering collaboration between private sector enterprises, post-secondary institutions, and innovation intermediaries to create a stronger innovation ecosystem, and by accelerating the development of platform technologies that can help solve industrial challenges and improve the productivity and competitiveness of firms, the ISI aims to stimulate domestic and international business opportunities for Canadian firms and help companies grow. The result will be new, high-quality jobs, improved skills for the existing workforce, and lasting growth across sectors.

### ***B2.1. Benefits for the Canadian economy***

This section focuses on the benefits that the proposal will have on the cluster region's economy, as well as on the Canadian economy as a whole, taking into account job creation and improvement, GDP, and impact on key sectors.

#### **Applicants must:**

- Describe the cluster's current annual contribution to the Canadian economy, including:
  - direct and indirect GDP contribution
  - total employment (direct and indirect), employment composition by occupational categories, and wage estimates.

In calculating the current economic impact, Applicants must also provide a breakdown of numbers and information by:

- cluster region versus the rest of Canada
- key participating sectors (both within the cluster region and for the rest of Canada)

*Applicants can use tables and figures, as appropriate.*

- Describe how the development of a supercluster advantage, as set out within the scope of the proposal, will result in economic benefits for Canada and for Canadians. Applicants must show the scope of the anticipated economic benefits by calculating and explaining the projected economic impact generated by the Entity's activities, including projections of the effect it will have on the cluster's:
  - Incremental contribution to GDP over the next five (5) and ten (10) years

- Incremental impact on job creation and retention over the next five (5) years and ten (10) years.

In calculating the **incremental** economic impact, Applicants must also provide a breakdown of numbers and information by:

- cluster region vs the rest of Canada
- key participating sectors (both within the cluster region and for the rest of Canada)

*Applicants can use tables and figures, as appropriate.*

- Describe the **types of jobs** being created and retained as a result of the proposed Strategy (both direct and indirect), explaining how these are linked to the cluster's efforts and incremental to expected growth for the region and sectors of focus. Demonstrate how the jobs being created include durable, high-value jobs and provide indications on **wage levels** for highly skilled professionals and other relevant positions.
- Explain the **assumptions** used in the **projections**, and provide references as required, and explain the **methodology** used to determine GDP and job projections. Assumptions and methodology will be evaluated to assess the validity of the estimated impact.

**(Maximum 2500 words, approximately 5 pages)**

## ***B2.2. Ability to enhance competitiveness and productivity***

This section focuses on the proposal's ability to increase the competitiveness and productivity of firms in the cluster and in key sectors of economic strength through the pursuit of technology leadership projects and other types of relevant activities.

### **Applicants must:**

Demonstrate how the proposed activities, including technology leadership projects, will create a competitive advantage and make Canada a global leader by:

- Describing two (2) key competitiveness and two (2) core productivity challenges for key sectors and firms that will be addressed through the Strategy.
  - For each of these four challenges, explain how new or improved technologies and processes developed through technology leadership activities can address the issues identified and increase the competitiveness and productivity of participating firms within sectors of interest, including both technology developers/solutions providers AND adopters. Describe how proposed technology advancements will result in better performing, faster, more efficient, more sustainable and/or higher quality production methods or processes.
  - As applicable, explain how other types of activities that will be undertaken (e.g., specialized certifications and development of workforce skills) will have a positive impact on the productivity and competitiveness of participating firms. Explain how the workforce will be developed to improve skills and specialize in the usage or development of new technologies or products.

- Illustrating how the expected impact on competitiveness and productivity will contribute to the evolution of the cluster and lead to transformations in key sectors, and discuss the expected magnitude of this impact.

***(Maximum 2000 words, approximately 4 pages)***

### ***B2.3. Business opportunities for participants***

This section focuses on global market needs and on business opportunities that will be created for cluster firms and participants through the execution of the Supercluster Strategy.

#### **Applicants must:**

- Estimate the value of the domestic and international market opportunities linked to the cluster's activities and technological advancements and provide the methodology and assumptions used to quantify these.
- Explain how the proposal will stimulate the production of high-value-added outputs and demonstrate which new commercial applications will be developed to respond to identified market opportunities.
- Discuss the anticipated domestic and international business opportunities that will be created for participating Canadian SMEs and large firms, including new streams of revenues and increased export potential, while highlighting key markets for exports. Describe opportunities for both technology developers/solution providers AND adopters.
- Discuss how the proposal will create tangible opportunities for Canadian firms, including SMEs, to participate in value chains. Proposals should highlight potential value chain integration opportunities among the participants themselves, as well as between participants and external firms.
- Describe how the Strategy will create a thriving business environment for companies and entrepreneurs that attracts investment, provides increased access to capital, increases linkages and opportunities for collaboration within the cluster, attracts and retains talent, and stimulates the creation of new companies.

***(Maximum 2500 words, approximately 5 pages)***

## **SECTION C) CAPABILITIES AND ASSETS**

### **C1. Innovation Ecosystem Potential**

This section focuses on demonstrating the involvement of highly innovative sectors of economic strength and strategic importance to Canada in the cluster, and demonstrating that the regional innovation ecosystem has the capacity, technology capabilities, know-how and assets to achieve the objectives of the proposed Supercluster Strategy.

**Applicants must:**

- Provide a detailed description highlighting the capabilities of the cluster, including technology expertise and sector strengths that will be the foundation of the Strategy. Description should highlight the expertise, research capabilities, commercial achievements, notable innovations and intellectual property developed by each of the following: SMEs, large firms, post-secondary institutions, and innovation intermediaries or other key players that are part of the cluster.
- Describe any other assets, attributes and areas of strength that make the cluster unique, distinguish it from clusters elsewhere in the world and in Canada, and position it for global recognition and leadership (e.g., qualified talent, diverse and skilled workforce).
- Explain the relevance between highlighted capabilities and assets and the cluster's focus, including links to platform technology(s) of interest, sector(s) of strength and ecosystem gaps and/or strengths.
- Discuss the presence of venture capital firms, incubators, accelerators as well as other innovation intermediaries.
- Briefly describe the patent landscape in core areas of interest for the cluster. Provide an overview of key patents held by participants that are relevant to the Supercluster Strategy.

*Applicants are encouraged to reference citations, publications, research chairs, awards, key products and other relevant industrial, commercial and research accomplishments that demonstrate Canadian expertise.*

***(Maximum 2500 words, approximately 5 pages)***

## **C2. Collaboration and Engagement**

### ***C2.1. Approach to fostering a collaborative environment***

This section focuses on demonstrating the Entity's approach to bolstering collaborations between private, as well as academic and public sector organizations, in order to foster a collaborative cluster environment that spurs and accelerates innovation.

**Applicants must:**

- Outline how the Entity will continually encourage large-scale collaboration of innovation ecosystem players located within the cluster region, as well as foster joint efforts between organizations to undertake new collaborative projects. The approach should give consideration to how the Entity will ensure new types of collaborations, including among organizations of all sizes and across key sectors of economic strength for the cluster.
- Outline how the Entity will develop a strong innovation network linking organizations located in other parts of Canada.

*Applicants should include reference to activities that will be undertaken as part of its Supercluster Strategy, as well as project selection mechanisms in the development of this section.*

***(Maximum 500 words, approximately 1 page)***

## *C2.2. Letters of Commitment and Letters of Support*

This section focuses on demonstrating commitment, through cash and in-kind contributions, from private, public and academic participants within the cluster region, as well as elsewhere in Canada, to the proposed supercluster and its activities.

### **Applicants must:**

- Demonstrate the active involvement (through cash and/or in-kind contributions) and provide a one page (maximum) Letter of Commitment for a **minimum of ten (10) private sector enterprises listed among the Lead and Partner Applicants, including:**
  - At least two (2) large firms (500 or more employees)
  - At least one (1) medium firm (100-499 employees)
  - At least four (4) small firms (1-99 employees)
  - At least one (1) other SME (1-499 employees)
  - At least two (2) other private sector enterprises
- Demonstrate the active involvement and provide a one page (maximum) Letter of Support for a **minimum of one (1) post-secondary institution** listed among the Partner Applicants.

**ALL** stakeholder organizations that will make funding or in-kind contributions to the Entity in the context of the ISI must provide a Letter of Commitment or Letter of Support, depending on the nature of the organization (private sector or other), on official letterhead clearly stating type and value of anticipated contribution. To be considered **eligible**, the **Applicant's Full Application must contain a minimum of ten (10) Letters of Commitment and one (1) Letter of Support from the organizations listed above**. For more details on these letters, please see section 8.1 of the current guide.

***(No word count for written proposal—must provide Letters of Commitment and Letter(s) of Support)***

## *C2.3. List of participants*

This section focuses on demonstrating interest from a critical mass of participants in the proposed supercluster, as well as outlining how they will meaningfully participate and contribute to supercluster activities and how they expect to benefit from the supercluster.

### **Applicants must:**

Demonstrate a critical mass of participating organizations by providing a list of all organizations expected to play a key role in the Entity and its activities. The required Participants List must include all:

- Lead and Partner Applicants
- organizations that will be contributing cash and/or in-kind contributions; and
- organizations interested in participating as members and non-members in the Entity.

Participating organizations include, but are not limited to, startups and SMEs, large firms, post-secondary institutions, innovation intermediaries, and relevant non-profit organizations, located in the cluster region or elsewhere in Canada (see [section 2.1 Who this Initiative is Intended for of the Program Guide](#) for details on who can participate). Confirmed cash and in-kind contributions, as set out in the Letters of Commitment and Support, must be indicated for all organizations on the Participant's List, as applicable, including, at a minimum, for the Lead Applicant and Partner Applicants. Details on the proposed role the organization will have within the Entity and the reason for their participation, including anticipated benefits, must also be indicated.

Applicants must use the Full Participants List Template (available from the [Application Toolkit](#)) in their submission. The list must be organized by the type of organization (e.g., private sector, post-secondary institution, not-for-profit, government, other), and include the following details:

- Name of organization
- Organization type
- Size of organization
- Ownership structure
- Sector of activity
- Line of business and/or focus of activities
- Business Number
- Employee Count in Canada
- Address of participant/participating location
- Contact information for organization (should align with signing authority on Letter of Commitment or Letter of Support, if provided).
- Value of cash commitment
- Value of in-kind contribution
- Nature of in-kind contribution
- Role within the Entity (to demonstrate meaningful contributions)
- Anticipated benefits and reasons for participating

***Please note: Information provided by Applicants may be verified by ISED for accuracy and used as part of the assessment of applications.***

***(No word count for written proposal—must provide Template 2: Participants List)***

## **SECTION D) IMPLEMENTATION AND GOVERNANCE**

Applicants to the ISI are required to describe their plan and approach to execute their Supercluster Strategy and carry out proposed activities and anticipated projects. They must also provide details on the budget required to execute their vision as well as on the financial commitments secured from participating and supporting organizations. Applicants need to explain the efforts involved in establishing the Entity and launching its activities as well as provide details on how the Entity will function as an organization, including how it will govern itself and provide support to its members.

### **D1. Implementation Plan**

Contributions provided through the ISI are normally expected to be in the order of **\$125-\$250 million over 5 years**, per funded Entity. Federal contribution must be **matched by industry** at a **minimum ratio of 1:1**, although applicants are encouraged to secure cash and in-kind contributions above the minimum mandatory cost-matching. Entities are expected to leverage **cash and in-kind contributions** from private sector firms to meet this requirement. In-kind contributions can count towards the required match but **may not exceed 25%** of the Entity's total reported industry cost-matching contributions.

Through their implementation plans, Applicants will need to explain how Entity-supported projects and activities—including any call exercises—will encourage Canada-based firms of various sizes, post-secondary institutions, and not-for-profit organizations to partner, how **diversity, including gender, and**

**increased participation and success of underrepresented groups will** be taken into account in the selection and implementation of projects, and how selection processes will ensure that benefits of these projects will extend beyond a single private sector firm or a small set of participants to the broader Entity membership and cluster. The implementation plans must demonstrate, in practical terms, how funds from federal and private sector partners will be used to execute the vision set out in an application and build a supercluster advantage, and should contain sufficient detail to make the Applicants' case for funding in a competitive field. This plan will be the basis for negotiation of contribution agreements with successful Applicants.

### ***D1.1. Financial commitment***

This section focuses on demonstrating financial scale of the applicant's intended investment and ability to meet the industry matching requirement with private sector cash and in-kind contributions.

#### **Applicants must:**

- Provide a breakdown of financial commitments and in-kind contributions from private sector participants as well as from other organizations and sources providing support (e.g., post-secondary institutions, provincial governments, etc.) by **completing *Table 3: Proposal Financing by Fiscal Year of the Financial Workbook for Lead Applicant template***. Stated contributions must represent incremental (i.e., not existing or previously committed) funding that is specifically linked to the execution of the Supercluster Strategy. In-kind contributions must be calculated at fair market value.
- Provide proof of funding through **Letters of Commitment** and **Letters of Support** as indicated above in section C2. Each stakeholder organization committing funds or in-kind contribution **must include a one page (maximum) Letter of Commitment or Letter of Support**, depending on the nature of the organization (private sector or other), on official letterhead stating the nature and value of the contribution, as applicable. For more details on the requirements and content to be provided the Letters of Commitment and Support please see section 8.1 of this guide.
- If applicable, indicate if any support for the proposed activities (or Entity receiving funds) has been secured in principle from other levels of government by **completing *Table 4: Contributions From Other Levels of Government of the Financial Workbook Lead Applicant template***. Indicate the conditions and/or program under which these funds will be made available. Applicants must provide the name and contact information of an official within government who can act as a reference concerning allocated support to the Entity. **Applicants are required to disclose any assistance received through provincial or federal programs that will be used to support the Entity and its activities.**

***(No word count for written proposal—must provide *Template 3: Financial Workbook for Lead Applicant, as well as Letters of Commitment and Letter(s) of Support*)***

### ***D1.2 Proof of financial capacity***

This section provides the information required for program due diligence to ensure private sector firms committing to the industry matching requirement can meet their intended investment.

**Applicants must:**

- Ensure the completion and submission of the **Financial Workbook for Project Funders** for the ten (10) participants providing the largest total cash contributions toward the industry matching requirement.
- Each of these participants must complete the **Financial Workbook for Project Funders and provide three (3) years of financial statements** which include: income statements, cash flow statements and balance sheets, with notes (audited or review engagement or Chief Financial Officer certified).
  - If most recent financial statements are older than six (6) months, participants must also provide the most recent quarterly statements showing year to date results in the same format as historical financial statements.
  - If any of the firms or the financial institution will have a guarantor, the guarantor must also provide the last three years of financial statements.
- Participants should review the instructions in the ISI Financial Workbook for Project Funders for detailed instructions on the financial information required. Participants will be required to provide information on estimated cash and in-kind contributions as well as organizational financial information. In addition, participants must include a description of financial risks (e.g., credit risk – accounts receivable, exposure to major customers, inventory; interest rate exposure and protection; foreign currency exposure; hedging strategies; financing plan risks, litigation, etc.) and mitigation strategies.

***(No word count for written proposal—must use Template 4: Financial Workbook for Project Funders. Please see section 8.1 for detailed instructions on how to submit the Financial Workbook for Project Funders and Financial Statements.)***

### ***D1.3 Total budget***

This section focuses on demonstrating suitability of allocated resources to fulfill the Supercluster Strategy and outlined projects.

**Applicants must:**

Provide a multi-year budget which includes a detailed breakdown of the funding allocations over the five-year lifecycle of the program and other required details using the tables from the **Lead Applicant Financial Workbook** available from the [Application Toolkit](#). The multi-year budget must include projected expenses and sources of funding for the duration of ISI funding (ending March 31, 2022). Please note that all tables must be filled completely and accurately.

***(No word count for written proposal—must use template in Template 3: Financial Workbook for Lead Applicant.)***

### ***D1.4 Launch of Entity and activities***

This section focuses on demonstrating adequate plans have been established to launch the Entity and its activities to deliver on program objectives in a timely manner.

**Applicants must:**

- Explain the process and efforts required to formally establish the Entity and set up operations.
- Provide details on when the Entity expects to begin Supercluster Strategy activities with its members.

***(Maximum 500 words, approximately 1 page)***

***D1.5 Project timelines and milestones***

This section focuses on defining clear and realistic project timelines and milestones to deliver on the activities outlined in the Supercluster Strategy.

**Applicants must:**

Provide a timeline that captures key steps and projected milestones aligned to the main objectives that the Entity expects to achieve throughout the duration of the program.

***(Maximum 500 words, approximately 1 page)***

***D1.6 Entity sustainability and ongoing activities***

This section focuses on demonstrating how a major investment in the Applicant's Supercluster Strategy will produce benefits beyond the lifespan of the five-year program.

**Applicants must:**

Explain how the Supercluster Strategy will continue to foster the growth and competitiveness of the innovation ecosystem whether or not federal funding is available after the conclusion of any ISI Contribution Agreement (i.e., no later than early 2022).

***(Maximum 500 words, approximately 1 page)***

**D2. Organizational Model and Capacity**

***D2.1 Governance model***

This section focuses on demonstrating that a sound governance model is in place that reflects private-sector leadership, distribution of firm size and sector representation from participating organizations, as well as diversity, including gender balance.

**Applicants must:**

- Describe the proposed governance model, including organizational and management structure, Board of Directors and key committees that will be established.
- Include an **organizational chart** (as an appendix) highlighting the members of the Board of Directors, key committees and planned positions for each of these committees. Chart must include the following details for the Board of Directors: name, title, name of home organization and position and percentage of salaried time to be devoted to the organization. A template for the organizational chart is not provided for this appendix.
- Include a **second organizational chart** (as an appendix) highlighting the key management and senior executive positions that the Entity expects to fill. At a minimum, the chart must include a

Chief Executive Officer, Chief Technology Officer and Chief Financial Officer. A template for the organizational chart is not provided for this appendix.

- Present which factors have been, or would be, taken into account in selecting candidates for a Board of Directors and explain how **diversity, including gender, has been taken into consideration in the composition of the Board and the selection of candidates for leadership positions** within the Entity, including any commitments and policies that will sustain a diverse and gender-balanced organization going forward.
- Explain how the Entity will operate as an independent and neutral organization that takes into account the diversity of participating organizations.
- Provide details on how decisions will be made, conflicts of interest managed, and disputes resolved.
- Demonstrate how participants from the private sector are involved in the leadership of the organization and in setting strategies and priorities.
- Explain how governance will enable the organization to plan its activities and be responsive to emerging opportunities within the cluster, as well as the priorities of its members.

***(Maximum 1000 words, approximately 2 pages, excluding organizational charts)***

## ***D2.2. Oversight and management capabilities***

This section sets out sound and appropriate leadership and management for the Entity to ensure program success.

### **Applicants must:**

- Provide a short biography and a resume (CV) for each of the proposed members of the Board of Directors. The resumes (CV) and biographies should highlight experiences and accomplishments that relate to the roles and responsibilities to be undertaken.
- Include a description of the roles and responsibilities that will be assumed by each of the proposed members of the Board of Directors.
- Outline the roles of key management positions for the Entity, including for the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Technology Officer and Chief Financial Officer, aligned to the organizational chart provided, and the type of employment of each position (e.g., full-time vs. part-time). At a minimum, outline a search strategy for filling the key management positions identified for the Entity, highlighting the types of candidates, qualifications and experience required to fill these positions.

***(Maximum 1000 words, approximately 2 pages total for roles and responsibilities of all members as well as search strategy in Full Application Proposal Document. As an appendix please also provide the following: Biographies—maximum of 250 words, approximately half (½) a page, per member. Resumes—maximum of 1000 words, approximately two (2) pages, per member.)***

## ***D2.3. Track record of participating firms***

This section focuses on the participants' track record for collaboration and the delivery of innovative solutions.

**Applicants must:**

Demonstrate how the experience of key participating firms and past collaborations align with the Entity's focus, and how this experience will contribute to the Entity's ability to achieve the objectives and expected results described in the proposal, including developing and/or adopting innovation, workforce development, and creation of high-quality, resilient jobs.

***(Maximum 500 words, approximately 1 page)***

***D2.4. Funding decisions and project selection***

This section focuses on alignment of project selection and funding decision mechanisms that will encourage large-scale collaboration and advance the priorities of a critical mass of member firms to meet program objectives.

**Applicants must:**

- Explain the process by which the Entity will make funding decisions and select the projects or initiatives that it will support with ISI and participant contributions, to advance the activities proposed in the Supercluster Strategy. This process must include project selection and funding decisions for, but not limited to, research, development, demonstration and commercialization projects, and demonstrate how project selection criteria will encourage diversity among Ultimate Recipients.
- Explain the mechanism by which members can bring project ideas forward to the Entity for consideration and discuss how these will be assessed. Describe how Entity is positioned to respond to new opportunities and priorities that emerge within the cluster.
- Discuss how the funding decisions and project selection process align with program objectives, takes into account the development of the broader cluster, ensures that the benefits of projects do not accrue to a single firm, and encourages project participants that reflect Canada's diversity and increase the participation of underrepresented groups in the industries of focus.

***(Maximum 1000 words, approximately 2 pages)***

***D2.5. Management of program funds***

This section focuses on the Entity's approach and ability to manage revenue and finances according to program requirements.

**Applicants must:**

- Describe the Entity's approach, financial systems and controls that will be used to ensure the sound management of program funds and participant contributions.
- Describe how the Entity will secure cash contributions from funding organizations and ensure that in-kind contributions are provided at fair market value.
- Explain how industry funds will either flow through the Entity or be allocated directly to projects by committed funders, and provide the rationale for the chosen approach.
- Explain how the Entity will assure ISED that program funds and private-sector cash contributions being used to satisfy the industry matching requirement are expended on incremental and eligible activities.

***(Maximum 1000 words, approximately 2 pages)***

## ***D2.6. Membership model***

This section focuses on outlining a membership model that is open, provides opportunities for relevant organizations of various types and scales to participate, and fosters collaboration between organizations.

### **Applicants must:**

- Describe the membership model that will be used by the Entity, including how organizations can become members and partake in projects.
- Provide details on the rights and privileges of, and any programs or services that will be delivered to, both member organizations and non-member organizations that interact with the Entity.
- Explain how new members will be recruited over the life of the initiative.
- Explain how the model encourages collaboration between participants and highlight any collaboration requirements that are related to supported activities.
- If proposing a paid membership model, describe the payment structure, benefits, and limits associated with the model.

**(Maximum 1000 words, approximately 2 pages)**

## ***D2.7. Results measurement and reporting***

Entities are expected to collect data to measure and report on their performance. Entities will be asked to submit annual reports and semi-annual updates (or more frequently, if required), tracking project outcomes as they relate to the firms involved, relevant sectors, as well as to the cluster itself. They will be expected to generate adequate metrics to demonstrate the results and to work with ISED to support the Department in reporting on program results. Data requirements include, but are not limited to:

- Participation (e.g., numbers and types of organizations; geographic location; sector of activity)
- project information (e.g., type of project; allocated funding and sources of funds; participating organizations; participants by profession; challenges addressed; outcomes)
- technology outcomes (e.g., number of products, processes or services developed or enhanced; number of commercialized products, processes or services; number of patents)
- business outcomes (e.g., employment growth; exports; creation of spin-offs or joint ventures; new clients/customers acquired)
- economic outcomes (e.g., GDP growth; job retention and creation, R&D expenditures)
- diversity outcomes (e.g., inclusion of under-represented groups within senior leadership, participation of under-represented groups across the cluster)

Additional data requirements will be based on the themes under which the Entity will conduct its activities. Additional details on results and key performance indicators can be found in Appendix C of this guide.

### ***D2.7.1 Results measurement and reporting strategy***

This section focuses on implementing mechanisms for data collection and a strategy for reporting that is suitable for supporting ISED report on program results and responding to the Entity's stakeholders.

**Applicants must:**

- Explain the mechanisms through which the Entity will monitor, measure and report on its performance. Specify key performance indicators.
- Describe how data will be collected from participants to report on results, as per the reporting requirements of the ISI outlined above, and based on the Entity's objectives.
- Explain how the Entity will work with ISED to capture metrics that extend beyond the supported projects to capture and assess the growth of the cluster, sectors of focus and participating organizations.

***(Maximum 1000 words, approximately 2 pages)***

***D2.8 Management of intellectual property***

Applicants are required to describe the proposed intellectual property strategy. This strategy must facilitate and incentivize increased technical collaboration, stimulate the member's participation and ongoing commitment to the Entity, and accrue lasting economic benefits to Canada (please refer to [section 5.8 Intellectual Property of the Program Guide](#)). While Applicants are invited to propose a Strategy and determine usage rights as that they deem appropriate, the approach to managing IP must be justified in light of program objectives and the economic benefit for Canada. The strategy must provide a clear view of how IP is treated by participating organizations and related industries.

In order to meet the above requirements, Applicants are strongly encouraged to address the following elements of the Intellectual Property strategy, if applicable:

- Ownership of IP
- Royalties
- Differentiated rights and responsibilities of members
- Management of Entity-supported IP (including anticipated costs)
- Acquisition of outside IP and licensing of Entity-generated IP
- Participation of SMEs
- How generated IP leads to direct commercialization and economic benefits for Canada
- Background IP
- Barriers to patentability
- Confidentiality
- Project selection
- IP support for members (expertise and mentorship)
- Management of IP litigation
- Ownership and management of IP when a member withdraws from the Entity
- Any outstanding issues where Entity will be required to make decisions

***D2.8.1. Access to IP and mentorship***

This section focuses on demonstrating the Entity has an IP strategy that will result in frictionless access to IP, support the development, acquisition, management and defence of IP, and incentivize member commitment to the Entity.

**Applicants must:**

Describe the strategy that will be implemented to ensure proper management of the intellectual property that is created as a result of funded projects. Description should:

- Explain how the IP strategy will ensure all Entity-supported intellectual property, in whole or in part, is either owned or licensed in a manner that maximizes accessibility to all Members.
- Outline any plan to differentiate access to IP based on who contributed to its generation, membership or other considerations.
- Describe who owns Entity-supported intellectual property and how it is licensed.
- Describe how members are provided with access to independent expertise and mentorship for the development, acquisition, management, and defence of IP.
- Provide details on what happens to the IP at the close of the agreement between the Entity and its members.
- Explain if the Entity has any plans to acquire or license external IP.

***(Maximum 1000 words, approximately 2 pages)***

***D2.8.2. Benefits of intellectual property strategy***

This section focuses on demonstrating that the Entity's IP strategy will maximize benefits for Canada and spur innovation.

**Applicants must:**

- Explain how the IP strategy will further program objectives, deliver benefits to members and help them achieve their goals, as well as generate economic benefits for Canada.
- Explain which parties receive the royalties of IP generated through funded projects and, if applicable, how these royalties will be managed, in whole or in part, by the Entity.
- Provide details on how the IP strategy increases the return on investment for participating SMEs and large firms and how the strategy incentivizes members' ongoing commitment to the Entity.

***PLEASE NOTE: Entities are not obligated to cover IP litigation fees.***

***(Maximum 1000 words, approximately 2 pages)***

***D2.9 Gender balance and diversity plan***

This section focuses on demonstrating action and support to help more women and underrepresented groups succeed in skilled jobs in highly innovative industries, and to help grow Canada's middle class.

**Applicants must:**

Describe the Entity's gender balance and diversity plan, which includes:

- How gender and diversity has been or will be taken into account in the composition of a balanced Board of Directors, and how the Entity will endeavour to increase representation of women and underrepresented groups concerning both employment and leadership in the Entity.
- Description of activities that will be undertaken by the Entity to ensure that women and underrepresented groups are meaningfully represented in and benefit from the supercluster investments.

- Plans to address gender and diversity considerations in the broader cluster, promote diversity and gender balance in the cluster's workforce, and position women and underrepresented groups to succeed in skilled jobs and highly innovative industries.

*(Maximum 500 words, approximately 1 page)*

## **D2.10 Risk assessment and mitigation**

This section focuses on the primary risks to the Supercluster Strategy and on the Applicants' proposed mitigation strategies.

### **Applicants must:**

Describe the three main risks that could have an impact on the Entity's ability to carry out its activities and achieve its desired objectives, as well as the approaches that will be used by the Entity to mitigate each of these risks.

*(Maximum 1000 words, approximately 2 pages)*

## **8. Appendices for the Full Application**

Appendices must be attached, along with the Full Application proposal template, to the ISI Application Form so that they are submitted simultaneously. If the appendices exceed the size limit in the ISI Application Form (100MB), Applicants can use the Innovation Superclusters Initiative Extra Attachments Form available from the [Application Toolkit](#).

The following appendices must be provided as part of the Full Application:

- Organizational charts (no template)
- Resumes and biographies (no template)
- Participants List (must use template)
- Letters of Commitment and Letter(s) of Support from the Lead Applicant, Partner Applicants and all other organizations contributing funding (no template)
- ISI Financial Workbook for Lead Applicant (must use template)
- ISI Financial Workbook for Project Funders (must use template)
- Financial Statements for Project Funders (no template)
- Detailed Project Listing (must use template)

All available templates are accessible from the [Application Toolkit](#). When available, the template must be used. Only the appendices noted above will be considered during the assessment of proposals. Additional attachments included as part of the full application will not be reviewed.

### **8.1. Financial Workbook for Project Funders and Financial Statements**

Each Lead Applicant will receive ten (10) Financial Attachments Forms which can be provided to project funding participants. The ten (10) participants providing the largest total cash contributions toward the industry matching requirement should use this form to attach and submit the Financial Workbook for Project Funders as well as the required financial statements.

Each Financial Attachment Form will be pre-populated with the name of the lead applicant, lead applicant business number as well as a unique reference number to be used specially by project funders. Each funder should provide their organization name as well as a contact email in the fillable section of the Financial Attachment Form. Once attachments are added and the form is submitted directly to the Innovation Superclusters Initiative, an email will be sent to the contact confirming submission.

**The onus is on the Lead Applicant to ensure that the all information required from project funders is submitted in advance of the full application deadline.**

## 8.2 Letters of Commitment and Letters of Support

**ALL stakeholder organizations committing funds or in-kind contributions must include a one page (maximum) Letter of Commitment** (for private sector enterprises) or a **Letter of Support** (for post-secondary, not-for profits or all other non-private sector organizations) on official letterhead as part of the Full Application. **A minimum of ten (10) Letters of Commitment and one (1) Letter of Support** from stakeholder organizations among the Lead and Partner Applicants must be submitted, as follows:

- A minimum of ten (10) private sector enterprises (Letters of Commitment), including:
  - At least two large firm (500 employees or more)
  - At least (1) medium firm (100-499 employees)
  - At least four (4) small firms (1-99 employees)
  - At least one (1) other small or medium-sized enterprise (1-499 employees)
  - At least two (2) other private sector enterprises
- A minimum of one (1) post-secondary institution (Letter of Support)

Proposals that do not provide the required Letters of Commitment and Letter(s) of Support will **not be eligible for funding**.

**Letters of Commitment** from private sector enterprises must provide details on committed cash and/or in-kind contributions for the full duration of the Innovation Superclusters Initiative, until March 31, 2022, and demonstrate the industry-led consortium has secured industry contributions to match the ISI funding request (see [section 2.4 Industry Matching Requirements of the Program Guide](#) for details).

**Letter(s) of Support** from post-secondary institution(s) and other organizations **not** from the private sector must explain their role within the Entity, involvement in its activities, and, if applicable, any financial or in-kind contributions.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to secure Partner Applicants or committed participants with Letters of Commitment beyond the minimum requirements outlined above (see *section 5 Eligibility Requirements for the Full Application*) in order to achieve, or preferably exceed, the scale and the level of industry funding required to match ISI contributions. The demonstration of a strong financial commitment will be taken into account during the assessment of proposals.

Letters of Commitment and Letters of Support must adhere to the following requirements:

- **Length:** Maximum of one page; additional content will not be considered.
- **Format:** Letters can be submitted as PDF or Microsoft Word documents only.
- **Contents:**
  - One paragraph on the value of committed cash contributions and/or the fair market value and nature of in-kind contributions that the organization will make over the funding cycle of the Innovation Superclusters Initiative.

- One paragraph that confirms that contributions are for incremental activities that stem from the Entity's Supercluster Strategy.
  - One paragraph which states how the organization will participate in projects and leverage or benefit from its involvement.
- **Language:** Written in one of Canada's official languages (English or French).
- **Endorsement:** Signed by a senior executive (e.g., C-level executive) with signing authority for the contribution (for private sector or non-for profit organizations), or by a senior representative (other types of organizations such as post-secondary institutions).
- **Presentation:** Provided on official letterhead.
- **Date:** Letters cannot be dated earlier than the launch of the Innovation Superclusters Initiative's application process.
- **Submission:** The letters must be attached to the online ISI Application Form and each letter should not exceed one page.

## Appendix A – Instructions for Completing the Innovation Superclusters Initiative Application Form

### **Step 1 – Applicant and Contact Information**

Reminder: you must have received a formal invitation from the Minister of ISED following the Letter of Intent Process to be eligible to submit a Full Application.

When submitting the ISI Application Form for the Full Application process, you must insert the **Application Reference Number** that you received by email (in the *Acknowledgement – Receipt of Application Email*) from your Letter of Intent submission. This email was sent to the email addresses listed in questions 7 and 8 of your Letter of Intent ISI Application Form. This information is critical to linking your Letter of Intent to your Full Application.

Use the Add Organization button to add entries in this question. Form expands to accommodate new entries. If you wish to remove an entry, click the “–” in the margin on the left of the entry.

### **Step 2 – Proposal Information**

**Q1.** Enter the primary location (and secondary location, if applicable) of the activities to be undertaken as part of the proposal.

**Q2.** Assign the proposal a title. If the proposal is approved and funded, this title will be used to refer to the agreement in all communications with the agreement holder and in public communications about the project.

**Q3.** To be eligible, each proposal must include a focus on technology leadership activities (see the [Program Guide](#) for more information on the activities). Provide a short description of the technology focus(es) here.

**Q4.** Please check off the sectors that will benefit directly from the activities in the proposal. If you do not see one or more sectors you wish to indicate, please check “Other manufacturing”, “Other primary and related industries”, or “Other services”, and insert the sectors in the space beside “Please indicate:”.

**Q5.** You are required to attach a Full Application proposal document (as described in this guide). You are also required to submit the appendices set out in the Guide appropriate to the process to which you are applying. You must attach all of these appendices through this application form by using the “Click to Add Attachments” buttons in this form. All required appendices must be submitted and completed in order for an application to be reviewed.

**Q6.** Insert the amount of funding requested from the Innovation Superclusters Initiative. Reminder: requests are normally expected to range from \$125 million - \$250 million over five years (average of \$25 million - \$50 million per year from the ISI).

On the next line, insert the amount of funding that will be invested by the private sector (industry). Reminder: to be eligible, applications must present at least the minimum amount of matching dollars from industry as required by the program.

On the next line, insert the funding to be received from all sources other than the ISI, and industry matching funding.

The form will populate the Total Project Costs line.

**Q7.** The ISI funding expires on March 31, 2022. The project end date should be March 31, 2022.

**Q8.** Identify all activity themes included in your Supercluster Strategy and proposed to be undertaken by the Entity.

**Q9.** Include a summary of your proposal, which could be used for public release. In your summary, include the proposal title, location, technology focus(es) and key sectors, as well as reference to the key objectives, highlights of the proposed Supercluster Strategy, and expected outcomes.

### **Submitting your Application**

The ISI seeks to bring players together from multiple sectors and technology areas to build diverse and robust superclusters, and to do so at significant scale. To support these objectives, the ISI seeks the Applicant's consent to share the: *Applicant Name, Contact Name for the Applicant, Contact information, technology focus(es) of the application, sector focus(es) of the application and proposal location* with other Applicants where this sharing of information may support the formation of larger scale, more competitive applications and facilitate the connection of potential project partners. Providing or withholding your consent will not affect the eligibility of your application.

The ISI Application Form will only submit successfully once the questions are completed and the attachments have been inserted.

## **Appendix B – Assessment Criteria**

### **Impact and Strategic Importance**

#### **Vision and mission for supercluster**

- The vision and mission and for the supercluster aligns with ISI objectives and addresses industrial challenges in sectors of economic strength.
- The Supercluster Strategy and related activities respond to the needs of the supercluster and to industrial challenges.

#### **Economic growth and industrial benefits**

- The anticipated economic growth and industrial benefits of the proposal for Canada include increased productivity and competitiveness of firms in the cluster and key sectors of economic strength, the creation of domestic and international business opportunities for participants, and a positive impact on GDP and job growth.

### **Capabilities and Assets Aligned to Proposal**

#### **Innovation ecosystem potential**

- The innovation ecosystem must have the capacity, technology capabilities, know-how and assets to achieve the objectives of the Superclusters Strategy. The proposals provide evidence of potentially highly innovative sectors of strength and strategic importance to Canada in the cluster.

#### **Collaboration and Engagement**

- Leveraging of key private, public and academic assets within the cluster region, as well as elsewhere in Canada, at a large scale.

### **Implementation and Governance**

#### **Implementation Plan**

- Level of financial commitment, suitability of budget allocation, and definition of clear and realistic project timelines and milestones, to deliver on the Supercluster Strategy.

#### **Organization Model and Capacity**

- Demonstration of a sound governance model that reflects private-sector leadership and takes into account diversity of participating organizations; management capabilities of executives and track record of participating firms; alignment of Intellectual Property management model, project selection mechanism, membership model and data collection and reporting mechanisms with program objectives; and adequacy of financial management approach.

## Appendix C – Results Measurement and Reporting

Organizations participating in the Innovation Superclusters Initiative are expected to deliver on program objectives and achieve outcomes that will provide benefits to Canada and to Canadians as well as to the participants themselves throughout and beyond the duration of the ISI.

The tables below contain a non-exhaustive list of sample key outcomes and indicators that ISED is expected to report on in evaluating the impact achieved by this initiative. Applicants should take this information into consideration, together with other outcomes that they are seeking to achieve, to draft their strategy on results measurement and reporting, per **section D2.7.1**.

Outcomes	Performance Indicators
<b>1. Collaboration across clusters and networks</b>	
Launch of new collaborative projects between private and academic sector organizations	Number of collaborative projects involving SMEs and academic institutions
Strengthened cluster and network participation	Number of participating organizations
<b>2. Strategic technologies are enhanced, resulting in the commercialization of innovative products, processes and services that address industrial challenges.</b>	
Increased private sector investments in technology research, development, demonstration and commercialization	Investment value committed by private sector participants to research, development, demonstration and commercialization projects initiated through the ISI
Development of new or improved products and processes	Number of products and processes developed by participants
Commercialization of products, processes and services that address industrial challenges	Number of products, processes, or services commercialized by participants
<b>3. Competitiveness, productivity and economic growth</b>	
Increased employment growth of participating SMEs	Rate of employment growth for SMEs participating in the ISI
Acceleration of Canada's economic growth	Increase in GDP contribution from participating firms
Expansion of a skilled workforce	Number of professional, science and technology-related jobs in the selected clusters
Enhanced business competitiveness of SMEs	Number of high-growth firms as a result of ISF funding, based on revenue growth
<b>4. Selected clusters are positioned as world-leading innovation ecosystems</b>	
Supported clusters are positioned as world-leading innovation ecosystems	Number of greenfield and expansion projects in funded clusters