Summary of the Evaluation of the Research in Strategic Areas - Strategic Partnership Grants for Projects (SPG-P)

SEVEN KEY FINDINGS – STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP GRANTS FOR PROJECTS

- Meet a real, important need and is a low-risk opportunity to gain knowledge and strengthen relationships for ideas that are not yet considered to be on a definite track to commercialization or policy development.
- Contribute to the production, dissemination and use of knowledge.
- Contribute to the public debate and influence public policy.
- Support the development of industry partnerships.
- Support a variety of collaborations and the development of HQP.
- Under-represented groups experience the same level success, but the perception of barriers persists.
- Are managed effectively.

Recommendation#1 - The federal government should continue to fund SPG-P. In the context where supporting innovation has been recognized as a government-wide priority, SPG-P occupy a unique niche as one of the few funding opportunities to provide substantial funding for longer-term collaborative research that, might not otherwise be undertaken because of its early-stages and high-risk nature. Strategic Partnerships is also NSERC's only opportunity supporting research aiming to contribute to public policy development.

THREE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation#2 - It is recommended that SPG-P retains the requirement for partners from public organizations to actively participate in collaborative research, but the range of potential partners should be broadened to include organizations that are well positioned to use the research results and leverage them to strengthen public policy (e.g.: Northern **Communities).** Encouraging other forms of collaboration and rethinking the tools to better document the project's contribution to the public discussion may be worthwhile.

Recommendation#3 - The Research Partnership Directorate should consider how to best document and measure the influence of identity factors on an applicant's ability to obtain funding. Although the evaluation did not reveal significant differences in the success rates of under-represented groups for which data are available, survey evidence suggest a perception that some barriers exist, particularly for women and to some extent for Francophone researchers. Also, the absence of data for Indigenous people and people with disabilities precluded an assessment of the extent to which they experienced identity-related barriers.

"(...) Production of scientific data is essential. Without research data, no decisions can be made (...) Participating in the strategic project reduced knowledge-transfer time, because this project gave me access to this knowledge without having to wait for it to be published."

SPG-P Case Study Participant, Government Partner (Member of an International Advisory Policy Group)

<mark>"We knew that this kind of</mark> research takes time, so we were not looking for something fast. We mainly wished to educate ourselves on possible ways to improve the technology. The objectives were to learn more about the technology so it could help the core business. Promote research and science in a field beneficial to our enterprise was exactly what we were trying to

SPG-P Case Study Participant, Industry

Knowledge Dissemination Connecting

Research Research results results inform responsive to public needs & debate pportunities

Research results translated to policy

research results are used by partners.

positive effects on their career development.

financial investments in R&D but not more than unsuccessful SPG projects funded through other sources. It also contributed to increase in the skills and knowledge base of the partner organizations; future business and/or R&D direction, with SPG-P results being used in decision-making about strategic business orientations; visibility in their sector was highlighted as very important to improve their competitive situation worldwide.

SPG-P functions as a two-way bridge between discovery research and collaborative research with partner organizations, and

Measuring the SPG-P impact in the field of public policy is not easy.

- The evaluation showed that the funded projects are influencing public discussions and that the knowledge they generate is being used by decision-makers.
- Collaboration between academic researchers and government organization representatives is critical to public policy impact.
- A wider range of stakeholders can also contribute to public policy development.

Moving from economic gain to policy development

"In Europe, several major car manufacturers have adopted this technology. As new technologies are being developed, social and political issues will need to be addressed."

SPG-P Case Study Participant, Funded Researcher

Borders are grey and there is an intersection

Moving from policy development to economic gain

"The Genomic selection and association mapping of Atlantic salmon populations supports stock management decisions which will also have economic implications."

SPG-P Case Study Participant, Funded Researcher

Measuring the SPG-P contribution to an economic gain for the private sector is proving challenging.

- SPG-P focuses on research that can at least potentially be used over the mid- or longterm for commercial or public good applications.
- Economic gain should be viewed more broadly than commercialization as it can encompass the use of knowledge, the enhanced organizations' R&D receptivity or capacity and can also support a company decision-making process.

