



CORPORATE PLAN  
FY2024-2025  
January 31, 2024



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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

CCA is very pleased to have received notice from the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry and the Minister of Health that our application to the inaugural Strategic Science Fund competition was successful. With five years of SSF funding commencing in FY2024-25, CCA will be able to continue to serve the Government and people of Canada as an arm's length, independent organization that provides authoritative assessments of evidence on important policy issues.

In the year ahead, the CCA will begin to operationalize a new strategic plan, build on our many recognized strengths, and continue to focus on opportunities to enhance our policies and processes. Our Corporate Plan for 2024-2025 provides an overview of the CCA's direction and expected activities, contingent upon the approval of an operational budget by the Board of Directors by March 31, 2024. It outlines commitments to complete two ongoing assessments that began in 2023 on EDI practices in postsecondary research and atypical food production technologies for Canadian food security and to initiate two new assessments referred to the CCA from the 2023 Call for Proposals led by ISED: (1) Balancing Research Security and Open Science for Dual-Use Research of Concern; (2) The State of Science and Technology and the State of Industrial Research and Development in Canada.

CCA is also committed to supporting knowledge mobilization activities for six assessments completed in 2023-24 including three referred by ISED on topics of: international science and technology partnerships; quantum technologies and gene-edited organisms for pest control (fully funded by Health Canada through the ISED contribution agreement).

Looking ahead, we are delighted that the Government of Canada is planning to launch in Spring 2024 the Call for Proposals for assessments to be undertaken by the CCA. With these new assessments, CCA will continue to build on its portfolio of 70 completed assessments in areas of science, technology and innovation, health and life sciences, and environment and energy and public safety and society, all carried out at with utmost care and objectivity to ensure that CCA assessments are a reliable and authoritative resource for Canadian policy makers.

This year also brings new leadership to the CCA. Starting January 1, 2024, the CCA Board appointed me as President & CEO (Interim), to ensure continuity of operation and a smooth leadership transition, following the departure of Eric M. Meslin who had served as President and CEO since 2016. My task is to oversee the organization's daily operations and maintain CCA's commitment to delivering impartial, evidence-based assessments to inform Canadian policymakers.

This is an important year for the CCA, having experienced transitions in governance and funding, and we look forward to realizing the many opportunities that lie ahead.

Tijs Creutzberg, PhD

President and CEO (Interim)

## 1. ABOUT THE CCA

The CCA is an independent non-profit organization established in 2005 with support from the federal Government to provide independent, authoritative, evidence-based assessments of the knowledge underlying current and future issues of public interest.

Following an initial investment of \$30 million over 10 years, the CCA has since been refunded multiple times at \$3 million per year through to FY2023/24. On December 5, 2024, CCA received notice from the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry and Minister of Health of new funding in the amount of \$17.7M over five years through the inaugural Strategic Science Fund competition. The Fiscal Year allocation for FY2024-25, as set out in the Award Letter, is **\$3,541,862**.

### Defining Attributes of the CCA

**Power to Convene Experts:** The CCA can call on Canada's (and the world's) experts in health sciences, natural sciences, engineering, arts, humanities, and social sciences to join its panels. More than 1,000 volunteers from academia, industry, and the public and non-profit sectors have joined the CCA to contribute their time and expertise, conservatively valued at over \$20M. Few organizations have the convening power to attract such expertise pro bono.

**Rigorous, Independent Process:** The CCA assessment process, shaped by 19 years of continuous improvement, is the principal reason assessment questions are referred to the CCA. This rigorous process includes high levels of scrutiny for recruitment of panel members and chairs, effective logistics and facilitation for expert panel deliberation, efficient management of external report review of all assessments, and use of leading publication, translation, and dissemination practices. All are provided by a staff of highly skilled researchers, administrators, and communications professionals. All reports are made available to the public free of charge in both of Canada's official languages. The overall assessment process is overseen by the Board of Directors, relying on the advice of a respected and authoritative Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and managed by a senior management team led by a President/CEO.

**Emphasis on Evidence:** Every CCA assessment aims to synthesize the best available knowledge on complex issues where the evidence may be challenging to understand, contradictory, or difficult to assemble. This often means identifying emerging issues, gaps in knowledge and research, Canadian strengths, and international trends and practices. It also means identifying different forms of data, information, and knowledge. CCA assessments do not advocate for policy change or make formal recommendations to Sponsors. Upon completion, assessments provide government decision-makers and other stakeholders with high-quality evidence to inform policy and practice.

## 2. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

CCA is governed by an independent Board of Directors, that operates with a *Directors-as-members* model and without corporate members. This is a new governance structure, approved by the Board in March 2023, and follows the departures of CCA's three founding corporate members - the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences (CAHS), the Royal Society of Canada (RSC), and the Canadian Academy of Engineering (CAE). Under this new model, CCA's Board of Directors is now responsible for appointing all Board members.

Along with the shift to a new governance model, the Board has committed to skills-based membership and is looking to have representation from important stakeholder groups as advised by legal council and corporate governance review.

### Governance Leadership

This past year also brought new corporate governance leadership when the Directors appointed Sue Molloy as Chair and Jay Kalra as Vice-Chair of the Board. In addition, Jay Kalra will continue as Chair of the Audit, Finance, Risk and Human Resources Committee, with Chantal Guay assuming the Chair of the Nominating and Governance Committee following her Acting Chair leadership of the Board during the governance transition period.

Throughout 2024-2025, the CCA plans on taking the following governance actions:

- Make transformational progress in recruiting a skills-based Board based on the recommendations of the external governance review and as directed by the Nominations & Governance Committee.
- Implement the Board-approved Strategic Plan.
- Make continued progress on implementing EDI strategies and initiatives.

These actions have the expected outcomes of updating processes, practices, and policies to better equip the CCA with the governance structure and capacity to meet SSF needs and position the CCA as a leading organization in corporate governance.

### 3. OPERATING PRINCIPLES

In fulfilling our mandate, the CCA's strategic intent is to identify, analyze, and interpret the best available knowledge on issues of importance to Canadians to inform decision-making. We do this by establishing and supporting independent expert panels tasked with assessing the evidence relevant to matters of significant public interest.

We will continue to employ operating principles founded upon the following:

- *People*: Our knowledge-based enterprise relies on individuals' intellectual and professional contributions. Therefore, our strategy and actions must fully support and recognize, in meaningful ways, the contributions of staff, Board and SAC members, and world-class panel experts and report reviewers.
- *Assessment Quality and Impact*: The potential impact of assessments depends jointly on the quality of the reports and our opportunity for influence. Therefore, we position ourselves and our work to achieve the highest standards of quality and the maximum potential for impact.
- *Process Excellence*: Our value proposition is founded upon our ability to deliver independent, evidence-based assessments. A transparent, consistent, and rigorous process is paramount to maintaining a reputation for being independent and unbiased. Therefore, our assessment activities – panel and engagement, research and writing, report production, publishing, dissemination, and knowledge mobilization – recognize the importance of process excellence.
- *Performance Measurement*: The CCA continues to respond to demands and the changing needs of those seeking our expertise. To maintain momentum and capture best practices, we have developed a performance measurement strategy to guide and evaluate ongoing activities and ensure the CCA has the data necessary for ongoing evaluations.

#### 4. ACHIEVING RESULTS: REPORTING ON THE WORK OF THE CCA IN FY2023-2024

The fiscal year 2023-2024 was very active for the CCA.

Eight (8) assessments were in various management stages, from in-progress to post-release mobilization.

1. Five (5) Government of Canada-referred assessments funded through the ISED Contribution Agreement were underway:

CCA completed and released three (3) ISED-referred assessments:

- Gene-edited Organisms for Pest Control (released November 8, 2023)
- Quantum Technologies (released November 30, 2023)
- International Science and Technology Partnerships (planned release by March 31, 2024)

In addition, CCA expert panels made substantial progress on two (2) assessments referred by ISED and scheduled for release in FY2024-2025:

- Evidence-Based Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Practices for Impactful Change in the Postsecondary Research Ecosystem
- Atypical Food Production Technologies for Canadian Food Security

2. CCA completed and released three (3) non-ISED referred assessments:

- Pull Incentives for High-Value Antimicrobials sponsored by PHAC (released September 7, 2023)
- Health Data Sharing sponsored by PHAC (released October 19, 2023)
- The Future of Arctic and Northern Research in Canada\* (released December 4, 2023)

*\*Sponsored by ArcticNet Inc. with a consortium of 26 co-sponsors*

In addition, CCA supported numerous briefings to key audience in and outside of federal departments. They included briefings to government departments and agencies, to non-federal stakeholders and to international audiences all with the goal of increased use and impact of evidence for policy development.

## 5. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTABILITY: PLANNED ACTIVITIES VERSUS OUTCOMES

The FY2023-2024 Corporate Plan included six ongoing goals:

1. *Improve responsiveness*: Develop and provide a line of services that responds to the needs of sponsors.
2. *Achieve potential*: Attract priority questions of the highest importance and relevance to Canada and the people in Canada.
3. *Maintain excellence*: Continue to enhance standards for scientific excellence and high-quality services.
4. *Become sustainable*: Establish a long-term funding stream by developing a compelling case for Strategic Science Fund support.
5. *Foster collaboration*: Strengthening relationships between all contributors to the science advisory ecosystem and the CCA to achieve its goals.
6. *Increase visibility*: Increase visibility and awareness of the CCA's work to further the organization's impact.

The following tables present the status of the planned activities for each of the CCA's six goals described in the FY2023-2024 Corporate Plan, progress made, and outcomes achieved to date.

### GOAL #1: IMPROVE RESPONSIVENESS

Planned Activities	Progress	Outcomes Achieved
<i>ISED-Supported Assessments</i>		
Complete three (3) ISED referred assessments	ACHIEVED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gene-edited Organisms for Pest Control (released November 8, 2023)</li> <li>• Quantum Technologies (released November 30, 2023)</li> <li>• International Science and Technology Partnerships (Planned release by March 31, 2024)</li> </ul>
Substantial progress on two (2) ISED-referred assessments	ACHIEVED	<p>Significant progress has been made on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Evidence-Based Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Practices for Impactful Change in the Post-Secondary Research Ecosystem</i></li> <li>• <i>Atypical Food Production Technologies for Canadian Food Security</i></li> </ul> <p>Both assessments are scheduled for completion in FY2024-2025.</p>
<i>Non-ISED Assessments</i>		
Complete three (3) assessments sponsored outside of the ISED agreement.	ACHIEVED	<p>Three (3) assessments were completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future of Arctic and Northern Research in Canada (ArcticNet and consortium of sponsors)</li> <li>• Pull Incentives for High-Value Antimicrobials (PHAC)</li> <li>• Health Data Sharing (PHAC)</li> </ul>



One (1) assessment was in the initiation phase by Health Canada.	NOT ACHIEVED	Anticipated the second of two assessments from Health Canada's original multi-year multi-assessment commitment to CCA.  Health Canada decided not to proceed with this assessment in FY 2023-24
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## GOAL #2: ACHIEVE POTENTIAL

Planned Activities	Progress	Outcomes Achieved
Undertake a comprehensive strategic planning exercise	ONGOING	Board on track to approve a new strategic plan by March 31 2024
Make transformational progress on implementing an enhanced corporate governance structure	ACHIEVED	As per above section on Corporate Governance, CCA has instituted a new board governance model.
Continue to expand outreach and engagement	ONGOING	In-person and virtual Networking activities, particularly meetings, briefings and social media engagement with relevant stakeholders build awareness and expand outreach for assessments.
In collaboration with ISED support the launch of the 2023 (SSF funded) annual Call for Proposals	ACHIEVED	CCA to receive referrals of successful topics selected through the Call for Proposal process.
Initiate new assessments of importance to Canada through the ISED funding agreement and with federal sponsors outside of ISED funding agreement	NOT ACHIEVED	A second assessment from Health Canada was to be referred to the CCA as part of a multi-assessment commitment but was cancelled in Q3 2023.
Prepare for an SSF submission that aligns CCA's capacity with the Government of Canada's priority needs.	ACHIEVED	CCA was successful in its application to SSF competition.

## GOAL #3: MAINTAIN EXCELLENCE

Planned Activities	Progress	Outcomes Achieved
Continue to update and revise as appropriate, assessment methodologies and lessons learned and apply to all future assessments, drawing on advice from SAC.	ACHIEVED	Updates to CCA assessment practices and policies include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updating CCA's Assessment Lifecycle Methodology to make it more adaptable to different types of assessments and current practices, such as AI.</li> <li>EDI considerations as applied to panel composition.</li> <li>Improving engagement with Indigenous participants and use of Indigenous knowledge, aided by assessment of Arctic Research, where half the panel is</li> </ul>

		Indigenous.
Continue strengthening publications and report release practices, including accessibility, translation, communication, and sustainability.	ACHIEVED	<p>The CCA continuously examines and refines communications and publication processes to ensure they effectively and efficiently support ongoing excellence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updating the CCA style guide to reflect emerging trends and best practices</li> <li>• Enhancing outreach and expert panel engagement processes in the release and mobilization of assessments</li> <li>• Diversifying and tailoring release products to better meet the needs of strategic knowledge groups</li> <li>• Successfully preparing for and executing an ambitious publishing schedule, including the release of five assessment reports in four months.</li> </ul>
Actively encourage CCA staff to focus on mental health and overall well-being.	ONGOING	<p>Management continuously monitors staff's well-being and is open about the mental health challenges that staff may face.</p> <p>CCA had identified gaps in its traditional group insurance plan for mental health coverage and addressed the gap in the renewal to ensure staff and their families have the support they need.</p>
Update and improve performance indicators accompanying measures of the quality and impact of the CCA's assessments.	ONGOING	<p>Continual progress has been made on metrics and processes for enhancing assessment methods. Internal procedures updated.</p> <p>New impact metrics have been developed and piloted.</p> <p>Google Analytics tools and a custom performance dashboard are used to track website usage, report downloads, social media engagement and reach.</p>
Focus on identified drivers of organizational engagement for EDI	ONGOING	<p>Worked with the Diversity Institute to identify opportunities to enhance EDI across CCA policies and practices.</p>

#### GOAL #4: UPDATE FUNDING MODELS

Planned Activities	Progress	Outcomes Achieved
Adapt policies to meet SSF Contribution Agreement requirements as required and align capacity to meet SSF demands	ONGOING	Draft policies in final stages of development
Operationalize CCA's new strategic plan with SSF contribution agreement as the foundation	ONGOING	Strategic Plan on track to be operational in FY2024/25.

#### GOAL #5: FOSTER COLLABORATION

Planned Activities	Progress	Outcomes Achieved
Continue to expand opportunities to support collaborative knowledge mobilization activities involving the wider science advice ecosystem concerning CCA assessments	ONGOING	Maintained connections among key organizations to increase the awareness of CCA assessments and the opportunities for knowledge mobilization.  Partnered with Science Up First on KMB activities related to misinformation.  Presented two panel sessions at annual CSPC conference.
Continue to develop opportunities for government and non-government organizations to collaborate with CCA to further goals of disseminating and using assessments.	ONGOING	Strengthened relations with key stakeholder groups, improving impact of assessments. Non-government examples include: CCLM (Canadian Conservation and Land Management), World AMR Congress, Pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance, CADTH, Quantum Days, Institut national d'excellence en santé et services sociaux, Government examples include various groups within CIHR, ECCC, AAFC, INFC, HC, and PHAC.
Continue to strengthen relationships with all contributors to the science advisory ecosystem, with a particular focus on the Office of the Chief Science Advisory	ONGOING	CCA has strengthened relationships with ongoing collaborations with organizations including ISSP and CSPC and the EU funded ExACT Project. .
Continue to develop opportunities to collaborate and partner on projects of joint interest.	ACHIEVED	CCA has collaborated on new projects including with CAE, provincial and federal privacy commissioners.
Initiate planning for the implementation of the anticipated SSF Impact Fund (support for collaborations)	NOT ACHIEVED	CCA will not be allocating SSF resources to the proposed Impact Fund.

**GOAL #6: INCREASE VISIBILITY**

Planned Activities	Progress	Outcomes Achieved
Advance CCA's overarching knowledge mobilization strategy by forming mobilization partnerships, expanding our communication and knowledge mobilization strategies suite and continuously improving our assessment practices to incorporate knowledge mobilization.	ONGOING	The CCA continued to enhance KMB processes, products, and partnerships
Communicate CCA's value through all appropriate means and social media platforms.	ONGOING	Information generated from impact monitoring will contribute to our ability to communicate the value of CCA assessments.  Assessments will generate further awareness about the CCA, leading to increased demand for CCA assessments across the federal Government and by other sponsors.
Continue to enhance the CCA's online presence and brand by deploying accessible content	ONGOING	CCA's active engagement on various social media platforms illustrates growth in this newer form of engagement, in addition to Traditional Media Mentions
Develop and implement a digital impact strategy in line with new strategic plan	ONGOING	Strategy in development to align with and support the forthcoming strategic plan.

## 6. CCA RISK IDENTIFICATION AND MITIGATION

Managing risk is an integral part of good governance. It is a consideration in everything the Board, staff and volunteers do and the reason for establishing a risk-aware culture in an organization.

Risk management does not necessarily imply risk aversion. Instead, organizations should balance opportunities and threats to achieve objectives compatible with their values and tolerance for risk. Successful risk management requires following good practices and procedures, while failures in risk management can be painful and expensive.

The CCA Board of Directors uses a risk identification and mitigation framework consistent with other not-for-profits. The framework includes four broad strategic risk categories: (i) Adaptability, (ii) Dependency, (iii) Capacity, and (iv) Credibility, subdivided into ten specific risks that are monitored over time. The Board and Management have assessed the risks and proposed mitigation strategies for FY2024-2025.

Risk identification is based on informed subjective assessments of the probability or likelihood of harm occurring, the impact or degree of harm, and the degree to which these risks can be mitigated. In general:

- A risk is identified as minimal if the harm is unlikely to occur, and were it to happen, its impact would be small and easily managed.
- A risk is identified as moderate if the harm is likely to occur, and were it to happen, its impact would be modest and require more ongoing management and continued monitoring and
- A risk is identified as high if the identified harm is very likely to occur, and were it to happen, its impact on the organization would be significant, requiring considerable ongoing management, review, assessment, and response.

The order of each *category* and *description* of each risk has been presented consistent with prior years. The individual *assessment* and *mitigation* proposals have been modified for FY2024-2025.

Category	Description of Risk, Assessment, Mitigation
<p><b>Adaptability</b></p> <p><i>Adaptability refers to the risk associated with changes in the internal and external environments.</i></p>	<p><i>1.0 Loss (including lack) of governance expertise within the Board of Directors and Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), leading to suboptimal governance for the organization.</i></p> <p><b>Assessment</b></p> <p>There is a moderate risk of lack or loss of corporate governance expertise by the Board.</p> <p>There is a moderate risk of loss of corporate memory on SAC relating to past practices, proposals, and input because vacancies have been filled, and the terms are staggered.</p> <p>There is a moderate risk of failing to anticipate and address the importance of adopting a strategy and implementing approaches to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) throughout the organization, including in the Board and SAC.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption of a skills matrix inventory for Directors and the recruitment of independent, engaged Directors to fill current &amp; future gaps on the Board.</li> <li>• Adoption of leading practices in Board governance, including updating relevant policies and procedures for not-for-profit organizations, and compliance with SSF governance criteria, including adopting relevant recommendations proposed in CCA's external governance review.</li> <li>• The NGC remains committed to ensuring that the CCA undertakes its responsibilities for monitoring progress.</li> </ul> <hr/> <p><i>2. Inability to fully respond to increased assessment requests from non-ISED sponsors.</i></p> <p><b>Assessment</b></p> <p>Based on projected workflow and cash flow requirements, there is a moderate to high risk that the CCA will not be entirely successful in securing sufficient funding to maintain operational capacity.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awarding of SSF funding to CCA beginning in FY2024-2025 may accommodate any assessment demand from federal departments, agencies, and crown corporations.</li> <li>• CCA's new strategic plan process will consider a growth-oriented strategy that leverages existing human resources capacity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Dependency</b></p> <p><i>Dependency refers to the risks associated with the reliance on other parties to meet</i></p>	<p><i>3. Decrease in the quality of assessments by an inability to attract high-quality chairs, panel members, and reviewers will lead to the defunding of the CCA.</i></p> <p><b>Assessment</b></p> <p>There is a moderate risk that expert panels cannot be convened, resulting in sub-optimal assessments. There is a moderate risk that chairs cannot be recruited, resulting in poorly run meetings. Finally, there is a moderate risk of not attracting peer reviewers, reducing the overall quality of assessment reports.</p>

<p>Strategic and operational objectives.</p>	<p>Mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to enhance engagement with broader stakeholder communities to provide input on panel chairs and members.</li> <li>• Consider providing moderate honorarium/recognition for panel members and chairs (consistent with evidence supporting enhanced equity, diversity, and inclusion).</li> <li>• Review the Board and SAC's approval and advice processes to optimize expertise and authority.</li> <li>• Implement enhanced EDI guidelines and practices as identified through external review by the Diversity Institute.</li> </ul>
	<p><i>4. Poor relationships with the community of expert panel members will lead to suboptimal engagement, loss of CCA credibility, and/or decreased access to expertise.</i></p> <p>Assessment</p> <p>There is a moderate risk that the CCA will be unable to effectively manage or maintain relationships with the expert community.</p> <p>Mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to enhance the current CCA practice of engaging with former expert panel members.</li> <li>• Continue to engage with the broad science and policy ecosystem from whom potential panel members will be identified.</li> <li>• Continue to improve the breadth and diversity of experts on SAC.</li> <li>• CCA President will continue active and visible relationships within the science-policy ecosystem in Ottawa, Canada, and internationally.</li> <li>• Continue to engage with SAC, whose members regularly interact with a broader community of experts.</li> <li>• Continue to foster productive relationships with leading academics across Canada &amp; globally as a respected resource for appointment to chair and/or sit on CCA expert panels, provide external peer review, sit on the CCA Board and SAC, and who are well-positioned to advance knowledge mobilization activities.</li> </ul>
	<p><i>5. Poor relationships with the Government of Canada will lead to a loss of trust and confidence.</i></p> <p>Assessment</p> <p>There is a moderate risk that the CCA's capacity to be responsive to government needs will be inhibited by ineffective communication strategies or other impediments to good working relationships across the Government.</p> <p>Mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCA President to continue regular external engagement with Deputy Ministers, department/agency/granting council heads, and Chief Science Advisor, and engage with the ADM and Director General identified by ISED.</li> <li>• The CCA Senior Management Team will continue interacting with their agencies and department counterparts regularly.</li> <li>• Internal reorganization to focus on larger program areas will increase the visibility of CCA for government sponsors.</li> <li>• Increase opportunities for the Board &amp; SAC to engage with the broader community of stakeholders to ensure awareness of CCA activities.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain mechanisms in place to ensure full compliance with the ISED Funding Agreement.</li> <li>• Continue to submit the Annual Report and Corporate Plan on time.</li> </ul>
	<p>6. <i>Loss of assessment process continuity will lead to material disruption in assessment activity and quality (e.g., delays and loss of corporate knowledge).</i></p> <p>Assessment</p> <p>There is a high risk that CCA staff turnover (voluntary and non-voluntary) will lead to material disruption in assessment activity and quality (e.g., delays and loss of corporate knowledge).</p> <p>Mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management is adopting a proactive policy on professional growth and development.</li> <li>• Management will enhance its recognition and retention strategy for staff.</li> <li>• Continue to update the CCA Assessment Lifecycle Methodology (CALM), the documented protocol that provides concrete guidance for the entire assessment development process.</li> <li>• Management will continue implementing an enhanced performance management model using key performance milestone set/control points for each position to recognize increased competency, capacity &amp; productivity.</li> </ul> <p>7. <i>Reduction in aptitude, skill, knowledge, and productivity due to the Hybrid working environment.</i></p> <p>Assessment</p> <p>There is a moderate risk that the CCA will not be able to attract or retain employees with the high competence and skills required to undertake assessment activities or manage corporate affairs – including maintaining an adequate breadth and depth of knowledge to support the assessment programs. Also, for CCA to succeed in the hybrid work world, it will be essential to facilitate flexibility and employee autonomy.</p> <p>Mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCA Management emphasizes staff mentoring and coaching when working in the office.</li> <li>• CCA will promote and show flexibility in its policy on professional development to enable more staff to pursue activities that enhance their professional growth and development.</li> <li>• CCA Management will develop strategies to earn staff commute to the office seeking to remove barriers, real or perceived.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Credibility</b></p> <p><i>Credibility refers to the risks associated with the reputation and relevance of the CCA.</i></p>	<p>8. <i>Reputational risk on quality and release of assessments</i></p> <p>Assessment</p> <p>There is a minimal reputational risk to CCA by permitting or allowing poor-quality assessments to be disseminated or for leaked, embargoed, or otherwise confidential assessment-related information to be publicly released—actions that result in a lowered perception of CCA's reputation as an independent objective organization with policies to protect the integrity of its processes.</p> <p>Mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to enforce the embargo policy on all CCA reports before public release.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to require panel members, chairs, and peer reviewers to comply with confidentiality and conflict of interest policy as a condition of agreeing to join a panel or review an assessment as applied to statements or presentations about reports or reviews of them.</li> <li>• Update appropriate policies and practices for sponsor briefings to accommodate changing needs.</li> <li>• Continue to enforce CCA's policy regarding report release during elections.</li> <li>• Maintain corporate communication policies and practices consistent with CCA's commitments to independence, confidentiality, and excellence.</li> </ul>
	<p><i>9. Negative perception of objectivity and intellectual independence.</i></p> <p>Assessment</p> <p>There is a moderate risk the CCA will be seen to lack objectivity and independence in its assessments, limiting the impact of CCA's assessments.</p> <p>Mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For panel members and sponsors, continue emphasizing the CCA processes and procedures that ensure objectivity and non-partisan approaches to assessing evidence.</li> <li>• Continue to utilize SAC as an objective advisory resource to the Board on assessment questions, expert panel members, and peer reviewers.</li> <li>• Ensure the report review process, involving peer reviewers and monitors, preserves the integrity and evidence-informed nature of the assessment reports.</li> </ul>
	<p><i>10. Reputational risk because of a cybersecurity breach.</i></p> <p>Assessment</p> <p>There is a moderate risk that CCA operations will be disrupted because of a security breach caused by human error.</p> <p>Mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue prioritizing data breaches and cyber risks in staff and panel training materials.</li> <li>• Maintain leading-edge software and hardware security improvements. For example, (1) CCA data storage (servers) and system back-ups are currently on-premise and will be migrated to the cloud via a high-security Next Gen Tier 3 data center. (2) CCA will introduce second-factor authentication (2FA).</li> <li>• Continue with the staff program for mandatory online cyber security training and ongoing security phishing testing with <i>Knowbe4</i> (the world's largest security awareness training and simulated phishing platform).</li> <li>• Continue with Cyber Insurance so that CCA is fully covered in a Cyberattack.</li> <li>• Continue with ongoing comprehensive end-to-end cyber security threat and risk assessment to know what new areas of weakness might be emerging and take immediate action to close any gap.</li> </ul>

### Overall Risk Profile Summary

The risk identified in # 6 is high; the most significant CCA has faced in many years warrants the greatest scrutiny and attention in the coming year.

Most other risks are assessed as moderate, and comprehensive current mitigation measures for all risks are appropriate. Continued vigilance is required to identify new risks and make changes in assessing known threats.

## 7. FORWARD PLANNING FY2024-2025

The CCA is committed to providing high-quality, evidence-based assessments on topics of importance to the Government and people of Canada. The following goals and corresponding actions for 2024/25 ensure that the CCA will uphold this commitment. Note, however, that the actions outlined for 2024/25 have been drafted prior to the finalization of both the new strategic plan and the SSF contribution agreement, both of which may result in adjustments to these actions.

### Financial Status

At the end of FY2023-2024, CCA will have drawn down \$13.5M of the \$13.5M fund, leaving a balance of \$0. The CCA FY2024-25 SSF funding of **\$3,541,862** will enable CCA to complete two ongoing ISED-referred assessments and to initiate two new ISED-referred assessments from the 2023 Call for Proposals.

### Goals, Activities and Expected Outcomes in FY2024-2025

Until the CCA adopts its new strategic plan in 2024, it will continue to work to achieve its six foundational goals:

- Improve Responsiveness
- Achieve Potential
- Maintain Excellence
- Become Sustainable
- Foster Collaboration
- Increase Visibility

The CCA recognizes the importance of evolving relevant performance and impact indicators to improve its capacity to report on how well it achieves expected outcomes. Appropriate indicators for our goals are important in performance management capacity. Below are the main activities planned for FY2024-2025 and the desired outcomes relating to the six foundational goals.

#### GOAL #1: IMPROVE RESPONSIVENESS

*Develop and provide, on a timely basis, assessments that respond to the needs of sponsors.*

*Planned Activities and Expected Outcomes (Short- and Medium-Term):*

##### ISED-Referred Assessments

- Complete two (2) assessments currently underway referred to under the ISED contribution agreement:
  - Evidence-Based Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Practices for Impactful Change in the Postsecondary Research Ecosystem
  - Atypical Food Production Technologies for Canadian Food Security
- Make substantial progress on two (2) assessments referred by ISED from the 2023 Call for Proposals:
  - Balancing Research Security and Open Science for Dual-Use Research of Concern

- The State of Science and Technology and the State of Industrial Research and Development in Canada
  - Following the Spring 2024 ISED Call for Proposals, CCA staff will commence the preparatory research phase to launch new ISED-referred SSF-funded assessments in FY2025-2026.

CCA will work towards initiating at least one more non-ISED sponsored assessment, fully funded by a non-ISED sponsor (through an amended ISED contribution agreement).

## **GOAL #2: ACHIEVE POTENTIAL**

*Continue to attract questions of high priority (importance and relevance) to Canada and people in Canada who would benefit from CCA's strengths in conducting assessments.*

### *Planned Activities:*

- Commence implementation of the strategic plan.
- Make transformational changes in Board composition based on a skills matrix to recruit new Directors.
- Continue to expand outreach and engagement with relevant stakeholders, champions and federal officials, including (as appropriate) the Office of the Chief Science Advisor, to build awareness of our work and support of science for informed policy and decision-making.
- In collaboration with ISED, support the 2024 (SSF-funded) annual Call for Proposals process launch.
- Prepare for an SSF implementation that aligns CCA's capacity with the Government of Canada's priority needs, including but not limited to:
  - Ensure that CCA has appropriate staff capacity to meet needs.
  - Identify a potential revised structure that best meets the needs.
  - Optimize mobilization and uptake of CCA assessments.

### *Expected Outcomes (Short- and Medium-Term):*

- Greater awareness of the CCA across the whole of Government.
- Expansion of demand in range, scope, and quality of questions submitted across the whole of Government.
- Updated processes, practices, and policies to better equip CCA with the governance structure and capacity to meet SSF needs and fulfill the potential of CCA to support the Canadian Government's commitment to evidence-based policymaking.
- Alignment and growth because of strategic plan implementation.
- A renewed, skill-based Independent Board will elevate corporate governance.

## **GOAL #3: MAINTAIN EXCELLENCE**

*Continually improve all assessment-related processes to ensure that the CCA meets or exceeds standards of excellence in conducting assessments.*

### *Planned Activities:*

- Continue to update and revise assessment methodologies and lessons learned as appropriate and apply them to all future work, drawing on work from a SAC review of how CCA uses evidence.

- Continue strengthening publishing and report release practices, including accessibility, translation, communication, and sustainability.
- Continue to improve performance indicators and measures of the quality and impact of the CCA's assessments.
- Continue to focus on identified drivers of organizational engagement: Growth and Development, Diversity and Inclusion, and Mental Health.
- Initiate review of CCA wide policies and process from standpoint of EDI

*Expected Outcomes (Short- and Medium-Term):*

- Feedback from sponsors, including from Sponsor Surveys run by ISED, will continue to demonstrate the value of CCA to policy development.
- Exceptionally high-quality employees will be retained and recruited.
- CCA will continue attracting leading experts to chair and participate in CCA expert panels.
- Assessment impact metrics will continue demonstrating the value of CCA to sponsors and Canada.

#### **GOAL #4: UPDATE FUNDING MODELS**

*Establish a growth strategy to become sustainable past the SSF funding period.*

*Planned Activities:*

- Prepare for an anticipated SSF-funded era with the implementation of a capacity alignment.
- Based on the solid foundation of the SSF contribution agreement, implement CCA's new strategic plan growth initiative.

*Expected Outcomes (Short-Term):*

- Work collaboratively with ISED to implement a new contribution agreement for FY2024-2025.
- Initiate a Board-approved strategic growth goal in FY2024-2025.
- Work towards initiating a non-ISED funded assessment.
- Work towards launching a national call for co-sponsored (co-funded) assessment proposals.

#### **GOAL #5: FOSTER COLLABORATION**

*Continue to foster collaboration with the wider science advice ecosystem to achieve shared goals.*

*Planned Activities:*

- Continue to strengthen relationships with all contributors to the science advisory ecosystem.
- Continue to expand opportunities to support collaborative knowledge mobilization.
- Continue to develop opportunities to collaborate and partner on projects of joint interest.
- Continue to develop opportunities for governmental and non-governmental organizations to collaborate with CCA to disseminate further and use assessments.

*Expected Outcomes (Short- and Medium-Term):*

- Strengthen relationships with the broader science advisory ecosystem to improve demand for, use and impact of CCA assessments.

## **GOAL #6: INCREASE VISIBILITY**

*Increase visibility and awareness of the CCA's work to further the organization's impact.*

*Planned Activities:*

- Advance CCA's overarching knowledge mobilization strategy by forming partnerships, expanding our suite of communication and knowledge mobilization strategies, and continuously assessing and improving our practices to incorporate innovation in knowledge mobilization.
- Communicate CCA's value through all appropriate means and social media platforms.
- Continue to enhance the CCA's online presence by deploying accessible content.
- Finalize and implement a digital impact strategy.

*Expected Outcomes (Short- and Medium-Term):*

- Communication and mobilization activities will generate further awareness of the CCA, contributing to increased demand for CCA assessments across the Federal Government and by other sponsors.
- Information generated from impact monitoring will continue to contribute to our ability to communicate the value of CCA assessments.

## 8. ASSESSMENT PUBLIC RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FY2024-2025

Working Assessment Name	Anticipated Public Release
Evidence-Based Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Practices for Impactful Change in the Postsecondary Research Ecosystem	Winter FY2024-2025
Atypical Food Production Technologies for Canadian Food Security	Winter FY2024-2025

## 9. FINANCIAL COMMENTARY

### FY2023-2024

The Board of Directors approved the Audited Financial Statements for FY2022-2023, included in the 2023 CCA *Annual Report*. This financial commentary is provided per the Contribution Agreement requirements between the CCA and ISED.

As part of its mandate, the Audit, Finance, Risk & Human Resources Committee (AFR-HRC) of the Board met regularly throughout the year to review CCA's financial position.

As of December 31, 2023, the available financial assets of the CCA are \$589K, which is the sum total of its deferred compensation account. <sup>1</sup> This amount excludes:

- \$1,328,491 in recoveries (accounts receivable) for work on the assessments for PHAC outside the ISED funding agreement
- \$1K of deferred compensation (severance liability)

At the end of the 2023 calendar year, the total financial assets of the CCA were about \$1.9M.

Change in Financial Position Financial Assets: December 31, 2023

Current Operating accounts	\$586K
Premium Business Savings accounts	\$4K
	<hr/>
	\$590K
ISED Expenditures YTD	\$2.04M
ISED Expenditures forecast Q4	\$0.79M
	<hr/>
Subtotal	\$2.83M

### Actual versus Plan

The financial projection in this Corporate Plan from the previous year (January 31, 2023) anticipated a total expenditure of \$2.8M.

### Revenue from Other Sources

By the end of FY2023-2024, CCA anticipates revenue from other sources in the range of \$1.5M to 1.7M.

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<sup>1</sup> CCA recoveries (accounts receivable) for work on assessments outside the ISED funding agreement (PHAC) will replenish the deferred compensation account. CCA's practice is to draw down on deferred compensation (severance liability) funds to cashflow assessments.

## **FY2024-2025**

CCA's planned expenditure for FY2024-2025 is forecast to be **\$3,541,862**.

During this period, the CCA will have four ISED assessments underway. As outlined below, two assessments will be released in FY2024-2025, and two will have substantially progressed.

The Board of Directors, on the recommendation of the Audit, Finance, Risk & Human Resources Committee (AFR-HRC), will be asked to approve the CCA's FY2023-2024 budget by March 31, 2024.

In FY2024-2025, the CCA will have these four ISED assessments:

1. Evidence-Based Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Practices for Impactful Change in the Postsecondary Research Ecosystem (to be released in FY2024-2025)
2. Technologies for Canadian Food Security (to be released in FY2024-2025)
3. Balancing Research Security and Open Science for Dual-Use Research of Concern (Substantial progress in FY2024-2025)
4. The State of Science and Technology and the State of Industrial Research and Development in Canada (Substantial progress in FY2024-2025)

## **Revenue from Other Sources**

At this time, the CCA expects additional contracted revenue from other sources in the range of \$700K or about 23% of additional funding in FY2024-2025.

This includes an assessment not funded through the ISED 2023 call for proposals.



## 10. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

The CCA was first funded in 2005 by the Canadian Government to provide a standing capacity to obtain independent, authoritative, and evidence-based assessments of a broad range of policy-relevant and complex issues. Since then, it has convened expert panels to assess diverse public policy questions. It has completed more than sixty assessments for the Federal Government, provincial governments, and non-governmental sponsors.

It has undertaken this work through the efforts of a professional staff, an experienced Board of Directors, an internationally respected Scientific Advisory Committee, and more than 1,200 dedicated individuals who have volunteered their time to give the Government of Canada high-quality evidence for policy development. The value of the CCA's assessments to the Government and the Canadian public is derived from the unique combination of independence, authority, credibility, and efficiency inherent in the CCA's methodology.

Nineteen years of experience confirms that the CCA provides the Government of Canada with high-quality, credible, independent, evidence-based assessments that achieve impact by informing policy in many areas of the Government's responsibility. The Government of Canada is committed to making evidence-based policy decisions by recognizing the need for assessments and selected the CCA as an SSF recipient with a five-year award of \$17,728,600.

CCA's Board of Directors, Scientific Advisory Committee, and staff look forward to continuing to work with ISED to enhance the CCA's capacity to inform policy in Canada.

## **ANNEX A: CORPORATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS**

### Requirements of the Funding Agreement for the Corporate Plan

6.1 Corporate Plan. The Recipient shall provide an annual Corporate Plan to the satisfaction of the Minister no later than two (2) months before the commencement of each Fiscal Year. Annual Corporate Plans shall be in both official languages and must be approved by the Board.

6.2 Contents of the Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan shall include:

- (a) A statement of the Recipient's objectives for the upcoming year;
- (b) A description of the proposed Activities to be undertaken in the upcoming year, along with a proposed schedule for their implementation;
- (c) The anticipated results of those Activities;
- (d) Reference to the Recipient's previous Corporate Plan, specifically its successes and remaining challenges;
- (e) The planned expenditures for the Activities in the upcoming year by source of funding;
- (f) The anticipated revenues from other sources in the upcoming year;
- (g) Annual cash flow requirements for proposed expenditures including, but not limited to, the amount requested for disbursement in the upcoming year;
- (h) Risk assessments and mitigation strategies and ongoing performance monitoring strategies;
- (i) Amounts owing to the Federal Government under legislation, under this Agreement or any other Agreement; and
- (j) Planned activities with measurable goals and outcomes for the coming Fiscal Year designed to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion.

## ANNEX B: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As of January 31, 2024

Name	Position	Location
Soheil Asgarpour, PhD, FCAE	President, Petroleum Technology Alliance Canada; Past-President, Canadian Academy of Engineering	Calgary (AB)
Pascal Grenier, ing.	Senior Vice President, Flight Services and Global Operations, CAE	Montréal (QC)
Chantal Guay, ing., P. Eng., FCAE (Chair of NGC)	Chief Executive Officer, Standards Council of Canada	Ottawa (ON)
Jawahar (Jay) Kalra, MD, FCAHS (Vice Chair & Chair of AFR-HRC)	Professor, Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine and Member, Board of Governors, University of Saskatchewan	Saskatoon (SK)
Catherine Karakatsanis, O.C., FCAE	Chief Operating Officer, Morrison Hershfield Group Inc.; President, Canadian Academy of Engineering	Toronto (ON)
Cynthia E. Milton, PhD	Associate Vice-President Research, University of Victoria; Past President of the College of New Scholars of the Royal Society of Canada	Victoria (BC)
Sue Molloy, PhD (Chair)	President, Glas Ocean Electric; Adjunct Professor, Dalhousie University	Halifax (NS)
Donna Strickland, C.C., PhD, FRSC, FCAE	Professor, Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of Waterloo; Nobel Prize in Physics in 2018.	Waterloo (ON)
Gisèle Yasmeen, PhD	Associate Vice-President, International University of Ottawa	Ottawa (ON)
Nipun Vats, PhD (Observer)	Assistant Deputy Minister, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada	Government of Canada

### Departures from Board of Directors, FY2023-2024

Name	Position	Location
Judy Illes, C.M., PhD, FRSC, FCAHS	Professor and Distinguished University Scholar, Department of Medicine, University of British Columbia	Vancouver (BC)

## ANNEX C: SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

As of January 31, 2024

Name	Position	Location
David Castle, PhD (Chair)	Past Vice-President Research, University of Victoria	Victoria (BC)
Maydianne Andrade, PhD	Professor of Biological Sciences, Canada Research Chair, Vice-Dean Faculty Affairs and Equity University of Toronto	Toronto (ON)
Peter Backx, PhD, FRSC	Canada Research Chair in Cardiovascular Biology York University, UHN	Toronto (ON)
Kyle Bobiwash	Assistant Professor and Indigenous Scholar, Department of Entomology, University of Manitoba	Winnipeg (MB)
Stephanie Chang, PhD	Professor   Co-Director, MEL Urban Systems University of British Columbia	Vancouver (BC)
Jackie Dawson, PhD	Canada Research Chair in Environment, Society and Policy and Associate Professor, Department of Geography, University of Ottawa	Ottawa (ON)
Colleen Flood, PhD, FRSC, FCAHS	Director, Centre for Health Law Policy and Ethics; Professor and Research Chair in Health Law, University of Ottawa	Ottawa (ON)
Digvir Jayas, PhD, FCAE	Vice-President (Research and International) University of Manitoba	Winnipeg (MB)
Malcolm King, FCAHS	Scientific Director, Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health, Canadian Institutes of Health Research	Saskatoon (SK)
Chris MacDonald, PhD	Associate Professor; Director, Ted Rogers Leadership Centre; Chair, Law and Business Department; Ted Rogers School of Management, Toronto Metropolitan University	Toronto (ON)
Louise Poissant	Scientific Director of Fonds de recherche du Québec – Société et culture	Montréal (QC)
Nicole A. Poirier, PhD, FCAE	President, KoanTeknico Solutions Inc.	Beaconsfield (QC)
David Wolfe, PhD	Co-Director, Innovation and Policy Lab, Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, University of Toronto	Toronto (ON)

### Departures from SAC, FY2023-2024

Name	Position	Location
Neena Chappell, PhD, FRSC, FCAHS	Professor Emeritus, Institute on Aging & Lifelong Health Department of Sociology, University of Victoria	Victoria (BC)
Jamie Snook, PhD	Executive Director, Torngat Wildlife Plants and Fisheries Secretariat,	Happy Valley, Goose Bay, (NL)