

EVALUATION OF NRC'S GRANTS FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFILIATIONS PROGRAM

●●● NRC-EVALUATION

The Grants for International Affiliations (GIA) program is a transfer payment program that maintains Canada's memberships in the International Science Council (ISC), an umbrella organization, and in 28 discipline-specific scientific unions and associations. The NRC maintains partner agreements with domestic learned societies (such as scholarly societies or academic associations) and federal agencies that support Canada's affiliations to international organizations by maintaining Canadian National Committees (CNCs). Funds are transferred to the international organizations to allow the CNCs to engage with their respective international communities of scientists and policymakers.

As of 2019, the program has been guided by a steering committee, the Canadian Committee for International Scientific Affiliations (CCISA), which is comprised of science-based federal agencies and other national stakeholders; it is co-chaired by the NRC and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).



Grants and Contributions: \$560,000/year



The NRC International Relations Office (IRO) administers the program and the NRC Secretary General holds accountability for the program

ABOUT THE EVALUATION

The evaluation of the NRC's GIA program covered the 2015-16 to 2019-20 period. It was conducted by the NRC's Office of Audit and Evaluation (OAE). It assessed the program's relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency, drawing on a mixed-methods approach including data review, document review and environment scan, and external and internal interviews.

RESULTS



Canadian leadership and influence

As of 2019, two-thirds (67%) of the supported organizations had Canadians in executive positions



Meeting Canada's international commitments

Participation in the ISC helps Canada meet its commitments to several international agreements and policies



Gender-based Analysis+

As of 2019, 88% of supported organizations or their respective CNC had programs for early career scientists and 50% had programs for women

FINDINGS

► Relevance

- The ISC is the most appropriate fit for the GIA program and the NRC, compared to other umbrella organizations for international science organizations that play a similar role
- There are opportunities to engage more with the ISC, and to support additional affiliations relevant to Canada, but the program is limited by its budget
- CCISA balances government and non-government members from both the natural and social sciences, which will allow it to articulate and promote Canada's science priorities
- The NRC continues to be the most appropriate administrator for the program given its mandate and national position in the scientific landscape

► Effectiveness

- With the support of the GIA program, Canadian scientists have led and participated in international science and technology efforts coordinated by their respective international scientific organizations
- Canadians in leadership positions influenced international science policy towards Canadian priorities
- Supported organizations and CNCs created opportunities for Canadian scientists and students, including those from groups traditionally excluded from STEM fields, to work with world leaders in their fields

► Efficiency

- The program maintains its affiliations with a static budget, but it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain these affiliations with rising inflation and increases in membership fees
- The NRC and the SSHRC need to come to an agreed upon governance model to clarify GIA roles and responsibilities
- Changes to the annual performance reporting received positive feedback, however consistency in the process will facilitate better tracking of program performance

The full evaluation report, including the management response and action plan, is available on the NRC's website: <https://nrc.canada.ca/en/corporate/planning-reporting/evaluation>

