



Digital Research Alliance of Canada



ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

Funded by the
Government
of Canada

Canada 

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About the Alliance

The Digital Research Alliance of Canada (the Alliance) is a national not-for-profit membership-based organization playing a central role in helping to advance the establishment of a researcher-focused, accountable, agile, strategic and sustainable digital research infrastructure (DRI) ecosystem for researchers in Canada.

Established in 2019, the Alliance works with DRI partners and community members across the country to fulfill its mandate to coordinate, operate and fund activities in advanced research computing (ARC), research data management (RDM) and research software (RS), and to advance the national DRI Strategy.

The Alliance's members include over 100 of Canada's top universities, colleges, research hospitals and institutes, and other leading organizations in DRI. By working closely with local, regional and national partners, the Alliance will ensure that researchers across disciplines have access to the digital tools, services and infrastructure they need to conduct cutting-edge research.

The Alliance is funded by the Government of Canada through Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED).



Vision, Mission, Values and Guiding Principles

Our Vision

To catalyze world-class Canadian research for the benefit of all.

Our Mission

As a trusted and inclusive partner, the Digital Research Alliance of Canada fosters national and global collaboration to provide researcher-centric, sustainable and integrated digital research infrastructure.

Our Values

- **Heartfelt humility**
We cultivate safe spaces through mutual recognition and respect
- **Fearless engagement**
We seek out new perspectives and celebrate alternate viewpoints
- **Unwavering honesty**
We act with integrity
- **Steadfast accountability**
We honour our commitments and outcomes
- **Authentic collaboration**
We build dynamic relationships

Guiding Principles

To ensure we meet the long-term DRI needs of Canada and to help deliver on our mission, we are guided by six principles:

- Researcher-centric
- Striving for excellence
- Collaborative
- Service-oriented
- Accountable and transparent
- Diverse and inclusive

Message from the Chief Executive Officer

I am pleased to present the Digital Research Alliance of Canada's 2023–24 Annual Report. As a member-based, nonprofit organization, the Alliance supports thousands of researchers in Canada across research fields by strategizing, integrating, championing and funding infrastructure and activities in advanced research computing, research data management and research software.

2023–24 was devoted to building a pan-Canadian ecosystem rooted in a shared vision of researcher-centric, strategic and sustainable digital research infrastructure (DRI). We achieved significant milestones and made impactful contributions to DRI services, access and functionality.

The Alliance received investments of up to \$228.3 million from Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) to advance nine new initiatives aiming to address pressing issues in the DRI ecosystem, from upgrading critical infrastructure, to transforming how sensitive research data may be securely deposited and reused, to tackling inequities so that all researchers in Canada have access to world-class DRI. We also began a funded partnership with the National Research Council Canada (NRC) to support international scientific collaboration and

advance Canada's access to leading-edge infrastructure, support, data and expertise in astrophysics.

Building on extensive research and analysis of the current state of DRI in Canada, we published national strategies for cloud services and research software that will help drive the importance of integrated DRI. Crucially, we developed a new vision for our future state that will become the foundation of our strategic plan for 2025–30. We held a coast-to-coast community roadshow to share our vision, which was built on the needs of the community and was positively received by key stakeholders across the country.

Throughout the year, we built new partnerships with peer organizations, participated in national and international events, and showed our support for the research

community through advocacy, training and engagement. Going forward, the Alliance will continue advocating for the needs of researchers so that they can focus on what matters most — leading cutting-edge research that will transform Canada and the world.

Our work would not be possible without the support of our members and the Government of Canada through ISED. We are grateful for this support and for every opportunity to advance research excellence in Canada.



GEORGE ROSS | Chief Executive Officer
Digital Research Alliance of Canada

Message from the Chair of the Board

On behalf of the Board of Directors, it is my pleasure to present the Digital Research Alliance of Canada's 2023–24 Annual Report. Throughout the past year, the Alliance has worked hard on a new vision to advance digital research infrastructure in Canada, and to provide the infrastructure, services and support researchers need to excel.

The Alliance plays a critical role in facilitating access to advanced research computing resources, enabling researchers to tackle complex problems and make groundbreaking discoveries. Through \$225 million in federal, provincial and institutional funding, the Alliance national systems will be replaced, resulting in a significant increase in computing and storage resources to meet growing researcher demand.

Through the Alliance's efforts in research data management, researchers are empowered to store, share and discover data, fostering transparency and reproducibility. Twenty-nine organizations are participating in the Controlled Access Management for Research Data (CAM) initiative, a unique partnership that will strengthen Canadian research security, foster greater research data discovery, and prevent unnecessary data loss.

As a founding member of the Research Software Alliance (ReSA) and a signatory of the Amsterdam Declaration on Funding Research Software Sustainability, the Alliance is committed to improving the research software ecosystem and the research it enables, for the benefit of all researchers in Canada.

The Alliance's dedication to supporting researchers and advancing research excellence is proven by the continued support and investment from our members, our partners, the community and our funder, the Government of Canada through ISED. I am grateful for this continued support, collaboration and dedication, and for the incredible work of the Alliance staff and senior leadership team.

I invite you to read this report and learn more about the Alliance's achievements in advancing an integrated, equitable and sustainable digital research infrastructure ecosystem—for researchers, and for everyone.



MARTHA WHITEHEAD | Chair
Board of Directors

Board of Directors

The Alliance Board of Directors is committed to driving our mission, vision, values and guiding principles, developing our strategic priorities, and overseeing compliance. Directors reflect the geographic and linguistic diversity of Canada as well as the complexity of the DRI ecosystem, and are committed to upholding the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility (EDIA) as fundamental to the Alliance.



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CHAIR



Gail C. Murphy
VICE-CHAIR



Dale Askey



Karen Barnes



Philippe Beaudoin



Connie Bonello



Donna Bourne-Tyson



Guillaume Bourque



Jennifer Doyle



Chris Lumb



David MaGee



Edward McCauley



Kelley McKinnon



Roya Rezaie



Randall Sobie



Jeffrey Taylor



Denis Thérien

Researcher Council

The Alliance Researcher Council was established in 2020 to facilitate regular consultation between Alliance Leadership and researchers across Canada, and to help guide the development of a researcher-centric DRI ecosystem. Members of the Researcher Council represent a range of cultures, languages, identities, expertise and regions, as well as academic disciplines and institutions, ensuring that the diversity of researcher voices is represented to the Alliance.



Randall Sobie
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Terry Peckham
Saskatchewan
Polytechnic



Ken Penner
St. Francis Xavier
University



**Rebecca
Pillai Riddell**
York University



Pekka Sinervo
University of Toronto



Digital Research
Infrastructure by
the Numbers



FRDR
Federated Research
Data Repository

8,626,636
FILES DOWNLOADED

227 TB
DATA DEPOSITED

461 PUBLISHED
DATASETS

11 SPECIAL
COLLECTIONS

424 REGISTERED
RESEARCHERS



lunaris

93,372
TOTAL DATASETS

17,530
MAPPED DATASETS

99 SOURCE
REPOSITORIES



borealis

20,163

**DATASETS
PUBLISHED**

71

**SUBSCRIBING
INSTITUTIONS**

Top Subject Categories

SOCIAL SCIENCES — 43%

**EARTH AND
ENVIRONMENTAL
SCIENCES — 33%**

OTHER — 7%

**MEDICINE, HEALTH, AND
LIFE SCIENCES — 5%**





17,313 REGISTERED RESEARCHERS

13,225 DMPS CREATED

125 REGISTERED ORGANIZATIONS



83,934

DOIs REGISTERED IN 2023-24

4,524,837

TOTAL DOIs REGISTERED

67 TOTAL CURRENT MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

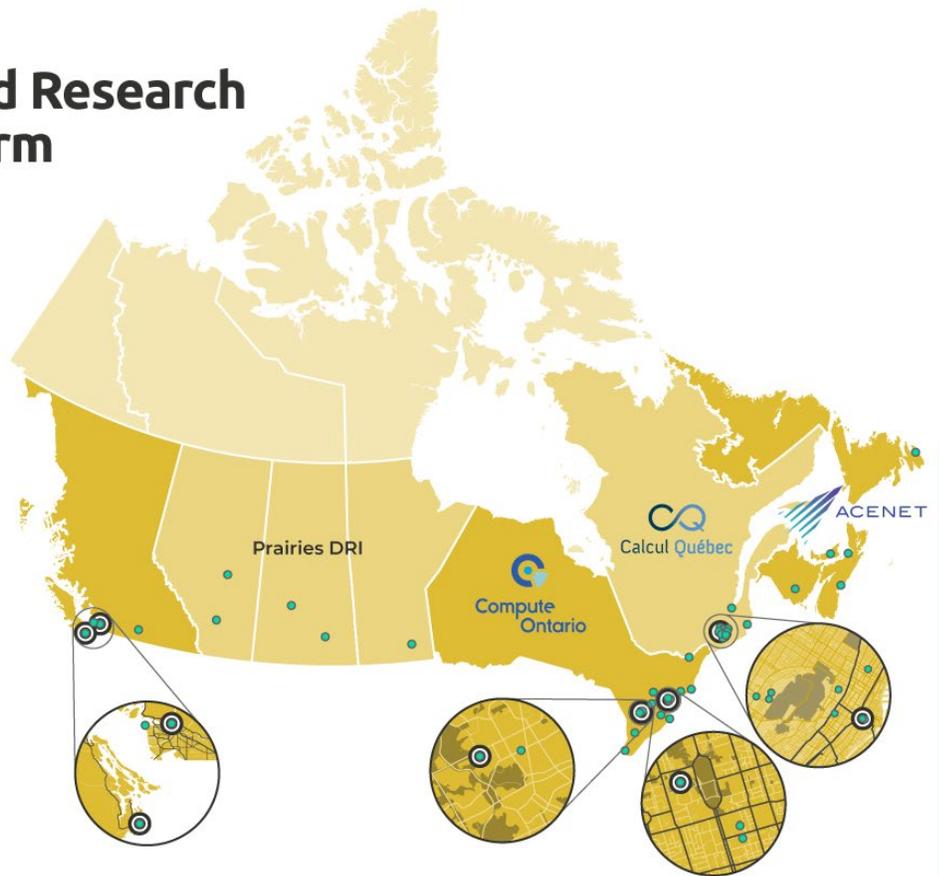
80 TOTAL CURRENT REPOSITORIES



Canada's Advanced Research Computing Platform



Digital Research Alliance of Canada



- National Host Sites
- Support Sites

National ARC Platform

ACTIVE USERS BY DISCIPLINE

Astronomy	114
Biological and life sciences	1,150
Business	117
Chemistry and biochemistry	422
Computer and information science	742
Engineering	1,048
Environmental and earth science	346
Humanities	97
Mathematics and statistics	373
Medical science	521
Physics	451
Psychology	128
Social science	256

22,372
TOTAL ACTIVE USERS

5,765
ACTIVE ACADEMIC PIs

Resource Allocation Competition

189,102

CPU CORE YEARS ALLOCATED

32,511

VIRTUAL CPU YEARS ALLOCATED

6,164

RGU YEARS ALLOCATED

159,811 TB

HPC AND CLOUD STORAGE ALLOCATED

Rapid Access Service

15,823 TB

TOTAL STORAGE ALLOCATED

National and International Engagement

FORMAL CANADIAN PARTNERS: 10

- Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute (AMII)
- Canadian Institute for Health Research (CIHR)
- Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN)
- Canadian Institute for Advanced Research (CIFAR)
- First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC)
- Mila – Quebec Artificial Intelligence Institute
- National Research Council Canada (NRC)
- Pan-Canadian Genome Library (PCGL)
- Statistics Canada
- Vector Institute

FORMAL INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS: 9

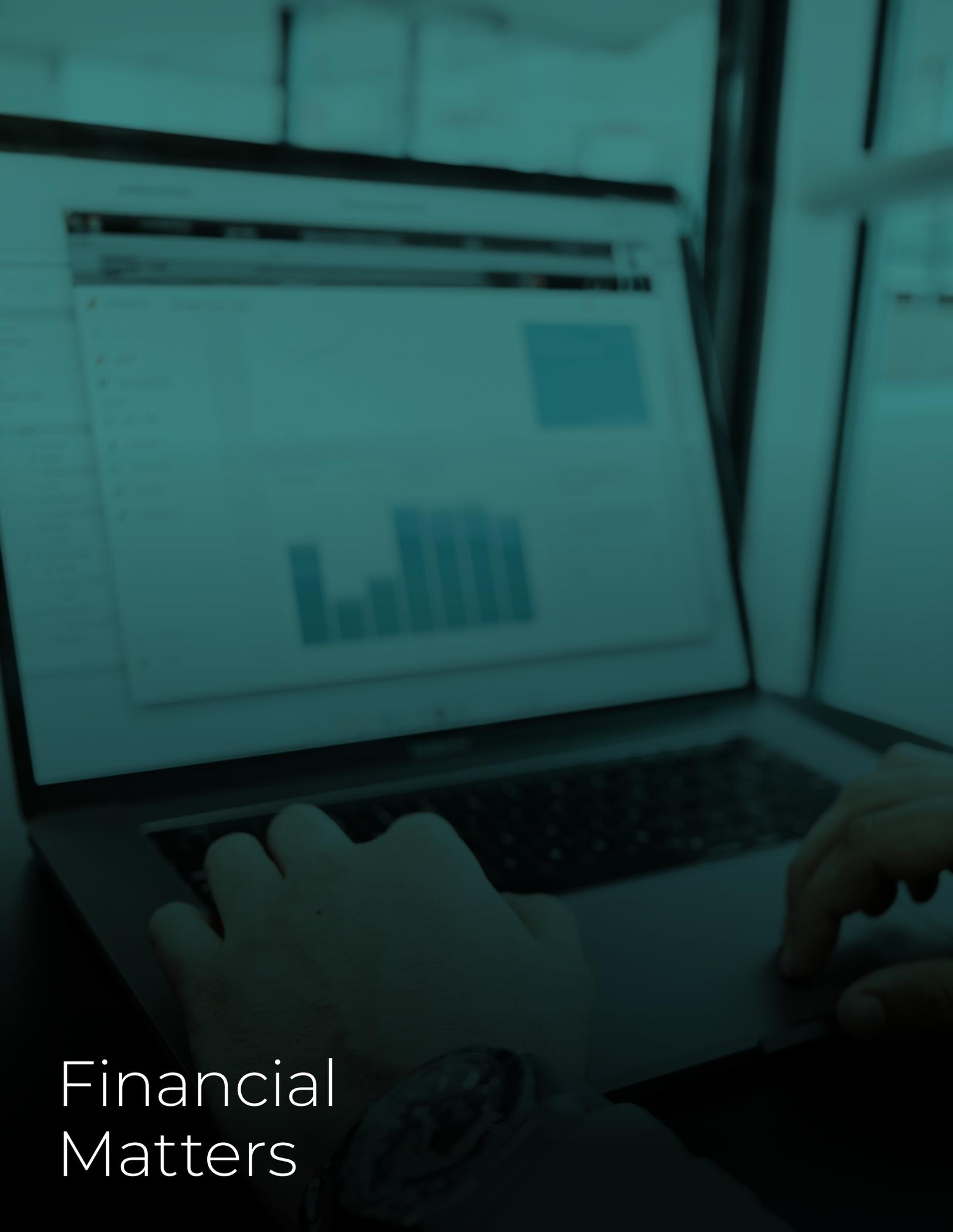
- Australian Research Data Commons (ARDC)
- CSC Finland
- European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) Association
- Hyperion/HPC User Forum
- Korea Institute for Scientific and Technical Information (KISTI)
- Research Data Alliance (RDA)
- Research Software Alliance (ReSA)
- San Diego Supercomputing Center
- World Data System – International Technology Office (WDS-ITO)

CANADIAN PARTNERS REPRESENTING INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS: 3

- DataCite Canada
- ORCID-CA
- RDA in Canada

INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES: 6

- CODATA
- DataCite
- Global Biodata Coalition (GBC)
- National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST)
- Society of Research Software Engineering (SocRSE)
- WDS International Program Office (WDS-IPO)



Financial
Matters

Audited Financial Statements

Audited financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2024, have been prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and have been approved by the Board of Directors. For the Audited Financial Statements, please refer to [Appendix C](#).



Funding Received

The Alliance follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Funding designated for the Alliance’s mandate is recorded as deferred funding when received, and recognized as revenue when the related expenses are incurred.

Through the Digital Research Infrastructure (“DRI”) contribution agreements, the Alliance received \$43,564K in funding from ISED in fiscal year 2023–24 and carried over \$1,818K from the previous fiscal

year. Of that amount, \$35,790K was spent on eligible costs and thus recognized into revenue.

Through the Dedicated Computing Capacity for Artificial Intelligence (“AI”) contribution agreement, the Alliance received \$2,309 in funding from ISED in fiscal year 2023–24 and carried over \$619K from the previous fiscal year. Of that amount, \$1,375K was spent on eligible costs and thus recognized into revenue.

[in \$K]			
REVENUE SOURCES	DEFERRED FROM 2022–23	CASH RECEIVED 2023–24	REVENUE RECOGNIZED 2023–24
ISED - Digital research infrastructure	1,818	43,564	35,790
ISED - Dedicated computing capacity for artificial intelligence	619	2,309	1,375
Membership fees	—	605	605
Interest income	—	639	639
Other revenue	—	80	80
TOTAL	2,437	47,197	38,489

Expenses

The following table presents the amount of the contribution directed towards eligible costs in the fiscal year, detailed by category of eligible activities.

[in \$K]					
ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES	DRI PROGRAM EXPENSES	AI PROGRAM EXPENSES	NATIONAL SERVICES EXPENSES	MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES	TOTAL EXPENSES
Leading and coordinating the governance of the DRI ecosystem	—	—	2,606	—	2,606
ARC/AI infrastructure acquisitions and operations	10,617	1,375	1,215	—	13,207
ARC resource allocations	—	—	648	—	648
Support for Highly Qualified Personnel	9,152	—	365	—	9,517
National data management activities	2,177	—	1,661	—	3,838
Cybersecurity	1,057	—	851	—	1,908
Management and administration	—	—	—	5,441	5,441
TOTAL	23,003	1,375	7,346	5,441	37,165

Leveraged Funding

The following table presents the amount of funding leveraged from other sources in the fiscal year to support eligible activities and eligible projects.

[in \$K and %]					
EXPENSES CATEGORIES	EXPENSES		LEVERAGED FUNDING		TOTAL
DRI program expenses	23,003	62%	14,239	38%	37,242
AI program expenses	1,375	95%	75	5%	1,450
National services expenses	7,346	100%	—	0%	7,346
Management and administration expenses	5,441	100%	—	0%	5,441
TOTAL	37,165	72%	14,314	28%	51,479





Objectives, Activities and Results

Objectives and Activities in 2023–24

The following were the Alliance’s objectives from April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024, presented by strategic theme.

ADVANCED RESEARCH COMPUTING		
Objective	Completed Activities	Pending Activities
Renewal of aging ARC/HPC infrastructure	Targeted call for proposals were completed by the national host sites and evaluated by the Alliance.	Procurement of equipment, delivery and installation.
Renewal of aging cloud infrastructure	A Supply Chain Integrity Assessment (SCIA) process was created and implemented to support the process. The process was created by the Alliance, the national host sites and the Canadian Centre for Cybersecurity (CCCS). Funding agreements were executed. The procurement process was initiated by the national host sites.	
Data centre capacity upgrade	Construction feasibility design completed. An oversight committee has been established to monitor the progress of the upgrades.	Completion of upgrades.
EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY		
Objective	Completed Activities	Pending Activities
Alliance EDIA Framework	EDIA Steering Committee has been formalized and will oversee and support EDIA initiatives and ensure alignment with the EDIA Framework consisting of a detailed list of EDIA initiatives to be advanced in the areas of partnerships, service delivery, funding and workforce environment.	

SERVICE AND FUNDING MODEL

Objective	Completed Activities	Pending Activities
New service delivery model	<p>An analysis of the current model compared to other jurisdictions was completed to inform the new service model.</p> <p>Formal funding and service agreements were established with the service partners.</p>	<p>Development of a national DRI service catalogue.</p> <p>Develop and launch awareness campaigns to increase use of national DRI services.</p>
New funding model	<p>Analysis on the limitations of the current funding model and potential new revenue sources was submitted to ISED as part of the 2025–30 mandate renewal.</p>	

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Objective	Completed Activities	Pending Activities
National and International relations	<p>The Alliance engaged and collaborated with 52 international organizations (and/or their Canadian offices) in areas such as policy, funding, governance, membership, participation and partnerships, among others. Highlights include participation in the European Open Science Cloud Symposium 2023, International Data Week and hosting the first Research Software Funders' Forum.</p> <p>Formalized collaboration with the NRC (ExCANFAR).</p>	

NATIONAL DRI

Objective	Completed Activities	Pending Activities
Cybersecurity	<p>The Training and Awareness Program has completed 7 out of 20 proposed items.</p> <p>As part of the Cyber Intelligence Platform and store for Threat Fusion, the Alliance deployed a malware information sharing platform (MISP) instance to collect threats and feeds.</p> <p>Successful penetration testing conducted on the CCDB.</p> <p>Finalized an RFP for a vulnerability management solution.</p>	<p>Complete the implementation of the enterprise vulnerability scanning solution across the national host sites.</p> <p>Analysis of a proof of concept for commercial security information and event management (SIEM) options.</p>

RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT

Objective	Completed Activities	Pending Activities
Stabilization and growth of the DMP Assistant	<p>Secured matching funding for service positions at partner institutions.</p> <p>New service positions were hired and onboarded.</p> <p>New grant-focused DMP Template developed and launched.</p> <p>Several major service upgrades completed, achieving parity with the international codebase.</p>	Complete implementation of Single Sign On for the platform.
Expansion of Lunaris	<p>New service positions were hired and onboarded.</p> <p>Developed an improved metadata harvesting process that allows users to more easily search for relevant datasets.</p> <p>Launched a new User Community Group for Lunaris to better understand the needs of the researcher and data management communities for data discovery and reuse.</p>	Implement sustainable UX design plan.
Controlled Access Management for Research Data (formerly Sensitive Data Repository Pilot)	<p>Successfully developed and launched two open calls.</p> <p>29 Partner Organizations are participating.</p> <p>Funding was awarded to three ultimate recipient organizations in support of three FTE positions to support the initiative.</p>	

RESEARCH SOFTWARE

Objective	Completed Activities	Pending Activities
Research Software	<p>The RS Strategy was developed by the Alliance in collaboration with the community via the Alliance RS Strategy Working Group.</p> <p>As part of the RS Strategy, the Alliance launched a survey on RS during the summer.</p> <p>The strategy was published on November 28, 2023.</p>	



SELF-DETERMINATION AND DATA SOVEREIGNTY FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Objective	Completed Activities	Pending Activities
Engagement with Indigenous Partners	Developed an approach to advancing a distinctions-based funding program in support of Indigenous Data Sovereignty.	

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Objective	Completed Activities	Pending Activities
National DRI Training Framework	<p>A training maturity assessment as a part of its broader continuous operational improvement.</p> <p>Training operations have increased in maturity while participating in training programs delivered by the regional partners.</p> <p>Delivered sessions as part of the Cybersecurity Training and Awareness Program including multi-factor authentication for users, cybersecurity for researchers, cybersecurity staff and specialized cybersecurity.</p> <p>Launched the National Training Coordination Council (NTCC).</p>	

A man and a woman are standing in a server room, looking at a rack of servers. The man is pointing at a server rack, and the woman is holding a tablet. The room is dimly lit with blue light from the servers.

Objectives and Activities in 2024–25

On March 24, 2023, ISED awarded the Alliance funding of up to \$228.3 million for initiatives within the Multi-Year Funding Proposal. The planned activities for the 2024–25 fiscal year presented here are a continuation of the two-year investment that are focused on upgrading critical infrastructure, as well as initiatives to improve services, access and functionality of DRI. The following initiatives and activities are presented by strategic theme.

Advanced Research Computing

RENEWAL OF AGING ARC AND CLOUD INFRASTRUCTURE

Existing compute capacity meets less than half of CPU and a quarter of GPU requests from Canadian researchers annually. The Alliance is committed to upgrading the national systems that are approaching end-of-life, while closely working with hosting universities and provinces. Host sites are completing their competitive procurement processes, which when completed, will allow renewal of their respective hardware.

DATA CENTRE CAPACITY UPGRADE

The Data Centre housing the national systems Béluga, Béluga Cloud and Narval has almost reached its maximum electrical capacity, restricting Calcul Québec from accommodating more powerful systems. The Alliance is committed to upgrading the capacity that supports the national systems while closely working with Calcul Québec, McGill University, the École de technologie supérieure (ETS) and the province of Québec. Electrical capacity will be boosted by 3.0MW, encompassing the installation and linking of an extra transformer, switchboard, cooling units and other necessary components.

3.0MW

ELECTRICAL CAPACITY WILL BE BOOSTED

SUPPORTING RESEARCHERS USING QUANTUM COMPUTERS

Quantum computing, while still an emerging technology, is rapidly evolving and its adoption is equally increasing. The Alliance will support regional organizations with quantum infrastructure in expanding access and utilization for Canadian researchers seeking to experiment and implement quantum technologies. The Alliance will fund staff within these institutions to help researchers define their research challenges, create quantum-powered solutions and offer comprehensive support to those exploring innovations in quantum devices.

ALLIANCE CLOUD CONNECT PILOT

The Alliance Cloud Connect Pilot (ACCP) aims to develop a single portal for researchers to access on-demand commercial cloud services and to simplify existing administrative and technical challenges. In addition, the ACCP facilitates funder and institutional interests in the use and provision of cloud services for their research community. ACCP will set the stage for the Alliance's provision of a hybrid cloud service that will not only simplify researcher access to compute, storage and software, but also allow for focused research and innovation.



Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility

DRI EDIA CHAMPIONS FUNDING CALL

The DRI EDIA Champions program will be aimed at promoting a DRI that is more equitable for all Canadian researchers. The call will support a targeted EDIA initiative to increase DRI service and infrastructure uptake and engagement among under-represented groups in the research and education sector. The call will follow a similar format to that of the 2022–23 Alliance Data Champions Pilot.

“This new approach will increase adaptability and responsiveness to evolving user needs while developing a culture of iterative enhancements...”

National Service Delivery

NATIONAL HELP DESK

As part of its efforts to continue to deliver high-quality support to researchers, the Alliance will continue working with its service delivery partners (national host sites, regional organizations and institutions, among others) to standardize and streamline ticketing services (user requests, incidents, bugs, etc.) in compliance with help desk policy and procedure.

This new approach will increase adaptability and responsiveness to evolving user needs while developing a culture of iterative enhancements within the Alliance and its service delivery partners. These efforts reinforce the Alliance's commitment to delivering top-tier services across all facets of DRI.

NATIONAL SERVICE MANAGEMENT AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The introduction of National Service Management and Continuous Improvement represents an operational enhancement within the Alliance's concerted efforts to elevate service delivery across DRI. This initiative establishes a structured framework for overseeing and refining services within the national DRI, aiming to ensure streamlined operations, enhanced user experiences and ongoing optimization.

NATIONAL DRI SERVICE CATALOGUE

Building on the Service Delivery Model and Service Classification Framework submitted to ISED in 2022, the Alliance will consolidate a National DRI Service Catalogue that will act as a central hub for researchers to have quick access to the diverse tools, resources and services they need for their work. In doing so, the catalogue will simplify search processes by providing a one-stop shop for their needs.

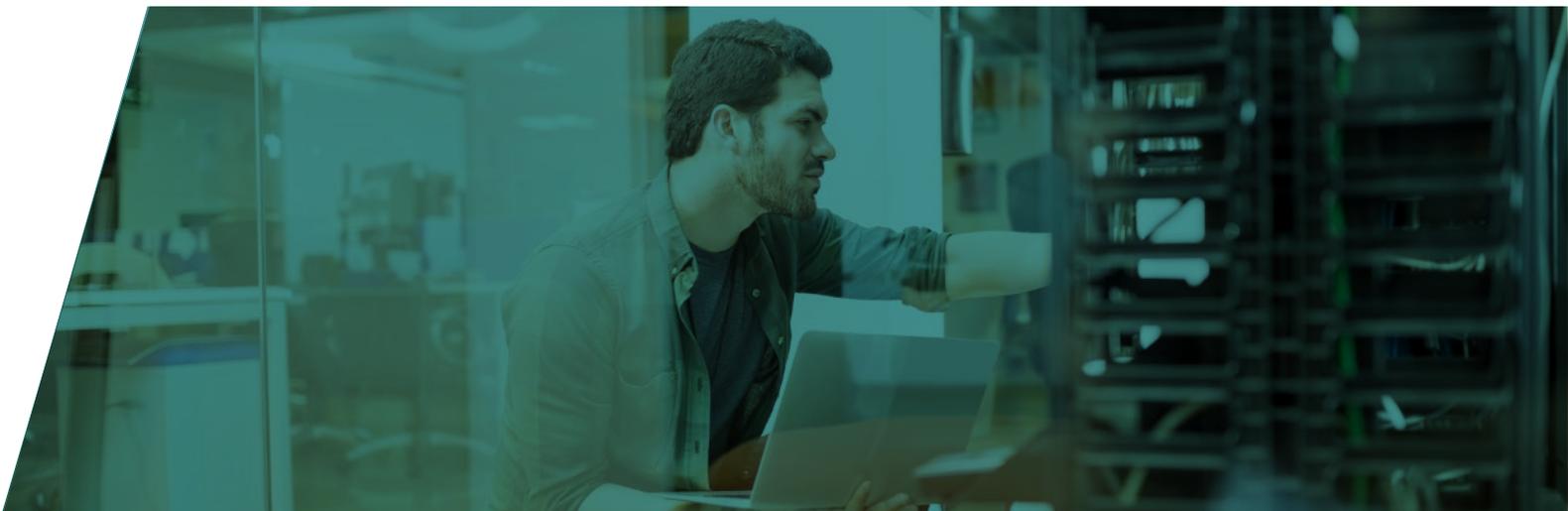
National DRI

CYBERSECURITY FRAMEWORK AND LONG- TERM ACTION PLAN (LTAP)

The LTAP cybersecurity program is designed to implement key initiatives outlined in the Cybersecurity Framework (CSF). This framework encompasses a roadmap for achieving future cybersecurity goals, including analyses of current and desired states, organizational structural changes, governance updates, policies and technology implementations. It aims to complement the existing security posture established in 2020 by Compute Canada and national host sites. The LTAP will guide the Alliance to determine the degree to which cybersecurity risk management practices exhibit the characteristics.

ECOSYSTEM ENGAGEMENT

The Alliance requires advisory structures fostering information exchange, bi-directional perspectives and inputs for decision-making. During 2023–24 the Alliance engaged with its partners to discuss the establishment of advisory tables and dedicated committees with defined mandates and memberships. These structures will enable agile responses to operational issues, offer advice on business cases, investments and project priorities, and facilitate transparency for aligned long-term planning with co-investment partners. They will also contribute to formulating high-level, Government of Canada-aligned strategies and goals.



Research Data Management

STABILIZATION AND GROWTH OF THE DMP ASSISTANT

The DMP Assistant is a tool that allows researchers to develop data management plans (DMPs) for their research projects in compliance with the new Tri-Agency funding policy. The Alliance will continue to enhance the DMP Assistant by enabling machine-actionable DMPs, which will improve the user interface and allow us to explore integrations into other Alliance infrastructure and services. These upgrades aim to improve the service capabilities, ensuring seamless integration into national infrastructure for increased interoperability within national data platforms. In addition, the Alliance will be working with its service partners to support the transition of the service to national cloud infrastructure, thereby making the platform more stable, secure and scalable. To date, the service has received high uptake by Canadian researchers and post-secondary institutions.

EXPANSION OF LUNARIS

The Alliance will continue expanding Lunaris, Canada's national data discovery service that indexes datasets from almost 100 Canadian repositories. Lunaris offers diverse search options for over 91,000 datasets, including text and map-based searches. Future service developments

will broaden discovery features, enhance service metadata, improve the platform's UX design, and continue expanding Lunaris' catalogue, further breaking down data silos and forging partnerships with more research organizations, repositories and communities. In particular, Lunaris aims to grow its relationships with disciplinary data repositories to ensure that these vital data communities are well represented in the national discovery portal.

CONTROLLED ACCESS MANAGEMENT FOR RESEARCH DATA (CAM)

The Controlled Access Management for Research Data Initiative aims to enable collaboration between Canadian data repositories and research institutions to enhance research data management and research security. The objective of this

initiative is to enable research organizations and existing data repositories to meet researcher needs related to long-term storage, security, sharing and re-use of restricted-access research data. Building on the foundation laid by the Federated Research Data Repository (FRDR) Sensitive Data Repository Project, the CAM Initiative establishes a forum for Canadian data repositories and research organizations, including post-secondary institutions, research hospitals and other research organizations, to collaborate and pilot test technology, to assess relevant workflows, to identify training and education opportunities, and to develop recommendations to enable the Canadian research ecosystem to improve stewardship of restricted-access research data.

+91,000

DATASETS WITH DIVERSE SEARCH OPTIONS OFFERED BY LUNARIS

Self-Determination and Data Sovereignty for Indigenous Peoples in Canada

FUNDING PROGRAM SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS DATA SOVEREIGNTY

Indigenous Data Sovereignty means that Indigenous Peoples have the right to own, control, access and steward data about their communities, lands and culture. The Alliance is proposing a targeted, distinctions-based+ approach to funding and supporting Indigenous-led projects on Indigenous Data Sovereignty in the context of DRI. This funding program will serve as a pilot for future funding program calls.



Training and Development

DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL DRI TRAINING FRAMEWORK

The Alliance will focus on securing resources to better support the DRI community and partners through enhanced training and development initiatives. This will include redesigning the Alliance Training Calendar (shared with the regions) with a data-driven approach and partnering with experts to refine existing DRI training services. Specialized training tailored to community needs will also be acquired, including

support for HPC, machine learning and AI. Exploring international models for training funding and strategies will also be a priority, within the Pan-Canadian AI Compute Environment (PAICE) program, as well as a Canadian Student DRI Competition.

EXTENDING USER SUPPORT

As part of the 2023–25 investments in DRI services, and in collaboration with regional partners, additional support staff have been

hired and continued to be onboarded in several regional areas. Alliance Funding Agreements will be executed, followed by public communications confirming the roles and partner institutions.

National and International Engagement

MAINTENANCE AND EXPANSION OF PARTNERSHIPS

The Alliance will continue working closely with CANARIE to plan activities for the DRI ecosystem. This collaboration is paramount to ensure priority, skillset and knowledge alignment on portfolios such as cybersecurity.

Similarly, the Alliance will coordinate its efforts with federal funding agencies—the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI), Canadian Institutes of Health Research

(CIHR), Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), Genome Canada and others—to continue supporting programs of national interest such as PAICE and the Human Genome Library. Beyond this work, the Alliance will seek to formalize collaboration with national and international partners, such as the NRC, among others.

2025–30 Preparation

PLANNING AND DESIGN FRAMEWORK

The Alliance has shared a proposal for a vision of the future of DRI in Canada with ISED as part of its 2025–30 mandate renewal. This vision is driven by fundamental digital research needs and emerging trends and capabilities that will go beyond simply meeting the growing needs of the Canadian research ecosystem. The Alliance will continue to engage with the community and DRI partners to refine the future direction and develop implementation plans that are robust, scalable and secure, with clear delineation of objectives and technological capabilities.

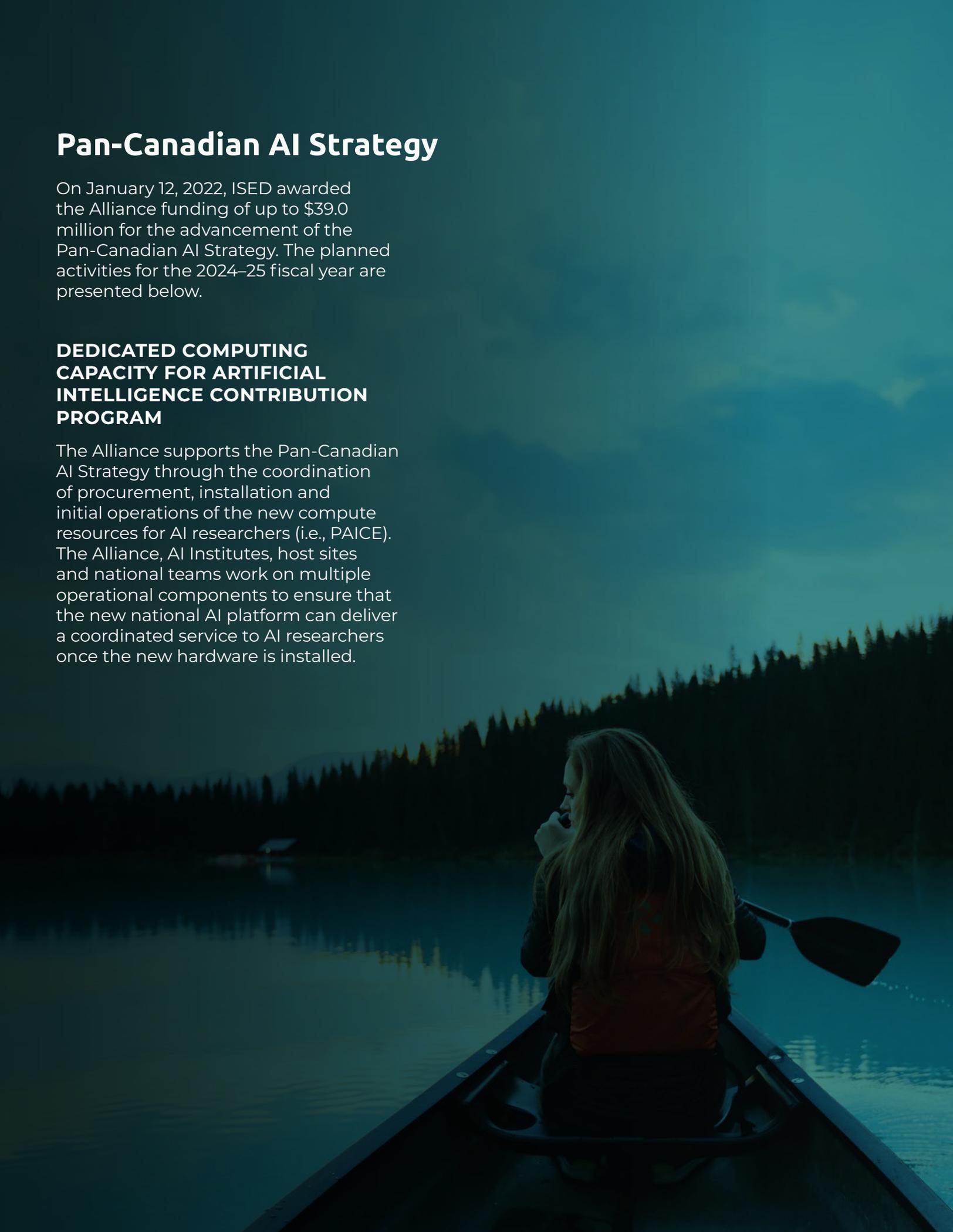
“This collaboration is paramount to ensure priority, skillset and knowledge alignment on portfolios such as cybersecurity.”

Pan-Canadian AI Strategy

On January 12, 2022, ISED awarded the Alliance funding of up to \$39.0 million for the advancement of the Pan-Canadian AI Strategy. The planned activities for the 2024–25 fiscal year are presented below.

DEDICATED COMPUTING CAPACITY FOR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE CONTRIBUTION PROGRAM

The Alliance supports the Pan-Canadian AI Strategy through the coordination of procurement, installation and initial operations of the new compute resources for AI researchers (i.e., PAICE). The Alliance, AI Institutes, host sites and national teams work on multiple operational components to ensure that the new national AI platform can deliver a coordinated service to AI researchers once the new hardware is installed.



Expansion of the Canadian Astronomy Network for Advanced Research

On November 15, 2023, the National Research Council Canada (NRC) awarded the Alliance funding of up to \$34.7 million to facilitate the establishment of a Canadian regional centre that provides Canadian astronomers access to data from the Square Kilometer Array (SKA) and other astronomy facilities, and to provide dedicated storage, computing capacity and services sufficient to support Canada's participation in SKA.

The objective for 2023–24 was for the Alliance, in partnership with the University of Victoria (UVic), to provide Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) to the SKA Regional Centre (SRC). The SRC will use this infrastructure to expand the services provided by the Canadian Astronomy Network for Advanced Research (CANFAR) to support Canada's participation in the SKA, and therefore this project is referred to as "Expanded CANFAR" or "ExCANFAR".

Hardware specifications were finalized in February 2024, with the hardware scheduled to arrive in early June 2024 and fully operational by the end of September 2024.

The objectives for 2024–25 are to:

1. Deploy the infrastructure purchased in 2023–24.
2. Identify, purchase and deploy additional infrastructure at UVic.
3. Identify networking requirements for UVic, working alongside CANARIE and BCNet.
4. Support personnel at UVic for the deployment and operation of the SRC.
5. Identify additional host sites for the SRC.

RISK MITIGATION

The main risks of this project are delays in infrastructure purchasing, delivery and deployment. The estimated delivery times of some of the 2023–24 infrastructure are slightly delayed, but will not impact the September 30, 2024, deployment date and no mitigation strategies are required. There is no expected delay in the subsequent delivery and deployment of 2024–25 infrastructure. Staffing is progressing on time without expected delays.



Investment Policies, Standards and Procedures

For the Statement of Investment Strategy and the Investment Policy, as approved by the Board of Directors, please refer to [Appendix A](#) and [Appendix B](#) respectively.



Criteria Applied to Select Eligible Projects

Project proposals are reviewed relative to the mandatory and the evaluative criteria for each program. Evaluation of proposals relative to these criteria constitute the basis for the decision of whether a project receives funding from the Alliance. Projects that fail to meet the mandatory criteria or fail to meet the evaluative criteria to an acceptable degree are not funded.

The Alliance's program guide for contribution funding details eligibility requirements, application and evaluation processes, and the administration and oversight of projects that are awarded funding.

Eligible Projects and Funding

ACTIVITY	PROGRAM	INSTITUTION	AWARDED IN 2023-24	PROGRESS ACHIEVED
ARC Infrastructure Acquisitions and Operations / Support for Highly Qualified Personnel / Cybersecurity				
ARC Regional Support (2023-04 to 2024-03)				
		Brock University	\$122,029	The Alliance provided funding for regional operations in 2023-24, including seven (7) new roles funded under the <i>Extending User Support project</i> .
		Calcul Québec	\$143,184	
		Concordia University	\$103,840	
		Dalhousie University	\$323,246	
		HEC Montréal	\$26,840	
		McGill University	\$3,650,400	
		McMaster University	\$295,651	
		Memorial University	\$470,882	
		Polytechnique Montréal	\$48,400	
		Queen's University	\$699,673	
		Saint Mary's University	\$68,111	
		The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids)	\$589,604	
		Simon Fraser University	\$2,445,000	
		St. Francis Xavier University	\$401,330	
		Université de Montréal	\$737,428	
		Université de Moncton	\$94,704	
		Université de Sherbrooke	\$644,528	
		Université du Québec à Montréal	\$121,570	
		Université Laval	\$427,420	
		University Health Network	\$682,105	
		University of Alberta	\$517,800	
		University of British Columbia	\$1,171,800	
		University of Calgary	\$369,600	
		University of Guelph	\$272,785	
		University of Manitoba	\$231,000	
		University of New Brunswick	\$90,286	
		University of Ontario Institute of Technology	\$66,342	
		University of Prince Edward Island	\$92,044	
		University of Saskatchewan	\$232,200	
		University of Toronto	\$3,562,115	
		University of Victoria	\$1,683,600	

ACTIVITY	PROGRAM	INSTITUTION	AWARDED IN 2023-24	PROGRESS ACHIEVED
ARC Infrastructure Acquisitions and Operations / Support for Highly Qualified Personnel / Cybersecurity				
ARC Regional Support (2023-04 to 2024-03)				
		University of Waterloo	\$1,218,683	
		University of Western Ontario	\$728,388	
		University of Windsor	\$58,308	
		Wilfrid Laurier University	\$69,432	
		York University	\$66,342	
			\$22,526,670	
ARC Infrastructure Refresh and Data Centre Upgrade (2023-04 to 2025-03)				
		McGill University	\$26,537,500	Funding was awarded in 2023-24 for the five (5) national host sites to each implement an ARC and Cloud Infrastructure Refresh. Many of the host sites issued RFPs for their projects in 2023-24. In addition, funding was awarded to McGill to complete a Data Centre Upgrade necessary to accommodate the ARC Infrastructure Refresh at the host site.
		Simon Fraser University	\$40,946,000	
		University of Toronto	\$26,200,000	
		University of Victoria	\$10,282,500	
		University of Waterloo	\$21,848,300	
			\$125,814,300	
Quantum Computing (2023-04 to 2025-03)				
		Calcul Québec	\$152,027	Funding was awarded in 2023-24 to provide training to Canadian researchers on the use of quantum devices as well as to hire six (6) FTEs to support researchers who are using quantum computing for research projects. In 2023-24, the first year of training was fully subscribed and hiring of FTEs was initiated.
		Quantum Algorithms Institute	\$300,824	
			\$452,851	

ACTIVITY	PROGRAM	INSTITUTION	AWARDED IN 2023–24	PROGRESS ACHIEVED
National Data Management Activities				
FRDR and Lunaris (2023-04 to 2025-03)				
		McMaster University	\$629,820	<p>The Alliance provided funding for FRDR and Lunaris operations in 2023–24 including two (2) new roles under the Expansion of Lunaris project. In 2023–24, 460 FRDR datasets were published and 91,970 Lunaris datasets were indexed, accelerating the growth of Lunaris into a research data discovery service that comprehensively captures the Canadian research data landscape. The additional staffing has also facilitated the launch of a Lunaris User Community Group to better understand the community’s needs and the development of an improved metadata harvesting process that will allow users to better search for data that is relevant to their needs. In this same period, FRDR has seen several major feature releases that have improved the experience of researchers using the service and allow the Alliance to more readily make Canadian research data findable and accessible for future reuse.</p>
		Simon Fraser University	\$249,596	
		University of Saskatchewan	\$1,340,182	
			\$2,219,598	
Borealis (2023-04 to 2025-03)				
		University of Toronto	\$528,999	<p>The Alliance provided funding for Borealis operations in 2023–24. In 2023–24, the Borealis services continued to operate successfully and to expand to new institutions. Alliance funding has helped to grow the service to allow more Canadian institutions to offer a Dataverse-based repository service to their researchers. Positions funded by the Alliance have increased the service’s capacity for community outreach, positively impacting researchers who use the service as well as building capacity for support staff within institutions.</p>
			\$528,999	

ACTIVITY	PROGRAM	INSTITUTION	AWARDED IN 2023-24	PROGRESS ACHIEVED
National Data Management Activities				
DMP Assistant (2023-04 to 2025-03)				
		University of Alberta	\$661,809	The Alliance provided funding for DMP Assistant operations in 2023-24 including two (2) new roles under the Stabilization and Growth of the DMP Assistant Platform and Service project. The positions have enabled the DMP Assistant service team to achieve parity with the platform's common codebase with our international partners and enhancement of our content offerings, including a new DMP template that will make it easier for researchers to comply with the Tri-Agency RDM Policy requirements. Alliance funding has also enabled projects that will significantly enhance the user experience on the DMP Assistant, such as single sign-on using institutional credentials.
			\$661,809	
Canadian Persistent Identifier Consortia (2023-04 to 2025-03)				
		Canadian Research Knowledge Network	\$722,348	The Alliance provided funding for persistent identifier (PID) operations in 2023-24 to support the ongoing operations, technical support and growth of Canada's two national PID consortia: DataCite Canada, which provides Digital Object Identifiers for research objects, and ORCID-CA, which provides ORCID iDs to researchers. The funding also supported the advancement of the national PIDs strategy and helped to coordinate the activities and meetings of the Canadian Persistent Identifier Advisory Committee.
			\$722,348	
World Data System - International Technology Office (2023-04 to 2024-03)				
		University of Victoria	\$591,050	The Alliance provided funding for WDS-ITO operations in 2023-24. In 2023-24 the offices worked collaboratively with partners to enhance the capabilities, impact and sustainability of member data repositories and associated data services.
			\$591,050	

ACTIVITY	PROGRAM	INSTITUTION	AWARDED IN 2023-24	PROGRESS ACHIEVED
National Data Management Activities				
Controlled Access Management for Research Data Initiative (2023-12 to 2025-03)				
		Centre for Addiction and Mental Health	\$80,000	Funding was awarded through the Controlled Access Management for Research Data Initiative in 2023-24 to address existing gaps in service offerings related to the sharing and preservation of sensitive data through enhanced data curation, access, long-term storage, preservation and safekeeping services in FRDR. In 2023-24, hiring for full-time resources was completed and/or in progress at each institution and the Partner Organization meeting series was underway with strong participation.
		Université de Montréal	\$80,000	
		Unity Health Toronto	\$80,000	
			\$240,000	
ACTIVITY	PROGRAM	INSTITUTION	AWARDED IN 2023-24	PROGRESS ACHIEVED
AI Compute Infrastructure Acquisitions and Operations				
PAICE (2022-10 to 2027-03)				
		Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute	\$624,485	The Alliance, AI Institutes, host sites and national teams work on multiple operational components to ensure that the new national AI platform can deliver a coordinated service to AI researchers once the new hardware is installed.
		Mila	\$728,566	
		Université Laval	\$12,271,212	The majority of work outlined in the initial PAICE 2023-24 Operating Plan was focused on planning and coordinating procurement for the new AI platform. Due to delays, some of the planned activities did not start as scheduled. All 2023-24 activities will be completed, with revised timelines, and have been incorporated into the 2024-25 Operating Plan.
		University of Alberta	\$12,375,344	
		University of Toronto	\$12,187,914	
		Vector Institute	\$811,830	
			\$38,999,351	
Dedicated Compute Infrastructure Acquisitions and Operations				
ExCANFAR (2024-02 to 2025-03)				
		University of Victoria	\$1,799,753	Funding was awarded in 2023-24 for the University of Victoria to initiate its hardware procurement.
			\$1,799,753	



Program Evaluations, Audits and Risk Assessments



Financial Audit

The Alliance undergoes an annual financial audit undertaken by independent auditors. These auditors are approved annually by the Board of Directors, and overseen by the Audit, Finance, Risk and Investment Committee of the Board. The financial audit for 2023–24 was completed in June 2024 by KPMG, LLP. The audited financial statements are presented in [Appendix C](#).

Recipient Audit

No recipient audits were conducted in 2023–24. Two recipient audits will be conducted by the second quarter of 2024–25.

Program Evaluation

ISED conducted an evaluation of the DRI Strategy covering the activities of CANARIE and the Alliance for the period April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2023. The evaluation found a continued need to support DRI with a coordinated strategy between both organizations. The evaluation also produced six recommendations, which are currently being addressed by CANARIE and the Alliance.

Remuneration

Below is a table setting out the total amount of remuneration paid to each employee, officer and director of the Recipient whose remuneration in that year exceeded \$100,000.

POSITION	ANNUAL SALARY RANGE
Chief Executive Officer	\$243,750 – \$405,250
Vice-Presidents	\$165,000 – \$275,000
Directors	\$120,000 – \$205,000
Managers	\$104,000 – \$156,000
Senior Professionals*	Up to \$124,000

* Market exception for Senior Solutions Architects, up to \$163,200.



Advancements
in Equity, Diversity,
Inclusion and Accessibility



Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility

Completed

The Alliance has successfully implemented several initiatives to embed EDIA principles into its operations. Accessibility evaluations were completed for Alliance service platforms such as FRDR, Lunarix and the DMP Assistant, ensuring that these tools are accessible to all users. The Board's composition now proudly includes 50% female representation, underscoring our dedication to gender equity. A comprehensive inclusive benchmark survey was launched, achieving full participation from our workforce. Insights from this survey are guiding the development of corporate and departmental action plans aimed at enriching the employee experience throughout the employee lifecycle.

In Progress

Efforts are underway to further improve the integration of EDIA principles into the Alliance's operations. This includes enhancing the composition of the organization's membership through an EDIA lens and establishing an EDIA academic representation contact list to ensure the organization has a network of professionals in the DRI ecosystem that are interested in contributing to the advancement of EDIA principles across the ecosystem. Alliance communication practices are also currently under review to better incorporate EDIA best practices. In addition, the organization is in the process of collecting EDIA-related information across various service platforms and developing measurable key performance indicators (KPIs) for each EDIA initiative to track progress and impact.

The Alliance is dedicated to supporting Canadian researchers with inclusive language in both official languages. Our DRI services are fully bilingual, available in both English and French. To further strengthen our French service provision, more than 30% of our employees engaged in corporate learning initiatives aimed at improving their proficiency in French.



Self-Determination and Data Sovereignty for Indigenous Peoples in Canada

Completed

The organization has taken steps to respect and support Indigenous data sovereignty and improve access to the national DRI. This includes the relaunch of mandatory OCAP® training for all employees and proactive engagement with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities to build and strengthen relationships and to collaborate on developing data standards and governance models. Educational programs have been expanded to facilitate greater adoption and capacity building in DRI technologies among Indigenous researchers and communities.

In Progress

Continued efforts are being made to deepen engagement with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities. This includes ongoing projects to assess how the Alliance may support Indigenous Data Sovereignty toward the development and modification of data standards and governance models on a project-by-project basis. Additionally, the organization is conducting a year-long corporate Indigenous learning program through a storytelling series, aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of Indigenous cultures and contributions within Alliance staff.



Representation that the Recipient is not in default under the terms of this Agreement.

To the knowledge of management, the Alliance is not in default under the terms of its contribution agreements with ISED.

Membership

The Alliance is a member-based organization, with representation from post-secondary institutions, research hospitals, colleges and related organizations across Canada. Members play a vital role in supporting and guiding the work and governance of the Alliance.

Members as of March 31, 2024:

47 PRIMARY MEMBERS

80 ASSOCIATE MEMBERS



Primary Members

- Athabasca University
- Baycrest
- Bow Valley College
- British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT)
- Brock University
- Carleton University
- Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
- CHU Sainte-Justine
- Concordia University
- Dalhousie University
- École de technologie supérieure (ÉTS)
- HEC Montréal
- Kwantlen Polytechnic University
- Lakehead University
- McGill University
- McMaster University
- Memorial University of Newfoundland
- Queen's University
- Royal Military College of Canada
- Saint Mary's University
- Simon Fraser University
- Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT)
- St. Francis Xavier University
- Sunnybrook Research Institute
- The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids)
- Toronto Metropolitan University
- Université de Montréal
- Université Laval
- University Health Network (UHN)
- University of Alberta
- University of British Columbia
- University of Calgary
- University of Guelph
- University of Lethbridge
- University of Manitoba
- University of New Brunswick
- University of Ottawa
- University of Prince Edward Island
- University of Regina
- University of Saskatchewan
- University of Toronto
- University of Victoria
- University of Waterloo
- University of Windsor
- Western University
- Wilfrid Laurier University
- York University

Associate Members

- Acadia University
- ACENET
- Amii (Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute)
- BCNET
- Bishop's University
- Brandon University
- Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL)
- Canadian Astronomical Society (CASCA)
- Canadian Astronomy Data Centre
- Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI)
- Canadian Research Data Centre Network
- Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN)
- CANARIE
- Cape Breton University
- CHEO
- Compute Ontario
- Concordia University of Edmonton
- Conestoga College
- Consortium Érudit
- Council of Prairie and Pacific University Libraries (COPPUL)
- CUCCIO
- Cybera
- Durham College
- École nationale d'administration publique (ENAP)
- Exactis Innovation
- Fanshawe College
- Fraser Health Authority
- George Brown College
- ICES
- Institut national de la recherche scientifique (INRS)
- Institute of Particle Physics
- King's University College at Western University
- Laurentian University / Université Laurentienne
- Lawson Health Research Institute
- Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute, Sinai Health
- MacEwan University
- McGill Centre for Integrative Neuroscience
- Mila
- Mount Saint Vincent University
- MRnet
- NB/PEI Educational Computer Network
- Niagara College
- Northwestern Polytechnic
- Nova Scotia Community College
- Ocean Networks Canada
- Ontario Brain Institute
- ORION
- Ouranos Inc.
- Polytechnique Montréal
- Red Deer Polytechnic
- RISQ
- Royal Roads University
- Saint Paul University
- Saskatchewan Polytechnic
- Selkirk College
- Seneca Polytechnic
- Sheridan College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning
- SNOLAB
- SRNet
- Thompson Rivers University
- Trent University
- TRIUMF
- Université de Moncton
- Université du Québec
- Université du Québec à Chicoutimi (UQAC)
- Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM)
- Université du Québec à Rimouski (UQAR)
- Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières (UQTR)



Associate Members

- Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue (UQAT)
- Université TÉLUQ
- University of Northern British Columbia
- University of Ontario Institute of Technology
- University of Ottawa Institute of Mental Health Research
- University of the Fraser Valley
- University of Winnipeg
- Vancouver Island Health Authority
- Vancouver Island University
- Vector Institute
- World Data System
- Yukon University



Digital Research Alliance of Canada



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Appendices

Appendix A — Statement of Investment Strategy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to establish a strategy best suited to meet the needs and objectives of the Digital Research Alliance of Canada's ("the Alliance") investment portfolio. This document is specifically intended to meet the requirements of section 5.5.6 (Statement of Investment Policy) of the Contribution Agreements between the Alliance and His Majesty in Right of Canada.

STRATEGY

The Alliance's investment strategy is specifically tailored to the duration and quality constraints imposed by the Statement of Investment Policy. These constraints, while deemed appropriate and necessary to meet the overall objectives of the Alliance, preclude adding value through active investment management. This conclusion is reached due to the "tightness" of the constraints, tightness which does not allow enough latitude for active investment management to be effective.

Rather than active investment management, the strategy adopted by the Alliance is "buy and hold", based on the following framework.

- Investment maturities will, wherever possible, match the forecasted cash requirements of the Alliance.
- The quantitative limits on investment holdings provide ample structural liquidity to meet the needs of the Alliance. It is appropriate, therefore, to hold less liquid types of approved investments. Value added will be achieved by moving out the "liquidity curve" when possible.
- At all times the Alliance will hold investments deemed eligible under the Statement of Investment Policy. For greater clarity, the determination of eligibility shall be made at the time of purchase. The Alliance will not be obliged to dispose of investments which become ineligible after the date of purchase but will favour (subject to market conditions) disposing of such securities should assets need to be liquidated. (Refer to the Liquidity and Maturity of Securities Policy (section 7) in the Statement of Investment Policy.)

AUTHORITY

The Investment Committee shall:

- Establish the Statement of Investment Policy for approval of the Board.
- Recommend to the Board for their approval the appointment of one or more independent, external investment advisors to provide investment advice. The Committee may also recommend to the Board the appointment of one or more professional portfolio managers to invest the Amount in a manner consistent with the approved Statement of Investment Policy and the investment strategy.
- Verify compliance with section 5.5.8 of the Contribution Agreement with respect to conflict of interest as it concerns the Investment Advisor/Manager.
- Ensure that funds are only invested in investments or securities within the terms of the Statement of Investment Policy.
- Ensure that the Board is regularly made aware of any significant financial risks facing the Alliance, including the consequences of significant potential losses of investments of any or all of the amount.
- Report to the Board on the status, operation and annual performance of the investment portfolio.
- Ensure that adequate safekeeping procedures are in effect for all investment instruments.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Committee consists of a minimum of five members, all of whom are members of the Board of Directors, are independent of the Alliance's management and are financially literate. At least one member should have an accounting background or related financial management experience. The Board Chair is an ex Officio non-voting member of the Committee.

The Board shall appoint one of the Committee members to be the Committee Chair.

Committee members are appointed for a one-year term with the possibility of renewal.

MEETINGS, MEETING SCHEDULE AND FREQUENCY

The Committee meets a minimum of four times annually. The Committee may choose to hold additional meetings if it considers them necessary for it to carry out its responsibilities effectively. Meetings can be held at any time and place as determined by its members, provided notice of such meeting is given to each member of the Committee. Meetings may be held by teleconference or videoconference, provided members have a means to vote. If members cannot participate in person, they may participate in a meeting that is held in-person via the teleconference or telephone.

A majority of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting thereof, and the act of a majority of the members of the Committee present at any meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Committee. The Chair, or in his or her absence, one of the directors shall preside at all meetings of the committee.

As an ex-officio member of the Committee, the Board Chair has voting rights at the Committee meetings that they attend. The Board Chair's attendance is not counted to determine whether a quorum is present at a meeting.

In the event of a vote that results in a tie, the Chair of the Committee has a casting vote.

At each meeting, the members of the committee may meet in private in in-camera sessions with committee members only.

Minutes of meetings will be available to the Board.

REVIEW

This document will be reviewed and updated (if necessary) no less frequently than annually.

Appendix B — Statement of Investment Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to establish an investment policy best suited to meet the needs and objectives of the Digital Research Alliance of Canada's ("the Alliance") investment portfolio. This document is specifically intended to meet the requirements of section 5.5.6 (Statement of Investment Policy) of the Contribution Agreements between the Alliance and His Majesty in Right of Canada.

All aspects of this Policy are governed by the Prudent Person Principle (refer to section 5.5.3 of the Contribution Agreements) and the principal objective of investment decisions shall be the preservation of capital to meet future disbursement requirements

INVESTMENT POLICY

(1) LONG-TERM RETURN OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTATIONS:

The long term objectives of the portfolio are twofold: (a) to provide funds on an "as needed" basis to meet the disbursement needs of the Alliance, (b) to maximize the investment income earned by the Alliance, subject to the Investment Strategy and Investment Policy adopted by the Alliance.

(2) RATINGS OF SECURITIES:

The deemed rating (the "Rating") of any Eligible Security will be established, at the time of the Alliance's acquisition of the Eligible Security.

Reference to the "issuer" shall include the unconditional guarantor, if applicable.

The rating category for Investment Policy purposes shall be based on the ratings of at least two of the following four rating agencies: Dominion Bond Rating Service (DBRS), Standard and Poor's (S&P) Rating Services, Moody's Investors Service and Fitch Rating Ltd.

In the case of Commercial Paper and other short-term investments:

To be included in the AAA category, the security must have at least two of the following, where two are available:

- [i] R-1 (high) from DBRS
- [ii] A-1+ from S&P and the issuer's bonds are rated "AAA" by S&P
- [iii] P-1 from Moody's and the issuer's bonds are rated Aaa by Moody's
- [iv] F-1+ from Fitch and the issuer's bonds are rated AAA by Fitch

To be included in the AA category, the security must have at least two of the following, where two are available:

- [i] R-1 (middle) from DBRS
- [ii] A-1+ from S&P
- [iii] F-1+ from Fitch
- [iv] P-1 from Moody's and the bonds are rated Aa by Moody's

In the case of bonds and other longer-term investments:

To be included in the AAA category, the security must have at least two of the following:

- [i] AAA from DBRS
- [ii] AAA from S&P
- [iii] AAA from Moody's
- [iv] AAA from Fitch

To be included in the AA category, the security must have at least two of the following:

- [i] AA from DBRS
- [ii] AA from S&P
- [iii] AA from Moody's
- [iv] AA from Fitch

(3) DIVERSIFICATION POLICY OF THE INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO, INCLUDING QUANTITATIVE LIMITS ON INVESTMENTS:

Throughout the life of the Alliance’s portfolio, Alliance investments in the securities of **any one issuer (or two or more affiliated entities)** will be limited to an aggregate market value limit based on the Rating of the security:

RATING OF SECURITY	AA	AAA
Government Securities	no limit	no limit
Provincial / Municipal Financing Authority	10% of portfolio	10% of portfolio
Municipal Securities	10% of portfolio	10% of portfolio
Other Eligible Securities	10% of portfolio	10% of portfolio

Throughout the life of the Alliance’s portfolio, the Alliance’s investment in the securities of **any one category** will be limited to an aggregate market value limit of the category, as set out below:

RATING OF SECURITY	AA	AAA
Government Securities*	30% of portfolio	no limit
Provincial / Municipal Financing Authority	70% of portfolio**	same 70%
Municipal Securities	70% of portfolio**	same 70%
Other Eligible Securities	70% of portfolio**	80% of portfolio

Minimum Government Securities is 10% of the portfolio

*For greater certainty, the phrase “Government Securities” means all securities issued, guaranteed by, or that have the full faith and credit of the federal government or a provincial government.

** The 70% constraint applies to the aggregate of AA securities

(4) ASSET ALLOCATION STRATEGY:

The portfolio will, at all times, be invested in Eligible Securities (refer to (5) below).

(5) PERMITTED INVESTMENT INSTRUMENTS AND TRADING ACTIVITIES:

The Alliance shall invest in Eligible Securities. Eligible Securities are defined as: bank certificates of deposit; banker's acceptances; treasury bills, commercial paper and other short-term securities, bonds and notes issued by the federal government, provincial governments, municipal governments and corporations; cash deposits in banks identified in Schedule I of the Bank Act; guaranteed investment certificates; and other fixed-income securities that carry the full faith and credit of the Government of Canada. For greater certainty, the Alliance shall not invest in derivatives, swaps, options or futures.

Any securities acquired shall have a Rating of at least AA.

All securities will be denominated in Canadian dollars.

The Investment Advisors/Managers will have authorized power to recommend and execute all trades on behalf of the Alliance. The Investment Advisors/Managers will notify the Alliance and include all details of all confirmations of trades.

The Board's Audit and Investment Committee will be advised of the transaction details by email or facsimile the same week that the transactions are authorized, or as soon as practical thereafter.

(6) PROHIBITED INVESTMENT INSTRUMENTS AND TRADING ACTIVITIES:

Prohibited investments consist of all investments not defined as permitted investment instruments.

(7) LIQUIDITY AND MATURITY OF SECURITIES POLICY:

- (a) The maturities and terms of investments shall match the profile of the Alliance's forecasted disbursements. In cases where the timing of disbursements is unknown, investments shall be held in securities with term to maturity of one year or less.

- (b) Should an unexpected disbursement or series of disbursements made by the Alliance reduce the total market value of the portfolio, the Alliance shall immediately take the steps necessary to comply with the requirements set by the diversification policy (refer to (3) above) within a period of 60 days from the date as of which the Alliance first failed to meet those requirements. Under no circumstances shall the Alliance materially fail to comply with the diversification requirements of section 3 for a period of more than 90 consecutive days.

(8) RISK MANAGEMENT POLICIES:

The purpose of the Alliance's investment portfolio is to earn investment income until such funds are needed to finance the Alliance's objectives.

The principal risks therefore are liquidity and capital preservation. Both risks, and steps taken to manage such risks, are specifically addressed in the Alliance's Statement of Investment Policy and Statement of Investment Strategy. In addition to the constraints contained in these documents, certain processes are in place to further manage these risks:

- On a monthly basis the Investment Advisor/ Manager receives reports from the Alliance's management regarding upcoming short-term cash requirements. This is compared to the upcoming maturity schedule with corrective action, if any, being initiated.
- On an annual basis the Investment Advisor/ Manager receives a long term projection of the Alliance's liquidity requirements. This is compared to the long term maturity schedule. Based on the comparison of the two, corrective action, if any, is taken. Note that corrective action in this instance may be taken over an extended time period.

- On a quarterly basis the Investment Advisor/ Manager reviews the credit ratings of all holdings. This is intended to act as an early warning as to potential, upcoming capital impairment issues.
- On a quarterly basis (or more frequently if necessary) the Investment Advisor/Manager reports to the Audit and Investment Committee on portfolio matters. Such matters include diversification compliance and potential capital impairment situations and recommended corrective actions.

(9) POLICY ON THE LENDING OF CASH OR SECURITIES AND BORROWING:

The lending of cash or securities is not permitted.

The borrowing of money, issuing any debt obligations or securities, guaranteeing or securing a debt or other obligation of a person, mortgagor or other entity, pledging all or any portion of the funds received as outlined in the Contribution Agreement by way of security for payment to any creditor or do any other thing that would encumber the funds received as outlined in the Contribution Agreement is not permitted.

(10) PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND MONITORING PROCEDURES:

Performance is measured first by the prime objective of safety of investment and, secondly, by the ability of the investment portfolio to have funds on hand to meet all expenditure requirements. After those considerations in importance comes performance measurement. This will be addressed in ongoing fashion in reporting on new investments and reinvestments in terms of their yield relative to the Canada Curve (the yield that would be achieved from a benchmark Government of Canada bond of similar duration). Less attention will be paid to annual comparisons with other bond managers, unless they operate under similar constraints.

(11) REVIEW:

This Statement of Investment Policy shall be reviewed at least once a year.



Appendix C Financial Statements

Financial Statements of

**DIGITAL RESEARCH ALLIANCE
OF CANADA**

And Independent Auditor's Report thereon

Year ended March 31, 2024



KPMG LLP

150 Elgin Street, Suite 1800
Ottawa, ON K2P 2P8
Canada
Telephone 613 212 5764
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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Directors of Digital Research Alliance of Canada

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Digital Research Alliance of Canada (the Entity), which comprise:

- the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2024
- the statement of operations and changes in net assets for the year then ended
- the statement of cash flows for the year then ended
- and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

(Hereinafter referred to as the “financial statements”).

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements, present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Entity as at March 31, 2024, and its results of operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the “***Auditor’s Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements***” section of our auditor’s report.

We are independent of the Entity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.



Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Entity's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.

We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control.



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- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'KPMG LLP'. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style. Below the signature is a horizontal line that starts under the 'K' and ends under the 'P', with a small upward tick at the end.

Chartered Professional Accountants, Licensed Public Accountants

Ottawa, Canada

June 26, 2024

DIGITAL RESEARCH ALLIANCE OF CANADA

Statement of Financial Position

March 31, 2024, with comparative information for 2023

	2024	2023
Assets		
Current assets:		
Cash	\$ 15,447,697	\$ 6,405,903
Accounts receivable	16,500	139,002
HST recoverable	111,130	86,727
Prepaid expenses	811,730	266,193
Net advance to projects	784,913	–
	<u>17,171,970</u>	<u>6,897,825</u>
Capital assets (note 4)	74,495	98,656
	<u>\$ 17,246,465</u>	<u>\$ 6,996,481</u>

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 945,429	\$ 2,382,101
Current portion of lease inducement	37,816	22,606
Net advances from projects	–	50,320
Deferred funding (note 2)	12,944,751	2,437,007
	<u>13,927,996</u>	<u>4,892,034</u>
Deferred lease inducement	81,664	119,480
Net assets	3,236,805	1,984,967
Commitments (note 5)		
	<u>\$ 17,246,465</u>	<u>\$ 6,996,481</u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

On behalf of the Board:





DIGITAL RESEARCH ALLIANCE OF CANADA

Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets

Year ended March 31, 2024, with comparative information for 2023

	2024	2023
Revenue:		
Government funding (note 3)	\$ 37,165,049	\$ 31,511,921
Membership fees	605,000	618,500
Interest income	639,148	220,721
Other revenue	79,331	156,156
	<u>38,488,528</u>	<u>32,507,298</u>
Expenses:		
Program expenses:		
Digital Research Infrastructure	23,003,542	20,101,876
Dedicated Computing Capacity for Artificial Intelligence	1,374,861	–
	<u>24,378,403</u>	<u>20,101,876</u>
Operating expenses:		
Salaries and benefits	5,686,060	5,578,521
Services	1,343,776	879,671
Transportation and communication	353,340	193,461
Supplies	29,693	17,034
Miscellaneous expenses	4,361	12,117
	<u>7,417,230</u>	<u>6,680,804</u>
Management and administration:		
Salaries and benefits	3,483,285	3,235,662
Services	1,667,629	1,511,528
Transportation and communication	225,032	125,053
Supplies	37,382	60,884
Miscellaneous expenses	3,568	5,709
Amortization of capital assets	24,161	22,147
	<u>5,441,057</u>	<u>4,960,983</u>
Total expenses	<u>37,236,690</u>	<u>31,743,663</u>
Excess of revenue over expenses	1,251,838	763,635
Net assets, beginning of year	1,984,967	1,221,332
Net assets, end of year	<u>\$ 3,236,805</u>	<u>\$ 1,984,967</u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

DIGITAL RESEARCH ALLIANCE OF CANADA

Statement of Cash Flows

Year ended March 31, 2024, with comparative information for 2023

	2024	2023
Cash provided by (used in):		
Operating activities:		
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$ 1,251,838	\$ 763,635
Items not involving cash:		
Amortization of capital assets	24,161	22,147
Amortization of deferred lease inducement	(22,606)	(25,072)
Net change in non-cash working capital:		
Accounts receivable	122,502	(30,435)
HST recoverable	(24,403)	3,391
Prepaid expenses	(545,537)	(146,814)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(1,436,672)	964,903
Net advances to/from projects	(835,233)	50,320
Deferred funding	10,507,744	(2,684,304)
	9,041,794	(1,082,229)
Investing activities:		
Purchase of capital assets	–	(120,803)
Financing activities:		
Increase in deferred lease inducement	–	167,158
Increase (decrease) in cash	9,041,794	(1,035,874)
Cash, beginning of year	6,405,903	7,441,777
Cash, end of year	\$ 15,447,697	\$ 6,405,903

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

DIGITAL RESEARCH ALLIANCE OF CANADA

Notes to Financial Statements

Year ended March 31, 2024

The Digital Research Alliance of Canada (the “Organization”) is a not-for-profit organization that was federally incorporated on August 28, 2019 as a member-based organization with an agreement between Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (“ISED”) and the Organization.

The Organization’s mandate is to play a critical role in helping advance the establishment of a researcher-focused, accountable, agile, strategic and sustainable Digital Research Infrastructure ecosystem for Canadian researchers.

1. Significant accounting policies:

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations and include the following significant accounting policies:

(a) Basis of presentation:

The Organization follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions for not-for-profit organizations.

(b) Revenue recognition:

Contributions and funding designated for the Organization’s mandate are recorded as deferred funding and are recognized as revenue when the related expenditure is incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recorded as revenue in the year received.

Membership fees are recognized in the period to which they relate, providing collection is reasonably assured.

(c) Expenses:

In the statement of operations, the Organization presents its expenses by function. Expenses are recognized in the year incurred and recorded in the function to which they are directly related.

(d) Capital assets:

Capital assets are comprised of leasehold improvements, which are recorded at cost. When a leasehold improvement no longer contributes to the Organization’s ability to provide services, its carrying amount is written down to its residual value.

Leasehold improvements are amortized over the life of the lease.

(e) Deferred lease inducements:

Deferred lease inducements for leasehold improvements consists of allowances granted to the Organization for the leased offices. The contributions are amortized on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

DIGITAL RESEARCH ALLIANCE OF CANADA

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

Year ended March 31, 2024

1. Significant accounting policies (continued):

(f) Employee benefit plans:

The Organization is a member of the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Pension Plan, which is a multi-employer, defined benefit pension plan. The Organization has adopted defined contribution plan accounting principles for this plan because insufficient information is available to apply defined benefit plan accounting principles.

(g) Use of estimates:

These financial statements have been prepared by management in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations and accordingly, require management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and the disclosure of contingent liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenditures during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from these estimates. The significant estimates in the financial statements include the collectability of receivables, deferred contributions, and the amount of certain accrued liabilities in the year they become known.

2. Deferred funding:

The Organization received funding from ISED as follows:

	2024	2023
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 2,437,007	\$ 5,121,311
Contributions received	47,672,793	28,827,617
Recognized as revenue	(37,165,049)	(31,511,921)
Balance, end of year	\$ 12,944,751	\$ 2,437,007

DIGITAL RESEARCH ALLIANCE OF CANADA

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

Year ended March 31, 2024

3. Government funding:

The two Contribution Agreements between ISED and the Organization under the Digital Research Infrastructure Contribution Program were signed on June 19, 2023 and June 30, 2023. The purpose of these agreements are to fund the Organization's activities. The agreements end on March 31, 2025.

The Contribution Agreement between ISED and the Organization under the Dedicated Computing Capacity for Artificial Intelligence Contribution Program was signed on September 28, 2022 and an amendment agreement was signed on January 18, 2023. The purpose of this agreement is to fund dedicated computing capacity for artificial intelligence researchers, in support of the Pan-Canadian Artificial Intelligence Strategy. The agreement ends on March 31, 2027.

The Partnership Agreement between National Research Council Canada ("NRC") and the Organization under the expansion of the Canadian Advanced Network for Astronomical Research program was signed on December 1, 2023. The purpose of this agreement is to develop digital research infrastructure to meet the needs of NRC's research community and the broader academic research community. The agreement ends on March 31, 2031.

4. Capital assets:

	Cost	Accumulated amortization	2024 Net book value	2023 Net book value
Leasehold improvements	\$ 120,803	\$ 46,308	\$ 74,495	\$ 98,656

Cost and accumulated amortization as at March 31, 2023 amounted to \$120,803 and \$22,147, respectively.

5. Commitments:

Under the terms of the operating lease agreement, the Organization is required to make the following payments over the next 3 years:

2025	\$ 167,861
2026	169,244
2027	169,244
	<hr/>
	\$ 506,349

DIGITAL RESEARCH ALLIANCE OF CANADA

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

Year ended March 31, 2024

6. Employee benefit plans

Starting on May 1, 2021, the Organization became members of the College of Applied Arts and Technology (“CAAT”) Pension Plan, which is a multi-employer defined benefit pension plan available to all eligible employees of the participating members of the CAAT. Plan members will receive benefits based on the length of service and on the average of annualized earnings during the highest five consecutive years prior to retirement, termination or death.

The Organization does not recognize any share of the Plan’s pension surplus or deficit as insufficient information is available to identify the Organization’s share of the underlying pension assets and liabilities. The regulatory surplus of the Plan as at December 31, 2023 was \$4.71 billion and the most recent actuarial valuation filed with pension regulators was as at January 1, 2023.

Employer contributions to the Plan during the year by the Organization amounted to \$508,211 (2023 - \$503,576) and are included in salaries and benefits expense on the Statement of Operations.

7. Financial risks:

The Organization's financial instruments consist of cash, accounts receivable, and accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

(a) Credit risk:

Credit risk refers to the risk that a counterparty may default on its contractual obligations resulting in a financial loss. The Organization is exposed to this risk relating to its cash and accounts receivable. The Organization holds its cash accounts with a federally regulated chartered bank who are insured by the Canadian Deposit Insurance Corporation.

The Organization assesses, on a continuous basis, accounts receivable and provides for any amounts that are not collectible in the allowance for doubtful accounts. At year-end, there were no amounts allowed for in accounts receivable.

(b) Liquidity risk:

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Organization will not be able to meet all cash outflow obligations as they come due. The Organization mitigates this risk by monitoring cash activities and expected outflows through extensive budgeting and keeping accounts payable current throughout the year. The Organization is continuously monitoring its cash flow in order to maintain its liquidity moving forward.

DIGITAL RESEARCH ALLIANCE OF CANADA

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

Year ended March 31, 2024

7. Financial risks (continued):

(c) Market risk:

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate as a result of market factors.

(i) Foreign currency risk:

Foreign currency risk results from the fluctuation and volatility of exchange rates. The Organization is not exposed to foreign exchange risk.

(ii) Interest rate risk:

Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value of future cash flows or a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in the market interest rates. The Organization is not subject to significant interest rate risk.

(iii) Other price risk:

Other price risk is the uncertainty associated with the valuation of assets arising from changes in equity markets. The Organization is not exposed to other price risk.

8. Comparative information:

Certain 2023 comparative information has been reclassified to conform with the financial statement presentation adopted for the current year.