

evaluate the proposals made for the program, the Tri-Council Steering Committee appointed an International Peer Review Committee (IPRC). Its members were chosen from the research community both in Canada and abroad. In an effort to ensure an international standard of evaluation and in order to avoid potential conflicts of interest within the Canadian scientific community, ten of the twenty-two members comprising this committee were from outside Canada.

After examining the 158 proposals made to the NCE program, the International Peer Review Committee eliminated 51 of them and further examined the remaining 107 applications. In the end, the IPRC recommended that 16 networks receive funding. In 1989, 14 of these were selected for the NCE program. Ten of these Networks are administered by NSERC and four by MRC, including two which encompass disciplines under both NSERC and MRC. In 1990, a fifteenth Network was created to be administered by SSHRC.

The process of selecting which proposals should receive funding was not an easy one. In order to guide the reviewers certain specific criteria were identified to help judge the applications. Table 1 lists the network selection criteria used by the International Peer Review Committee.

Table 1
Network Selection Criteria

The excellence of the science and of the people involved (50%)	The linkages and networking (20%)	The relevance to future industrial competitiveness (20%)	The administrative and management capability (10%)
The excellence and coherence of the research program; the quality of the researchers and of the scientific leadership; the ability to foster the development of highly qualified research personnel.	Demonstrated linkages among industry, universities, and governments for collaborative research; the extent to which the proposals have sought to include excellent researchers and facilities wherever they are located across the country; the nature and extent of partnerships with and contributions from industry and the provinces to the research program.	The longer-term potential for innovation ultimately leading to new products or processes for commercial exploitation; arrangements for the dissemination of research results, advanced technology developments, and people, to industry; the creation of an environment that encourages the development of new technologies and opportunities for the private sector; the extent to which the proposals have taken into account the objectives and principles adopted by governments in the National Science and Technology Policy.	Proof of an administrative structure capable of managing a complex multi-disciplinary, multi-institutional program.

Source: ARA Consulting Group Inc., *Final Report*, p. 2-5.

In understanding the role of the Networks program it is useful to see how it fits in with other government scientific programs and agencies. Figure 1 shows that basic and applied research are central features of the Networks program. Education and human resources development are also important as is pre-commercial technology development but as the figure indicates, these are not the primary components of the Networks program.