

2020 Postdoctoral Fellowship Program Guidelines

Updated September 30, 2020

These guidelines provide detailed information regarding the Postdoctoral Fellowship program offered by the Women and Children's Health Research Institute (WCHRI).

These guidelines will be reviewed annually and may be subject to amendment. It is the responsibility of awardees to ensure continued compliance with these guidelines.

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1.0 Award overview

The WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellowship Program supports outstanding postdoctoral candidates seeking training under the supervision of WCHRI academic members who will provide a training environment that specifically focuses on advancing women and/or children's health. The awards, valued at \$40,000 per year for two years (total maximum \$80,000), have been funded through the generosity of our partners, the Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation and the Lois Hole Hospital for Women. Successful candidates must demonstrate how this award will enable them to further their career goals in the area of women and/or children's health.

Postdoctoral fellows may receive this award once during their training.

2.0 Eligibility

All applications to WCHRI must be highly aligned with our relevance criteria in order to be eligible for funding.

2.1 Applicant eligibility

All applications to WCHRI must be highly relevant with our [relevance criteria](#) in order to be eligible for funding. For this program, projects presenting with a focus on global health and/or breast cancer are not eligible.

- Applicants must have a conferred PhD in keeping with [UAPPOL Postdoctoral Fellows Policy](#) and be within the first 36 months of their postdoctoral training at the application deadline.
- Applicants must be formally employed as a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Alberta, and actively engaged in doing the research proposed in this application, full-time.
- Applicants must present with a career development plan that fosters skill development specific to women and/or children's health.
- Applicants may not hold or be on leave from a faculty position.
- Applicants must be under the direct, primary supervision of a WCHRI academic member. Where formal co-supervision applies, the co-supervisor must also be a WCHRI academic member.
- Sponsoring supervisors/co-supervisors must have been a WCHRI academic [member](#) for at least one year at the time of application, except new recruits with an academic appointment of less than 1 year at the time of application deadline.
- Primary supervisors may only submit one application per competition cycle.
- Career development mentors are not required to be University of Alberta faculty.

All applications must be institutionally sponsored. Please refer to department, faculty and RSO for RES account set-up and approval processes and deadlines. WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellowship awards are tenable at the University of Alberta only. Changes to institutional support must be reported to WCHRI without delay.

2.3 Application restrictions

Unsuccessful fellowship applicants may apply one additional time for the WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellowship award; WCHRI will consider a total of two applications for any given applicant.

Re-application to the WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellowship program must occur in the competition immediately following the unsuccessful application attempt.

2.4 Application focus

Applications in areas focused on, or related to global health and/or breast cancer are not eligible for funding consideration.

2.5 Additional information

WCHRI does not accept updates to (pending) applications including but not limited to publications/ research outcomes.

3.0 Supervision

All fellows are required to complete their training under the primary supervisor who sponsors their application. The supervisor is responsible for providing direct supervision.

The supervisor’s research program must evidence a predominant (if not exclusive) focus on women and/or children’s health research. Assessment of engagement in women and/or children’s health is based upon representative research outputs submitted at the time of application.

Supervisors must include evidence that they can provide a WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellow with a broad and supportive training environment.

4.0 Award Funding

The WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellowship award is valued at up to \$82,000 (total maximum) provided over a 2 year period.

The WCHRI award contribution supports salary of up to \$80,000.00 over the period of support; statutory and other benefits are contributed to the awardee by the supervisor. Additional funding of \$2,000.00 is provided to support awardee travel to scientific meeting, conferences and/or symposium. Refer to [4.4 Travel allocation](#) for additional information.

4.2 External/other funding

It is the responsibility of the awardee and/or the supervisor to inform WCHRI if they receive another award within 30 days of receiving notification of the award. WCHRI awardees are required to accept alternate funding. Awardees are required to apply for other external competitive trainee funding opportunities during the term of their WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellowship.

Top-up funding provides awardees holding another postdoctoral fellow stipend below the value of the WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellowship award with funding that brings them to the same funding level as trainees currently supported by the fully funded WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellowship.

Incentive funding provides awardees holding another qualifying postdoctoral fellowship stipend with incentive of up to \$5000 per annum.

Scenario	WCHRI Award	WCHRI Incentive	Total
WCHRI award only	\$40,000	\$0	\$40,000
Other award of \$30,000 (e.g. Molly Towell)	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$45,000
Other award of \$46,000 (e.g. Killam)	\$0	\$5,000	\$51,000
Other award of \$50,000 (e.g. Mitacs Elevate)	\$0	\$5,000	\$55,000
Other award of \$70,000 (e.g. Banting)	\$0	\$5,000	\$75,000

4.3 Payment schedule compliance

Awardee implementation is confirmed by payment schedule; institutional sponsors assume responsibility for timely disbursement of funding according to the payment schedule.

All awardees are required to report funding changes and delays with their payment schedule within 30 days. Where award funding is non-compliant with the payment schedule for a period exceeding 60 days, the WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellowship award will be withdrawn and all financial commitments will end.

4.4 Promotion of research outcomes

WCHRI Postdoctoral fellows are offered up to \$2,000.00 (total) to attend at least 2 unique scientific conferences and/or sessions. These funds may be used to promote your research either virtually or in-person.

Funding is subject to the WCHRI deferral policy.

4.5 Participation in grant review

This award is intended to offer opportunities to participate in the development of research competencies. All awardees and their supervisors are expected to participate in grant review starting in year one of the award.

The review participation schedule is as follows:

- Year 1: Graduate studentship, with supervisor support, and WCHRI Research Day.
- Year 2: Summer studentship, and Innovation grant with supervisor support.

Awardees and their supervisors will be booked for grant review participation provided compliance with the participation schedule and approval of the committee chair.

5.0 Application

5.1 Research and scholarship integrity

WCHRI supports the University of Alberta's efforts to ensure the highest standards of research and scholarship practice and behavior. By submission of the signed application, the applicant and their supervisor(s) asserts that the information provided in the document(s) adheres to all research policies and procedures in place at the University of Alberta. WCHRI reserves the right to request institutional confirmation of assertions contained within this application.

Misrepresentations of authorship, credentials or research support may result in disqualification of the candidate from this competition. Further actions may include: disqualifying the applicant and/or supervisor(s) from future competitions for a time period determined solely by WCHRI, withdrawal of any remaining installments of support for any existing WCHRI grant or award for which misrepresentation appears in the submission, and seeking partial or full repayment of any past financial support under any WCHRI grant or award for which misrepresentation appears in the submission.

Please refer to [UAPPOL](#) for further information on the University of Alberta's [research and scholarship integrity](#) policy.

5.2 Application process

Registration is offered to support in-training membership and establish research team eligibility to apply to this award program. Access to the application is offered based on a completed registration form that meets requirements. All application forms must be submitted using the application platform.

Competition information is posted on our [website](#). Late applications are not accepted. Information not requested in the application form will not be forwarded to the committee for review and applications with missing information or documentation will be submitted to the committee "as is" provided applications meet administrative eligibility requirements.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure the application is accurate, complete and submitted to WCHRI.

5.3 Changes to a funded research project

If funded, the research project should not be substantially altered from that proposed in the original application. If changes become necessary, the trainee must seek WCHRI's approval prior to making any significant change. The supervisor must agree with the proposed changes and the original aims and conditions of the award must be satisfied. In the event that the necessary changes significantly alter the funded research, the awardee will be required to re-apply to the WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellowship Advisory Committee for assessment and evaluation of the application.

6.0 Review process

The WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellowship Advisory Committee is broadly composed and representative of the application demographic for this program opportunity. All eligible applications are forwarded to the committee and undergo peer-review using the postdoctoral fellowship grading grid. For access to the current grading grid, please refer to the [website](#).

7.0 Competition results

Competition outcomes are posted on the WCHRI website with official result letters and competition feedback will be emailed to the applicant, supervisor and institutional sponsors about 1 week following the competition result posting. In the event of discrepancy between the website posting and the formal outcome letter, the website posting constitutes our notification of outcome.

Institutional sponsors also receive notification of application outcome.

8.0 Funding implementation

WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellowship offers of award must be implemented by dates stipulated on the formal award letter. Any offers of award not accepted within the acceptance period will be withdrawn and the offer of award void.

9.0 Institutional sponsorship

Application sponsorship confirms that adequate support exists at the institutional level to achieve the proposed/ funded research and that all signees have reviewed and agreed that: 1) the application meets research scholarship and practice requirements and 2) is consistent with UAPPOL policies and procedures. Please refer to the [Meaning of Signatures](#) for details on sponsorship responsibilities.

Institutional sponsors also agree to the public release of information and/or support of any WCHRI communication initiatives subsequent to award funding.

By signing the application, institutional sponsors agree to administration of award funding to awardees in a timely manner following fund transfer. All award disbursements are processed by the sponsor according to the WCHRI payment schedule from RSO established accounts. Where program interruption, and/or concerns arise that necessitate changes to the payment schedule, WCHRI must be contacted without delay.

All applicants must obtain institutional sponsorship from their department chair and faculty dean.

10.0 Time commitment

WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellowship awardees must be engaged in full-time research (minimum 90% dedicated research time) for the duration of the award.

10.1 Unpaid leave of absence / interruption of award

Unpaid leaves of absence of up to twelve (12) months may be granted following a formal request to WCHRI outlining the purpose of the leave. The support of the supervisor and the host department and/or faculty is required. WCHRI will consider requests on a case by case basis and reserves the right to terminate the award if the required approvals are not met.

10.2 Re-implementation following an approved leave

In order to request award re-implementation, the awardee must notify WCHRI of the intent to return to the program of study/ research no less than 6 weeks prior to the anticipated date of return. Notification of the intent to return to the program of study/ research must be supported by the sponsoring supervisor. WCHRI may consider extending the award by an amount of time not exceeding the duration of the approved leave. A request for award extension must be provided at the time of the request to re-implement the award.

At no point will WCHRI provide more than twenty four (24) months of funding to any awardee.

11.0 Reporting

11.1 Progress report

Progress reporting is required prior to completion of the first 12 months of funding in order to be considered for renewal of the WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellowship award. Criteria for successful renewal of year 2 of the award includes evidence that:

- Adequate research progress has been made by the awardee since implementation.
- An application has been submitted to an additional qualifying peer-reviewed funder for salary/stipend support within the first year of the WCHRI period of support.
- The research and training environment continues to be supportive in helping the fellow achieve their career goals.
- The awardee has executed or made arrangements to complete the community presentation requirement.
- The awardee has remained compliant with the terms and conditions of the WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellowship Guidelines.

11.2 Community presentation

WCHRI-funded Postdoctoral Fellows are required to present on research within the community school setting.

Presentation (or arrangements made to present) in the community will be required prior to the submission of the progress report and sufficient evidence should be available to WCHRI to assess the quality/ impact of the presentation provided.

WCHRI will require prior notification of the awardee's intention to present their community presentation in order to allow for sufficient opportunity for a WCHRI delegate to attend. The awardee's (primary) supervisor, and if applicable, co-supervisor, is/are strongly encouraged to attend the presentation.

11.3 WCHRI Research Day presentation

Awardees must present their research at WCHRI Research Day in either the first or second year of the WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellowship award. Trainees are strongly encouraged to present in both years.

11.4 Acknowledgement of WCHRI support in email communications

All implemented awardees are required to acknowledge the support received through this program on email communications. This acknowledgement may follow the awardees name and degree candidacy. The accepted standard for this acknowledgement is "WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellow".

11.5 Final report

The awardee and their supervisor must complete and submit the final report within one month of the termination or completion of the WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellowship award. Both the awardee and supervisor will receive a link to an online report with a submission deadline date.

12.0 Communications

All publications, including public messages, arising from research supported by WCHRI awards must acknowledge the support of WCHRI. Funding acknowledgement is provided in the formal offer of award letters and can be found on our [website](#).

Awardees are asked to inform WCHRI in advance if their research will be published in a major journal and/or receive media coverage. WCHRI reserves the right to publish and/or disseminate information relevant to grants and awards.

13.0 Award termination

WCHRI reserves the right to terminate any award if the conditions of the award are not met, or if there is evidence of unsatisfactory progress.

The awardee and/or supervisor must immediately notify WCHRI of any changes to the training status that may affect the recipient's eligibility to hold an award. This includes termination of employment or leaves of absence.

14.0 Contact information

If you have any questions regarding the WCHRI Postdoctoral Fellowship Program, please contact WCHRI grants administration at wcgrants@ualberta.ca.