



2016 Research Trainee Program Competition for Post-Doctoral Fellowship Awards

GUIDELINES

DEADLINES

Letter of Intent: Friday, December 4, 2015

Full Application: Tuesday, February 9, 2016

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1. Preface

The Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research (MSFHR) harnesses the power of health research to improve the health of British Columbians and their health system. We do this by building BC's capacity for world-class research by funding the best scientists, coordinating the sharing of health research resources across the province, and bringing people together for health research planning and action. Learn more at www.msfhr.org.

2. Purpose

The MSFHR Research Trainee – Post-Doctoral Fellowship Program is designed to attract, recognize, and support outstanding researchers who have completed a PhD, or are a health professional eligible for a fellowship (or equivalent) program.

MSFHR has allocated 70 percent of the total funding for this competition to applications across all four research themes (biomedical, clinical, health services, and population health). The remaining 30 percent of the funding is allocated across the clinical, health services, and population health research pillars to encourage applications from these research areas.

3. Eligibility Requirements

At the time of application or by the award start date of September 1, 2016, the applicant must:

- Have a PhD **OR** be a health professional in active clinical service.
- Hold or be eligible to hold a post-doctoral fellowship position by the award start date, and for the duration of the MSFHR award, at a BC university that holds a memorandum of understanding¹ with MSFHR.
- Not have held a PhD degree for more than five years or have been a health professional in active clinical service for more than 10 years for the duration of the MSFHR award. Justified career interruptions may be deducted from the calculation. Examples of eligible career interruptions are parental leave for birth or adoption, medical leave, residency training, etc.
- Have a written commitment from a supervisor protecting:
 - a. A minimum of 75 percent time of the PhD applicant's time for research training. This represents no less than 30 hours per week, **OR**
 - b. A minimum of 50 percent of a health professional applicant's time (those in active clinical service) to health research activities. This represents no less than 20 hours per week.

¹ Please refer to the [list of eligible Host Institutions](#).

- Be a Canadian citizen, permanent resident or foreign national. Foreign nationals must be sponsored by a BC supervisor who holds an academic appointment at a BC university.
- Not have held a previous MSFHR post-doctoral fellowship award.
- Conduct research in one of the four health research themes as defined by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research: biomedical, clinical, health services, or population health². A clear link to human health must be made in the research project.
- Provide two reference letters from:
 - a. PhD supervisor or for health professionals, an individual who can provide the information required in the reference letter **AND**
 - b. An expert in your area of research and outside of your Host Institution **OR**
 - c. A mentor (cannot be the primary or co-supervisor of the current application)

Notes: If the PhD supervisor is the primary or co-supervisor of the current application, he/she cannot be one of the referees. Instead, select a referee from your Host Institution who can provide the information requested in reference letter.

At the start date of the award, September 1, 2016, successful PhD applicants must provide proof of degree completion if this was not complete at the time of application. Health professional applicants must provide proof of being engaged in active clinical service. If unable to provide proof of degree completion or of being engaged in active clinical service by September 1, 2016, the award offer will be withdrawn.

4. Supervisor(s)

An applicant can have up to two supervisors. The primary supervisor must be an established researcher who holds an academic appointment (at the level of an assistant, associate, or full professor) with a BC university. The co-supervisor must also hold an academic appointment with a BC university. However, the co-supervisor can be an adjunct professor or equivalent.

Supervisor(s):

- Can support up to a maximum of four fully funded MSFHR trainees at any one time.
- Must have a productive health-oriented research record and sufficient resources to ensure the satisfactory conduct of the applicant's research.
- Provide commitment of:
 - a. Minimum of 75 percent of the applicant's time for health research activities. This represents no less than 30 hours per week, **OR**

² MSFHR has adopted the description of the CIHR pillars, but retained a shorter title for pillars 3 and 4 referring to them as health services and population health.

- b. Minimum of 50 percent of a health professional applicant's (those in active clinical service) time to health research activities. This represents no less than 20 hours per week.

The primary supervisor agrees to:

- Supervise the applicant's research and to provide the resources that are necessary for the successful completion of the research project including any KT activities, as appropriate.
- Administer the research and travel allowance of the award recipient.
- Respect the obligations described in the MSFHR Research Trainee – Post-Doctoral Fellowship Award guidelines and conditions of award, as well as those of the Host Institution as they relate to the supervision of post-doctoral fellows.
- Ensure the award recipient:
 - Respects and abides by the obligations described in the Research Trainee – Post-Doctoral Fellowship guidelines, conditions of award, and the Host Institution's policies and procedures.
 - Uses the MSFHR award funds only for the purposes intended.
 - Informs MSFHR and the Host Institution immediately of any substantive changes such as the fellow's eligibility status, change of Host Institution or research location, etc.
 - Meets all reporting requirements of MSFHR in a timely fashion.
 - Complies with the ethical and research policies outlined by the Host Institution and the Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - i. Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans 2nd Edition
 - ii. Canadian Council on Animal Care Policies and Guidelines
 - iii. Canadian Environmental Assessment Act
 - iv. Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines

The co-supervisor agrees to all of the above and provides academic support when the primary supervisor is unavailable (e.g. sabbatical leave, extended sick leave) and cannot provide full guidance.

5. Knowledge Translation (KT)

MSFHR encourages applicants across all research themes to include a range of appropriate KT activities, from traditional dissemination activities such as conference presentations and publications, to non-traditional activities such as development and implementation of toolkits; education sessions

with patients, practitioners, or policy makers; media engagement; or commercialization of scientific discoveries, in their research projects, where applicable.

KT may be included in research projects in one of two ways:

- As components of a research project (the practice of KT)
- As the focus of the project (KT science)

Applicants may submit research projects that are fully focused on KT science; these will be evaluated with appropriate KT science criteria. KT science explores the theories, mechanisms, concepts and/or methods by which evidence is used in healthcare practice and policy.

Please visit our [website](#) for resources related to KT. For applicants interested in submitting a KT science application, you will find additional information and sample study protocols specific to KT science on our [website](#).

6. Partnerships

MSFHR partners with other health research funders to build capacity and fill strategic gaps in health research in BC. Applicants interested in partnered awards are encouraged to go to our website for instructions on the process of registering your interest for a partnered award and indicating how your research aligns with partner areas of interest. The Research Trainee – Post-Doctoral Fellowship Award partnership form can be [found here](#).

Applications that fulfill the funding criteria for both MSFHR and a partner organization are eligible for a partnered Research Trainee – Post-Doctoral Fellowship Award. However, only those applications that receive an MSFHR peer-review rating of 3.8 or above will be considered. Funding decisions are based on existing MSFHR policies, confirmed partnership support, and the funding envelope available.

MSFHR and partner(s) financial contributions are subject to availability of funds and the annual budgetary approvals by both MSFHR's Board of Directors and the partnership organization beyond year one of the award.

7. Award Amount and Duration

The award consists of a stipend and a research and travel allowance. MSFHR's financial contributions beyond year one of the awards is subject to availability of funds and the annual budgetary approval by the Foundation's Board of Directors.

The amount and duration of the MSFHR Research Trainee – Post-Doctoral Fellowship Award is determined by the amount of time since applicants completed their PhD or health professional degree as of the Full Application deadline, February 9, 2016. No changes are made to the stipend amount during the term of the award.

The award will provide support for up to a maximum of three years. MSFHR will not fund post-doctoral fellows who hold a PhD beyond five years of degree completion or who hold a health professional degree beyond 10 years of degree completion during the term of the MSFHR award.

Applicants must apply for at least **one year of support**.

The stipend and research and travel allowance are inclusive of benefits, are valued in Canadian dollars, and are taxable.

The table below demonstrates the stipend amounts.

Years Since Degree	Stipend Amount	Research and Travel Allowance
<3 (0 – 36 months)	\$37,000	\$4,500
3 – 5 (37 – 60 months)	\$42,000	\$4,500
>5 – 10 (61 – 120 months)	\$47,000	\$4,500

Example calculation of award amount and duration as of the Full Application deadline date, February 9, 2016:

Date of PhD degree completion: August 31, 2012
 September 1, 2012 to January 31, 2016 = 41 months
 Eligible for 19 months funding at \$42,000 per annum

8. Incentive and Top-Up Funding for Stipend, and Research and Travel Allowance (RTA)

Post-doctoral fellows who hold external stipend awards at the time of application or at the award start date, or who apply and receive such an award in the period that they hold an MSFHR Research Trainee – Post-Doctoral Fellowship Award are eligible to receive a top-up and incentive award. MSFHR considers a stipend award to be external if the award meets **all** the conditions below:

1. Is external to BC
2. Is granted through an open competition
3. Is peer-reviewed
4. Has a value of 50 percent or more of the value of the MSFHR Research Trainee – Post-Doctoral Fellowship Award

The top-up and incentive funding would be available for the duration of the MSFHR Research Trainee – Post-Doctoral Fellowship Award or to the end of the external stipend award, whichever comes first.

Example of MSFHR award adjustment:

MSFHR stipend award	External stipend award received by award recipient	Effect on MSFHR stipend award
\$37,000	Greater than or equal to \$37,000	MSFHR stipend award reduced to \$0 Receives MSFHR incentive award of \$7,000
\$37,000	\$18,500 or greater but less than \$37,000	MSFHR award reduced to the amount that, when added to the external stipend award, will equal \$37,000 plus Receives MSFHR incentive award of \$7,000

Example of MSFHR RTA adjustment:

MSFHR RTA award	External RTA award ¹ received by award recipient	Effect on MSFHR RTA award
\$4,500	\$4,500 or greater	MSFHR RTA award is \$0
\$4,500	Less than \$4,500	MSFHR RTA award is adjusted such that the adjusted value, when added to the external RTA award, will equal \$4,500 Example: External RTA is \$2,500, MSFHR RTA reduced to \$2,000; together the RTA Award adds up to \$4,500

¹The research and travel allowance (RTA) award must be a component of the external stipend award. RTA awards without a stipend component are not eligible for top-up or incentive adjustments.

9. Deferral of Start Date

MSFHR Research Trainee – Post-Doctoral Fellowship Awards are normally offered with a start date of September 1. The start date may be deferred up to 12 months. The start date must be on the first day of any month within the deferral period, and be no later than August 1, 2017.

It is not acceptable to defer the start date of the award to meet the eligibility requirement for PhD or health professional degree completion.

Deferral of the award may affect the term of the award if it impacts the five or ten-year eligibility requirement as previously described. **Deferred start dates, once confirmed by MSFHR, will not be revised.**

10. Authorized Paid Work

Award recipients are expected to spend 75 percent of their time or a minimum of 30 hours per week in research training. Health professionals in active clinical service are expected to spend 50 percent of their time or a minimum of 20 hours per week in research training. All award recipients, with the approval of their supervisor(s), may earn additional amounts from other sources by engaging in work outside of their research activities. For example, they may engage in and accept remuneration for limited departmental activities that contribute to their development as an independent researcher. This work cannot interfere with their research training progress.

11. Application Process

The application process is composed of two mandatory stages: submission of a Letter of Intent and the Full Application.

Letter of Intent (LOI) – **deadline date: December 4, 2015, 11:59 p.m. Pacific Standard Time**

Consists of:

- The short LOI form in MSFHR ApplyNet

Full Application – **deadline date: February 9, 2016, 11:59 p.m. Pacific Standard Time**

Consists of:

- Research project and appendices³
- Canadian Common CV – MSFHR Abbreviated Version (include information from entire career)
- List of Publications, Patents & Intellectual Property Rights (uploaded as an attachment to CCV)
- Supervisor(s) Approval form
- Supervisor(s) Common CV – MSFHR Full Version (include information from past five years only)
- Two letters of reference (one letter must be from PhD supervisor)
- Doctoral certificate or health professional degree certificate

Please note that each university has its own internal deadline that is earlier than MSFHR's. Please check with the office of graduate studies at your Host Institution for more information.

All components of the application package must be uploaded as an attachment in MSFHR ApplyNet and received by MSFHR by the deadline indicated. Incomplete or late applications cannot be considered.

MSFHR will declare applications ineligible if they fail to meet the established criteria.

³ References, charts, figures, tables and photographs only.

For detailed information on the application and submission processes, refer to the Research Trainee – Post-Doctoral Fellowship competition [Instructions](#).

12. Contact Information

For questions on the MSFHR Research Trainee – Post-Doctoral Fellowship Program guidelines or information on how to apply, please contact:

Rashmita Salvi

Manager, Research Programs (Competition Management)

Phone: 604.714.2779

Email: traineeprogram@msfhr.org

Technical Questions

MSFHR Help Desk

Phone: 604.714.6609

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