



MICHAEL SMITH FOUNDATION
FOR HEALTH RESEARCH

BC's health research funding agency

2021 SCHOLAR COMPETITION



GUIDELINES

DEADLINES:

LETTER OF INTENT: **FEBRUARY 8, 2021, 4:30 P.M. PT**

FULL APPLICATION: **MARCH 22, 2021, 4:30 P.M. PT**

Table of Contents

Help With Your Application	1
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Key Competition Dates.....	2
3. Award Amount and Duration	2
4. Eligibility Requirements.....	3
5. Commitment from Host Institution.....	4
6. Research Ethics.....	5
7. Knowledge Translation (KT).....	5
8. Partnerships.....	6
9. How to Apply.....	7
10. Review Process	9
11. Award Start Date and Deferral	10
12. Reporting Requirements	10
13. Applicant Updates	11
Appendix A – Incentive Funding	12
Appendix B – Mitacs Accelerate Internships	13
Appendix C – Frequently Asked Questions.....	14



Help With Your Application

For questions regarding the application and submission process, please contact:

Andrew Biagtan

Coordinator, Research Competitions

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For information about the MSFHR ApplyNet system or help with login information, please contact:

MSFHR Help Desk

helpdesk@msfhr.org

1. Introduction

The Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research (MSFHR), funded by the Province of British Columbia, is BC's health research funding agency. MSFHR helps develop, retain, and recruit the talented people whose research improves the health of British Columbians, addresses health system priorities, creates jobs, and adds to the knowledge economy. Learn more at www.msfhr.org.

Delivering for BC in a changing context

As BC's health research funding agency, MSFHR is committed to helping develop, support, and retain the province's research talent base. The COVID-19 pandemic has created rapid change and uncertainty within BC's health research community.

We reached out to stakeholders in BC's health research system to better understand current needs. We listened and it's clear that funding for early-career researchers is critically important now more than ever. In response, we're introducing changes to our program eligibility, application and review process for the 2021 Scholar competition to account for the impact of the pandemic on research outputs and activities.

Purpose

The MSFHR Scholar program is designed to attract and foster the development of outstanding health researchers from across BC. Scholar awards help enable early career researchers to build leading-edge health research programs, train the next generation of scientists, and make significant contributions to their field. The Scholar program protects dedicated time for health research activities for award recipients through salary support.



Objectives

MSFHR has a strategic commitment to develop health research talent and strengthen health research capacity across BC. Through the Scholar program, we support early career researchers to form their own research teams and develop strong research programs that advance cutting-edge health solutions.

The specific objectives of the program are to:

- Develop, attract and retain high quality early career health researchers in BC.
- Enable early career researchers to develop an independent research program, attract additional research funding, and train the next generation of researchers.
- Enable researchers to develop programs of research that inform practice, policy, and further research.

2. Key Competition Dates

Action	Target Date
Competition launch	Early November 2020
LOI deadline for applicants	February 8, 2021, 4:30 p.m. PT
Full application deadline (applicants)	March 22, 2021, 4:30 p.m. PT
Full application deadline (host institution)	March 29, 2021, 4:30 p.m. PT
Anticipated notice of funding decision	June 2021
Anticipated start of funding	July 1, 2021

3. Award Amount and Duration

MSFHR is committed to developing the health research talent BC needs through investments in the Scholar program. Over the past three years, MSFHR has awarded an average of 19 new Scholar awards in each competition, for an average success rate of 36 per cent. These figures include partnered awards. Additional funds contributed by partners (see Section 8) may increase the number of awards MSFHR is able to offer in a given competition.

The Scholar award provides salary support at \$90,000 per annum for a term of **five years**. Scholar award funds are strictly for use as partial or full salary contributions, inclusive of benefits, for the award recipient, and/or research staff and trainees working directly on the award recipient's program of research, if applicable. The Scholar award cannot be used as an operating grant.



Eligible Expenses

- Salary and/or benefits of the award recipient.
- Stipends/salary of students, post-doctoral fellows, research assistants, and technicians directly involved in the research activities of the award recipient.
- Salary and/or benefits of personnel who provide teaching relief to enable the award recipient to maintain protected time. For example, sessional instructors.

Researchers who hold external salary awards at the time of application or at the award start date, or who apply and receive such an award during the period they hold a Scholar award are eligible to receive incentive funding. See [Appendix A](#) for details about incentive funding.

MSFHR's financial contributions beyond year one of the awards are subject to future funding of the Foundation by the provincial government and the annual budgetary approval by the Foundation's Board of Directors.

4. Eligibility Requirements

At the time of application, applicants must:

- Have a PhD, or equivalent, and commit to a minimum of 75 per cent of their time conducting research.
- Hold an appointment at, or have a commitment for an appointment that will begin by the award start date of **July 1, 2021**, from a BC institution that must allow the applicant to:
 - Apply for and hold peer-reviewed funds as a principal investigator.
 - Be a research supervisor for graduate and post-graduate trainees.
 - Publish their research results.
- Be affiliated with a BC host institution that holds a memorandum of understanding with MSFHR.
- Be within **six** years from the start of their first university appointment (at an assistant professor level, or equivalent) **OR** be within **six** years of obtaining a PhD¹, as of the award start date, **July 1, 2021**, whichever comes last. Note: MSFHR has adjusted this eligibility requirement for the 2021 Scholar competition in recognition of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Justified career interruptions (e.g. parental leave for birth or adoption, medical leave, residency training, clinical licensing, etc.) are deducted from the calculation.

¹ In recognition that some host institutions do not require a doctoral degree as a prerequisite for a faculty position.



BC's health research funding agency

- All time spent in research appointments will be factored into the calculation for eligibility.
- Part-time (0.5 FTE) appointments will be counted at 50 per cent (e.g., a one-year part-time research appointment will be counted as six months). The same formula applies for the five-year window for obtaining a PhD (e.g., for a part-time PhD student).
- Have confirmation from the department head (or equivalent) protecting a minimum of 75 per cent of the applicant's time for health research activities, or no less than **30 hours** per week.
- Conduct research in one of the four health research themes as defined by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research: biomedical, clinical, health services, and population health.² A clear link to human health must be made in the application.
- Not currently hold, or have ever held an MSFHR Health Professional-Investigator, Innovation to Commercialization, or Scholar award.
- Have met all reporting requirements (including a final financial statement) if you currently hold or have previously held MSFHR funding.

5. Commitment from Host Institution

The host institution is the institution that administers funds for the duration of the award, and where the majority of resources to support the project is provided (e.g. infrastructure, human resources, administration, etc.). View a complete list of [eligible host institutions](#).

The selected host institution will be responsible for administering the award funds. The applicant's host institution must ensure that MSFHR funds are used to support:

- Salary and benefits of the Scholar
- Buy out time from administrative and teaching responsibilities
- Stipend and salary of trainees, post-doctoral fellows, research assistants, research technicians working *directly* with the MSFHR Scholar on the program of research funded by the award

See [Host Institution Selection](#) for information on how to correctly choose your host institution.

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.



6. Research Ethics

Scholar award applicants must comply 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:

- Tri-Council Policy Statement: [Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans \(2018\)](#)
- [TCPS 2 – Chapter 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada](#) if the research involves Indigenous peoples
- [Canadian Council on Animal Care Policies and Guidelines](#)
- [Canadian Environmental Assessment Act](#)
- [Canadian Biosafety Standards and Guidelines](#)

Indigenous Health Research

Applicants must comply with the ethical and research policies outlined in [Chapter 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada](#) of the [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans](#) (2018). When appropriate, applicants must also describe their data management plan in accordance with the First Nations principles of [OCAP®: ownership, control, access and possession](#).

Additional resources for researchers can be found on the [First Nations Health Authority](#) website.

7. Knowledge Translation (KT)

MSFHR requires all applicants to include knowledge translation (KT) activities in their research proposal. KT is defined as the broad range of activities meant to improve the use of health research evidence in practice, policy, and further research. It provides the pathway to the impact of your research.

KT-related activities must be embedded within the research proposal through, for example, research user³ engagement, research dissemination, and/or research uptake activities. KT activities should be determined based on their appropriateness given the type of research, expected findings and target

³ Research users are the target audience(s) of research evidence. Research users are experts on their needs, environment, and local context. Including research users as members of the research team will ideally result in more relevant research evidence and an increased likelihood of its use for the purpose of making informed decisions about health policies, programs and/or practices. A research user may include, but is not limited to, other researchers, policy makers, health care practitioners, decision makers, health care administrators, educators, patient user group, or health charity, and the public. [Adapted from Canadian Institutes of Health Research's 'Guide to Knowledge Translation Planning at CIHR: Integrated and End-of-Grant Approaches']. www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/45321.html. Accessed September, 2019.



BC's health research funding agency

audience. Applicants are strongly encouraged to engage research users throughout the research process.

KT Resources

For examples of KT activities and resources to explore as you consider what KT activities make sense – and are doable – within the context of your research project/program, read MSFHR's [Knowledge Translation by Research Theme](#) guide.

If you would like to assess your KT skills, learn more about KT competencies and find resources on incorporating KT into your application, please see [KT Pathways](#). For additional resources on KT in health research, please visit the [MSFHR KT page](#) or contact the MSFHR KT unit at KT@msfhr.org.

KT Science

Applicants may submit a program of research that is fully focused on KT science. While the practice of KT covers activities to encourage and enable evidence use, for example synthesis, dissemination, exchange and implementation of evidence; KT science is the study of those activities, including implementation science. KT science explores the theories, mechanisms, concepts, and/or methods by which evidence is used in health care practice and policy.

KT science applications will be evaluated against set KT science evaluation criteria in addition to standard Scholar award evaluation criteria.

8. Partnerships

MSFHR partners with other funders to build capacity and fill strategic gaps in health research in BC. By partnering on competitions, MSFHR and our partners are able to increase the total number of Scholar awards funded. Partnered awards have the added benefit of offering researchers the opportunity to develop relationships with partners and their community of stakeholders. Details regarding potential partners will be available on our [website](#) and in [MSFHR ApplyNet](#), MSFHR's online application portal, in the coming weeks.

There are two ways for applicants to be considered for partnered awards:

- Applicants interested in being considered for partnered awards are encouraged to indicate this preference in MSFHR ApplyNet when completing their full application. Please indicate the partner(s) of interest and how your research aligns with their funding priorities.
- MSFHR uses keywords provided by partners to identify applications that may be relevant to and align with partners' areas of interest. Applicants are encouraged to review the list of partner keywords that will be available on our [website](#) and in [MSFHR ApplyNet](#), and ensure that their scientific summary within the application captures at least one of the keywords.



BC's health research funding agency

Applications that fulfill the funding criteria for both MSFHR and a partner organization are eligible for a partnered Scholar award. However, only those applications that receive an MSFHR peer review score of **3.8 or above** will be considered. Funding decisions on partnered awards are based on existing MSFHR policies, confirmed partnership support, and available funding. Financial contributions from MSFHR and its partners are subject to availability of funds and the annual budgetary approvals by both the MSFHR Board of Directors and the partner organization beyond year one of the award.

Mitacs Accelerate Internships

MSFHR and [Mitacs](#) are partnering together to provide Scholar applicants access to additional funding and training opportunities for graduate students and post-doctoral fellows involved in their program of research, through the Mitacs Accelerate internship program. Mitacs Accelerate grants start at \$15,000 per 4-month segment through co-funding with an eligible non-academic partner. Applicants interested in benefiting from this additional opportunity must complete a Mitacs Accelerate Proposal application with their Scholar full application.

See [Appendix B](#) for more details.

9. How to Apply

The application process for the 2021 MSFHR Scholar competition is composed of two mandatory stages: A Letter of Intent (LOI) stage where applicants are screened for eligibility by MSFHR staff, and a Full Application stage. Applicants with eligible LOIs are invited to submit a full application. In recognition of the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on many researchers, applicants will have the option to complete a **COVID-19 impact statement** as part of the application process.

1. Letter of Intent (LOI)

- **Deadline date: February 8, 2021, 4:30 p.m. PT**
- Consists of:
 - The short LOI form in MSFHR ApplyNet

2. Full Application

- **Deadline date: March 22, 2021, 4:30 p.m. PT**
- Consists of:
 - Program of research and appendices⁴
 - Canadian Common CV – MSFHR Full Version
 - List of Publications, Patents & Intellectual Property Rights
 - Department Head, or equivalent Form

⁴ References, charts, figures, tables, and photographs only.



- Dean of Faculty Form (if applicable)
- A letter of reference from **each** of the following:
 - PhD or post-doctoral fellowship supervisor or equivalent
 - An expert in the area proposed in the applicant's program of research; and
 - A mentor or collaborator from outside the host institution (within BC or national or international)
- Consent forms and questionnaires (if applicable)
- Letters of collaboration⁵ (if applicable)
- Mitacs Accelerate Proposal application – Part 1 (if applicable)

To complete your application, create an [MSFHR ApplyNet](#) account and follow the instructions in the MSFHR ApplyNet application form. Ensure that applications are complete and submitted by the MSFHR application deadline. Incomplete or late applications cannot be considered.

Submission Requirements

- All steps of the application must be submitted using MSFHR ApplyNet, the Foundation's online application submission system.
- All documents uploaded onto MSFHR ApplyNet must be in .pdf format. The documents must NOT be encrypted. No other formats will be accepted.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to review the .pdf copy of the application prior to submission to ensure that all data entered are complete and accurate. Once an application is submitted it cannot be modified in any way.
- As an applicant, you will be able to access a .pdf copy of the full application to review the information you have uploaded.

MSFHR reserves the right to declare applications ineligible based on the established criteria.

Note: All users (applicants, referees, department head, dean) using [MSFHR ApplyNet](#) for the first time must register and create a system account.

⁵ A collaborator is an individual who participates at some point in the overall program of research and may make a significant contribution to the intellectual direction of the research or research-related activity, and who may play a significant role in the conduct of the research.



10. Review Process

Letters of Intent (LOIs) for this program are not adjudicated, but will be screened for eligibility by MSFHR Research Competitions staff. Applicants with eligible LOIs are invited to submit a full application. Full applications undergo review by an external review panel for funding recommendations.

In recognition of the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on many researchers, applicants will have the option to complete a **COVID-19 impact statement** as part of the application process. MSFHR will also provide peer reviewers with additional guidance on how to take COVID-19 impacts into consideration as part of the review process.

Applications are evaluated via a process that incorporates six principles of peer review: integrity, accountability, transparency, balance, confidentiality, and impartiality. For further details, please see this [overview of MSFHR's peer review process](#). There are **separate peer review pools** for new faculty recruits (within 0 – 2 years of their first *eligible* appointment) and more established junior faculty (3 – 5 years from their first *eligible* appointment) in order to ensure an equitable review process⁶.

The information presented in the **Evaluation Criteria** and **Rating Scale** sections below is used for the peer review process. All applications are assessed against a defined set of criteria in three categories: 1) track record, 2) program of research, and 3) environment and support. To be **considered** for funding, the application must receive a minimum score of **3.8**.

MSFHR recognizes each BC region brings strengths to the provincial health research system and that there is variation in the infrastructure, resources, and supports available to health researchers at different institutions. MSFHR's commitment to rigorous peer review includes ensuring applications from across BC are reviewed fairly and equitably.

Evaluation Criteria

All applications are assessed against the criteria and weightings below. A full description of the evaluation criteria will be posted on our website. **It is highly recommended that applicants refer to the evaluation criteria when completing their applications.**

Criterion	Weighting
Track record	50%
Program of research	30%
Environment and support	20%

⁶ For applicants who have received their first appointment prior to obtaining their PhD, an equivalent separation will be made based on the number of years post-PhD, i.e., the newer faculty pool will include applicants who are 0 – 2 years post-PhD, and the more established faculty pool will include applicants who are 3 – 5 years post-PhD.



Rating Scale

Descriptor	Range	Outcome
Outstanding	4.5 – 4.9	May be funded (min. score of 3.8)
Excellent	4.0 – 4.4	
Very good	3.5 – 3.9	
Fair	3.0 – 3.4	Not fundable
Less than adequate	0 – 2.9	

Funding Decision

Following application review, the highest rated applications are identified in each applicant pool. Applicants are notified of the outcome of the peer review process after the review panel meetings and the subsequent approval of the results. There is no appeal process.

Applicants receive notification of the funding decisions and the reviewers' comments. A list of successful applicants is published on MSFHR's website.

11. Award Start Date and Deferral

Unless otherwise indicated, funding for Scholar awards begins **July 1, 2021**. Successful applicants must confirm their acceptance of the award within the stipulated time indicated in the award notification package.

The start date may be deferred up to a maximum of 12 months; if a deferral is required, award recipients must contact MSFHR with the deferral request and obtain approval. The start date must be on the first day of any month and be no later than **July 1, 2022**. Deferred start dates, once confirmed by MSFHR, cannot be revised.

12. Reporting Requirements

Scholar award recipients are required to complete annual progress reports and provide an up-to-date Canadian Common CV (CCV) to MSFHR for each year of their award. MSFHR will provide reporting information for these purposes in advance. The information gathered in progress reports is used for administration, evaluation, government reporting, and communication purposes, and helps improve award programs.

In addition to annual reporting requirements, award recipients must submit a final report in the last year of their award and a final financial statement within **three months** following completion of the



BC's health research funding agency

award. Any unexpended funds must be returned to MSFHR. MSFHR will provide reporting information for these purposes in advance of the award end date.

MSFHR reserves the right to contact award recipients up to five years after the award end date to determine the outcomes and/or impacts of the Scholar award.

Additionally, to inform evaluation and continued improvement of MSFHR's award programs, award recipients are invited to provide feedback to MSFHR staff to determine areas of improvement for this funding opportunity.

13. Applicant Updates

MSFHR will accept updates regarding **new awards** received following the full application deadline (**March 22, 2021**).

MSFHR will contact all applicants to provide updates on any new awards.



Appendix A – Incentive Funding

Researchers who hold external salary awards at the time of application or at the award start date, or who apply and receive such an award during the period they hold a Scholar award are eligible to receive incentive funding. MSFHR considers a salary award to be external if the award meets **all** the four conditions below:

1. Is external to BC
2. Is granted through an open competition
3. Is peer-reviewed
4. Has a total value⁷ of 50 per cent or more of the value of the MSFHR Scholar award

The incentive funding is available for the duration of the Scholar award or to the end of the external award, whichever comes first. Award recipients who receive top-up or incentive funding are still required to complete the reporting requirements stated in Section 12.

Incentive Funding Scenarios

Incentive funding is applied when:

- the external award totals **less** than the MSFHR Scholar award and is used to raise the combined salary award amount to equal the Scholar award, **OR**
- the external award totals **more** than the MSFHR Scholar award and is used to provide an additional amount (\$15,000) on top of the external award.

MSFHR salary award	External salary award	Effect on MSFHR salary award
\$90,000	\$60,000	MSFHR will pay the difference (\$30,000) between the other salary award amount and the Scholar award amount so the total sum is \$90,000 per year.
\$90,000	\$100,000	MSFHR salary award is reduced to \$0 and applicant receives an MSFHR incentive award of \$15,000.

⁷ Inclusive of match funding from other funding sources, if applicable. Total award value applies to the portion used for salary, i.e., it is not inclusive of other components above and beyond salary, such as research or travel allowances.



Appendix B – Mitacs Accelerate Internships

[Mitacs Accelerate](#) supports collaborative research between faculty, graduate student or post-doctoral research interns (trainees) and a non-academic partner that has committed to hosting the students and/or fellows for an experiential learning opportunity. Faculty get flexible funding for new collaborations and experiential training for their researchers. Mitacs Accelerate grants start at \$15,000 for a four-month term through **co-funding** with an eligible non-academic partner.

Successful MSFHR applicants have expedited access to Mitacs funding, as Mitacs recognizes the results of the scientific review managed by MSFHR and requires only an internal evaluation to confirm eligibility and compliance with Mitacs Accelerate program requirements. Only applicants who are successful in the Scholar competition and who have submitted a **Mitacs Accelerate Proposal application (Part 1)** are eligible for this expedited review process.

How to apply

Scholar applicants interested in including a Mitacs Accelerate internship in their MSFHR Scholar full application **must** contact their regional [Mitacs Business Development](#) representative to learn more about the program and obtain a **Mitacs Accelerate Proposal application (Part 1)**. Mitacs will work with interested applicants to determine how best an internship can be integrated into the proposed Scholar Program of research.

To apply for Mitacs Accelerate funding, Scholar applicants will need to include the following in their full application:

- The number of interns and the length of each internship (the identity of the intern(s) is not necessary at this stage)
- The name of the non-academic partner organization in Canada where the internship will take place, and that will provide match funding with Mitacs to co-fund the intern
- Details of the internship project, including: specific objectives, methodologies, timeline, expected deliverables, benefits to the intern, and partner interactions.
- The partner's proposed role in the project, how the partner will benefit from participating, and how the Canadian community will benefit from this research

All questions regarding the Mitacs Accelerate program, such as eligibility, timelines, expectations, and benefits should be directed to [Mitacs](#).



Appendix C – Frequently Asked Questions

Who can apply to the Scholar Program?

Applicants who have a PhD or equivalent, are within six years from the start of their first university appointment (at an assistant professor level or equivalent) as of the award start date (July 1, 2021), and can commit to a minimum of 75 per cent of their time conducting research are eligible to apply.

What is a host institution?

The host institution is the institution that administers funds for the duration of the award and where the majority of resources to support the project is provided (e.g. infrastructure, human resources, administration, etc.). Host institutions **must** have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with MSFHR. View a complete list of [Eligible Host Institutions](#).

See [Host Institution Selection](#) for information on how to correctly choose your host institution.

What is the nature of the appointment that I must have with my host institution?

The appointment must:

- Allow you to apply for and hold peer-reviewed funds as a principal investigator;
- Allow you to be a research supervisor for graduate and post-graduate trainees, and;
- Allow you to publish your research results.

Can research associates and post-doctoral fellows apply?

Yes, but if they are successful in the Scholar competition, they must have the appointment described above at a BC institution (university, health authority, or research institute) as of the award start date (July 1, 2021).

What is independent research?

Independent research refers to when a researcher is no longer part of a formalized research training program, and no longer under the direct supervision of an academic supervisor. The researcher is engaged in a systematic, intensive study that is intended to increase knowledge or understanding of the topic being studied, apply new knowledge to meet a recognized gap, and apply new knowledge to the creation of useful material, devices, and systems or methods.

Is the Scholar competition open to both PhDs and health professionals?

Yes. Both PhDs and health professionals may apply to the Scholar competition as long as they meet the eligibility criteria. However, please note that all applicants are evaluated under the same criteria. If you



BC's health research funding agency

are unsure about which competition is most relevant for you to apply for, please contact us at helpdesk@msfhr.org.

Can I apply for this award if I already hold an MSFHR Health Professional-Investigator or Innovation to Commercialization award?

No. Applicants cannot currently hold, or have ever held an MSFHR Health Professional-Investigator, Innovation to Commercialization, or Scholar award.

Will interruptions/delays in my career be considered when determining my eligibility?

Interruptions and delays in your studies are considered when determining eligibility. This information is also used by peer reviewers when assessing productivity. Applicants are advised to clearly and fully describe any interruptions or delays that affected the research and the dissemination of research results in the "Career Interruptions" section of the Letter of Intent (LOI).

How will the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic be considered as part of my application?

MSFHR has introduced changes to our program eligibility, application and review process for the 2021 Scholar competition to account for the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. We have adjusted the program eligibility window by one year, and applicants will have the option to complete a **COVID-19 impact statement** as part of the application process. MSFHR will also provide peer reviewers with additional guidance on how to take COVID-19 impacts into consideration as part of the review process.

What are the requirements for embedding knowledge translation (KT) activities within the program of research?

MSFHR requires Scholar applicants from all disciplines to include KT activities, as appropriate, over the course of the program of research. KT activities are embedded at multiple stages of research, including at the beginning, integrated throughout the program of research, and at the end of funding. For more information, refer to the document [Knowledge Translation by Research Theme](#).

I am transitioning from my post-doctoral position to my first faculty appointment. Will I be evaluated against early career researchers who have been faculty members for several years?

No. Applications within 0 – 2 years of their first appointment will be separated from those who are between 3 – 5 years from their first appointment to ensure equitable evaluation and scoring between new faculty recruits and more established faculty. Applications within their respective pools are then reviewed and assessed **relative to each other**. Furthermore, reviewers are instructed to assess research independence in context of an applicant's **relative career stage**. That is, applicants who have more recently completed their post-doctoral studies will likely have more evidence for **potential** research independence compared to applicants applying closer to the end of the five-year eligibility window, who will likely show more examples of **demonstrated** research independence. Reviewers are instructed that within each context, both are legitimate forms of research independence.



The availability of mentors for the applicant is included as part of the evaluation criteria within the Environment and Support category. What does this mean?

Mentoring provides a network of support and resources for new and junior faculty to more efficiently learn policies and practices, and guidance when challenges inevitably arise. For example, junior faculty members who are mentored are more likely to be successful at navigating the tenure process, increasing the chances of career success. Furthermore, accomplished faculty members who are well mentored are most likely to become effective mentors themselves. Given the importance mentorship plays for new and junior faculty, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide evidence of this within their application, and/or ensure that the availability of mentorship is explicitly included in the Department Head Form.

My project proposal includes work relevant to Indigenous health. What ethical and research policies am I expected to comply with?

Applicants must comply with the ethical and research policies outlined in [Chapter 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada](#) of the [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans](#) (2018). When appropriate, applicants must also describe their data management plan in accordance with the First Nations principles of [OCAP®: ownership, control, access and possession](#).

Additional resources for researchers can be found on the [First Nations Health Authority](#) website.

Where can I find the list of available potential Scholar award partners?

Applicants are encouraged to review the list of partner keywords that will be available on our [website](#) and in [MSFHR ApplyNet](#), and ensure that their scientific summary within the application captures at least one of the keywords.

How do I indicate interest in a partnered award?

Applicants interested in being considered for partnered awards are encouraged to indicate this preference in [MSFHR ApplyNet](#) when completing their full application. Please indicate the partner(s) of interest and how your research aligns with their funding priorities. All applicants are assessed on potential partnership matches and may be eligible for partnership opportunities whether or not interest is expressed at the application stage.

If partners are confirmed after the full application deadline, MSFHR staff will match the keywords of the applicants with those provided by the partner, and if there is a match, they will inform the respective applicant.



How do I get help with developing a Mitacs Accelerate proposal?

Applicants interested in including Mitacs Accelerate internship in their MSFHR Scholar application **must** contact their regional [Mitacs Business Development](#) representative to learn more about the program and obtain a Mitacs Accelerate Proposal application. Mitacs will work with interested applicants to determine how best an internship can be integrated into the proposed Scholar Program of research. See **Appendix B** for more details.

All questions regarding the Mitacs Accelerate program, such as eligibility, timelines, expectations, and benefits should be directed to Mitacs.

Will I be at a disadvantage if the dean or the department head (or equivalent) indicates that my appointment is conditional upon my success in the Scholar Program competition?

Institutional support is an important component of the Scholar application and review process. The form from the host institution should indicate a strong commitment to the applicant, both during and after the term of the award, regardless of success in the competition.

What is the difference between a reference letter and a letter of collaboration?

Three reference letters are mandatory for the full application and must be part of the application package. These are typically written by former supervisors, mentors, and experts in the field who are familiar with your work. Letters of collaboration are not mandatory and are written by collaborators who are expected to make a significant contribution to your program of research, and are confirming their enthusiasm to participate in the manner indicated.

My appointment is with one institution but my research will be conducted at a different site. Who should complete the Dean Form?

The dean (or equivalent) of the host institution that will administer the funds should complete the Dean Form in MSFHR ApplyNet.

My host institution (e.g. health authority) does not require the approval of a dean. Who completes the Dean Form in MSFHR ApplyNet?

Do not nominate a dean in the Third Party section in MSFHR ApplyNet. The department head or equivalent at the health authority completes additional questions in the Department Head Form that captures the information required of the dean.



BC's health research funding agency

My host institution has a dean (or equivalent) but no department head. What form needs to be completed?

Your dean (or equivalent) should complete the Department Head form instead of the Dean Form. The Department Head Form contains more detailed questions about the nature of your appointment. Please follow the instructions in the application form on how to do this.

Where in the application does the department head, or equivalent, indicate their commitment to protect a minimum of 75 per cent of the applicant's time for research, for the duration of the Scholar award?

This commitment must be indicated in the Department Head Form (or equivalent).

Can I defer the start date of the Scholar award?

Deferrals may only be requested for the following reasons: medical or parental leave and caregiving. Other reasons not stated are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. If a deferral is required, award recipients **must indicate the requested award start date and the reason for deferral on the Award Acceptance Form and obtain approval from MSFHR**. The deferred start date must be on the first day of any month and be no later than **July 1, 2022**. Deferred start dates, once confirmed by MSFHR, cannot be revised.

How much time do I have to respond to an offer of the Scholar award?

Successful award recipients have a minimum of five (5) business days to accept or decline the award as of the date on the funding notification letter.

What documents will I need to provide before I can start my award?

A copy of the Award Acceptance Form signed by you and your department head or equivalent (which also confirms your research appointment) must be uploaded in .pdf format to MSFHR ApplyNet via the "Accept Award Agreement" task.

If you hold other external funding, you are also required to upload official documents that show 1) that the award has been offered and accepted, and 2) the award duration and amount, including start and end dates.

