



Michael Smith
**Health
Research BC**

2022 Research Trainee Program

GUIDELINES

DEADLINES

Letter of intent: December 6, 2021, 4:30 p.m. PT

Full application: February 14, 2022, 4:30 p.m. PT

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Help with your Application

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

Yuliya Shapova

Research Competitions Coordinator

trainee@healthresearchbc.ca

For information about the Michael Smith Health Research BC ApplyNet system or help with login information, please contact:

Michael Smith Health Research BC Help Desk

helpdesk@healthresearchbc.ca

604.714.6609

1. Introduction

Michael Smith Health Research BC (Health Research BC), funded by the Province of British Columbia, is BC's health research funding agency. Health Research BC 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.healthresearchbc.ca.

Delivering for BC in a changing context

As BC's health research funding agency, we are 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.

Health Research BC continues to reach out to stakeholders in BC's health research system to better understand current needs. It's clear that funding for post-doctoral fellows is critically important now, more than ever. Beginning with the 2021 Research Trainee competition, Health Research BC implemented changes to our program eligibility, application and review process to account for the impact of the pandemic on research outputs and activities.

Purpose

Health Research BC's Research Trainee Program is designed to attract, recognize, and support outstanding early career researchers from across BC who have recently completed a PhD, or are a health professional eligible for a research fellowship (or equivalent) program. The Research Trainee award protects award recipients' time for health research activities during post-doctoral training by providing funding to support their stipend. These awards support health researchers in training to strengthen near and long-term health research capacity and contribute to the success of BC's health research system.

Objectives

Health Research BC has a strategic commitment to develop health research talent and strengthen health research capacity across BC. The Research Trainee Program helps develop talent and strengthens provincial health research capacity by investing in health researchers in the post-doctoral training phase of their research careers.

The specific objectives of the program are to:

- Identify and develop talented post-doctoral-level trainees in health research.
- Increase the research productivity of post-doctoral-level trainees, and by extension, their supervisors.
- Prepare post-doctoral-level trainees for successful careers in research, biotechnology, health policy, and other sectors.

2. Key Competition Dates

Action	Target Date
Competition launch	Early November 2021
LOI deadline for applicants	December 6, 2021, 4:30 p.m. PT
Full application deadline (applicants)	February 14, 2022, 4:30 p.m. PT
Full application deadline (host institution)	February 22, 2022, 4:30 p.m. PT
Anticipated notice of funding decision	August 2022
Anticipated start of funding	September 1, 2022

3. Award Amount and Duration

Health Research BC is committed to developing the health research talent BC needs through investments in the Research Trainee Program. Over the past three years, Health Research BC has awarded an average of 45 new Research Trainee awards in each competition, for an average success rate of 29 percent. These figures include partnered awards. Additional funds contributed by partners (see Section 11) may increase the number of awards Health Research BC is able to offer in a given competition.

The Research Trainee award consists of a stipend valued at \$45,000 per annum and a research and travel allowance valued at \$4,500 per annum for up to **three years**. Applicants must apply for at least **one year of support**. Health Research BC Research Trainee stipend amounts are inclusive of benefits, i.e. host institutions¹ may use the award stipend to pay benefits to the award holders, according to their respective payroll policies. Information about travel and research allowances can be found in Appendix A.

¹ The host institution is typically the institution that provides the majority of resources to support the program of research (e.g. infrastructure, human resources, administration, etc.). The host institution will be responsible for administering the award funds via the recipient's supervisor.

Research Trainees who hold external stipend awards at the time of application or at the award start date, or who apply and receive such an award during the period that they hold a Health Research BC Research Trainee award, are eligible to receive incentive funding. See Appendix B for details on incentive funding.

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

Additional Paid Work

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.

4. Eligibility Requirements

At the time of the award start date of **September 1, 2022**, the applicant must:

- Be a Canadian citizen, permanent resident or foreign national². Applicants who are foreign nationals must be sponsored by a supervisor who holds an academic appointment at a BC institution.
- Have a PhD or equivalent³ **OR** be a health professional in active clinical service (i.e. have a license to practice), **AND** be researching in one of the four health research themes⁴ as defined by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research: biomedical, clinical, health services, or population health.
- Hold or be eligible to hold a post-doctoral fellowship position, or equivalent, by the award start date, and for the duration of the Health Research BC award, at an [eligible BC host institution](#) that holds a memorandum of understanding with Health Research BC. Research associates are not eligible to apply.
- Be within **six years** from their PhD (or equivalent) degree completion **OR 11 years** from their health professional degree completion as of the start date of the award, September 1, 2022. (Note: Beginning with the 2021 Research Trainee competition, Health Research BC adjusted this eligibility requirement in recognition of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.)
 - Justified post-degree career interruptions (e.g. parental leave for birth or adoption, medical leave, residency training, clinical licensing, etc.) are deducted from the calculation.
- Have a written commitment from a supervisor protecting:
 - A minimum of 75 percent time of the PhD (or equivalent) applicant's time for research training. This represents no less than 30 hours per week, **OR**
 - 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.

² A foreign national is a person who is not a citizen or permanent resident of Canada, but is legally allowed to study or work in Canada.

³ Applicants with health professional degrees (e.g. MD) who are not in active clinical service. If you have questions about your eligibility, please contact the competition coordinator.

⁴ Health Research BC has adopted the description of the four themes of CIHR funded health research, but with modified titles for themes 3 and 4, referring to these as health services and population health, respectively.

- Not have previously held an MSFHR (now Michael Smith Health Research BC) Research Trainee award.

Applicants who are within six years from their PhD degree completion or 11 years from their health professional degree completion (excluding any post-degree career interruptions) may apply to between 12 and 36 months of support.

Eligibility Window Calculation

Applicants who are within six years from their PhD degree completion or eleven years from their health professional degree completion (excluding any post-degree career interruptions) may apply for between 12 and 36 months of support.

Example:

- Date of PhD degree completion: October 24, 2017
- The applicant had a 6-month long post-degree interruption (parental leave) between September 14, 2018 and February 13, 2019.
Number of full calendar months between the date of degree completion (October 24, 2017) and the award start date (September 1, 2022) = 58
- Deducting the career interruption: 51 months (since degree completion) – 6 months (career interruption) = 45 months
- The applicant is within the eligibility window (72 months) and is eligible to apply for between 12 and 36 months of support at \$49,500/annum (stipend + research and travel allowance).

5. Supervisors

The primary supervisor must be an established researcher who holds an academic appointment (at an academic rank of assistant professor or higher) with a BC institution that holds a memorandum of understanding with Health Research BC. Applicants may also have a co-supervisor who is an independent researcher with expertise related to the proposed research area. The co-supervisor may be located outside of BC. The expertise of the supervisor and co-supervisor should be complementary and appropriate for the proposed research project and KT activities, and for the professional development of the applicant.

Both the primary supervisor and the co-supervisor (if applicable) must complete a Supervisor Form.

Supervisor(s):

- Can support up to a maximum of **four** fully-funded Health Research BC Research 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:
 - For applicants to the PhD (or equivalent) stream, a minimum of 75 percent of the applicant's time for health research activities. This represents no less than 30 hours per week, **OR**
 - For applicants to the health professional stream, a minimum of 50 percent of the applicant's time for 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 Health Research BC Research Trainee competition 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 competition guidelines, Conditions of Award, and the host institution's policies and procedures.
 - Uses the Health Research BC award funds only for the purposes intended.
 - Informs Health Research BC 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 Health Research BC in a timely fashion.

6. Research Ethics

Research Trainee 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](#)

7. Indigenous Health Research

Health Research BC is committed to reconciliation and to supporting health research to improve the health and wellness of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada. Health Research BC is working to grow our knowledge and skills in Indigenous cultural safety through staff training, improving our policies, programs and practices, and building relationships and partnerships with Indigenous organizations, collectives and communities.

Health Research BC expects applicants to approach their research and knowledge translation activities with culturally safe practices that demonstrate humility, integrity, accountability and respect for Indigenous self-determination. 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.

8. Integrating Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Considerations in Research

Health Research BC has a [strategic commitment](#) to fostering equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in health research. Diversity in research is important to cultivating talent and promoting inclusive excellence, which in turn drives discovery and helps build a more equitable health research system.

There is a robust body of evidence demonstrating the effects of systemic inequities on the health of people and communities. Systemic inequities disproportionately and negatively affect specific groups, including Indigenous and racialized communities, women, disabled people, and LGBTQ+ people, among others. To achieve impact, health research and knowledge translation must seek to understand, account for and remedy systemic inequities in ways grounded in the needs and priorities of affected communities.

Health Research BC expects applicants to meaningfully and appropriately account for EDI in the design of their research programs, in the analysis and interpretation of the findings, in their KT activities, and in the composition and governance of their research teams. Health Research BC recognizes that meaningful approaches to support EDI in research and KT will vary depending on the research topic, discipline, methods, etc. Where guidance is needed, applicants are encouraged to consult appropriate resources, access additional training and professional development, and seek input from more experienced mentors.

9. Knowledge Translation (KT)

Health Research BC requires all applicants to include knowledge translation (KT) activities in their research project. KT is the broad range of activities meant to improve the use of health research evidence in practice, policy, and further research. They provide the pathway to the impact of your research.

KT-related activities must be embedded within the research proposal through, for example, research user⁵ 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 audience. Applicants are strongly encouraged to engage research users throughout the research process.

⁵ 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].

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 Health Research BC'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 [Health Research BC KT page](#) or contact the Health Research BC KT team at KT@healthresearchbc.ca.

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 by a peer review panel that includes expertise in KT science.

10. How to Apply

The application process for the Health Research BC Research Trainee competition is composed of two mandatory stages: A letter of intent (LOI) stage where applicants are screened for eligibility by Health Research BC Research Competitions 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: December 6, 2021, 4:30 p.m. PT**
- Consists of:
 - The short LOI form in Health Research BC ApplyNet

2. Full application

- **Deadline: February 14, 2022, 4:30 p.m. PT**
- **New for 2022 competition:** As Health Research BC is now a signatory of the [Declaration on Research Assessment \(DORA\)](#), we no longer allow the use of journal-based metrics, such as Journal Impact Factor, as surrogate measures of research quality. In keeping with best practices for responsible research assessment⁶, we will no longer allow the use of article citation counts or H-index. *Please do not include Journal Impact Factors, article citation counts or H-index in your application.*

⁶ See [Bibliometrics: The Leiden Manifesto for research metrics](#).

- Consists of:
 - Research project and appendices⁷
 - Canadian Common CV – Health Research BC Trainee Version
 - List of Publications, Patents & Intellectual Property Rights
 - Supervisor (and Co-Supervisor, if applicable) Approval Form (submitted by supervisor(s) through Health Research BC ApplyNet)
 - At least 2 (max 3) letters of reference from previous supervisors and/or senior mentors or previous collaborators who can comment to the applicant's potential as an independent researcher. Individuals cannot submit both a letter of reference and a supervisor form or a letter of collaboration. (Letters of reference must be submitted by the referees through Health Research BC ApplyNet.)
 - Letters of collaboration⁸ (if applicable)
 - Doctoral degree (or equivalent) certificate or health professional degree certificate⁹

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

Submission Requirements

- All steps of the application must be submitted using Health Research BC ApplyNet, the organization's online application submission system.
- All documents uploaded into Health Research BC ApplyNet must be in .pdf format.
- 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 entered.

Health Research BC reserves the right to declare applications ineligible based on the established criteria.

Note: Applicants using Health Research BC ApplyNet for the first time will need to register and create a system account. Department heads will also need a system account in order to submit the Department Head Form.

⁷ References, charts, figures, tables and photographs only.

⁸ A collaborator is an individual who significantly contributes to the conduct and/or direction of the research or knowledge translation activities.

⁹ Successful applicants must provide proof of degree completion by the award start date of September 1, 2022, if not complete at the time of application. Health professional applicants must provide proof of active engagement in clinical service. If proof of degree completion or active engagement in clinical service is not provided by the award start date, the award offer will be withdrawn.

11. Partnerships

Health Research BC partners with other funders to build capacity and fill strategic gaps in health research in BC. Partnering on competitions enables Health Research BC and partners to increase the total number of Research Trainee 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 [Health Research BC ApplyNet](#), Health Research BC'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 Health Research BC ApplyNet when completing their full application. Please indicate the partner(s) of interest and how your research aligns with their funding priorities.
- Health Research BC 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 [Health Research BC ApplyNet](#), and ensure that the lay and scientific summaries within the application captures at least one of the keywords.

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

12. Review Process

Letters of intent (LOIs) for this program are not adjudicated, but are screened for eligibility by Health Research BC Research Competitions staff. Applicants with eligible LOIs are invited to submit a full application. Eligible full applications will undergo review by an external 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. Health Research BC will also provide peer reviewers with additional guidance on how to take COVID-19 impacts into consideration as part of the review process.

Applications will be evaluated via a process that incorporates six principles of peer review: **integrity, accountability, transparency, balance, confidentiality and impartiality**. For more details, please see the [overview of Health Research BC's peer review process](#)

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

Health Research BC 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. Health Research BC’s commitment to rigorous peer review includes ensuring applications from across BC are reviewed fairly and equitably.

Evaluation Criteria

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
Applicant expertise and experience	30%
Research project	40%
Environment and support	30%

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 Decisions

Following peer review, the highest rated applications are identified in each applicant pool. Applicants will be 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 will receive notification of the funding decisions, as well as the reviewers’ comments. A list of successful applicants will be published on Health Research BC’s website.

13. Award Start Date and Deferral

Unless otherwise indicated, funding for Research Trainee awards begins September 1, 2022. Successful applicants must confirm their acceptance of the award within the stipulated time indicated in the award notification package.

The start may be deferred up to a maximum of 12 months; if a deferral is required, award recipients must contact Health Research BC with the deferral request and obtain approval. The start date must be on the first day of any month and no later than September 1, 2023. Deferred start dates, once confirmed by Health Research BC, cannot be revised.

14. Reporting Requirements

Research Trainee award recipients are required to complete annual progress reports. Health Research BC 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 our award programs.

In addition to annual reporting requirements, Research Trainee 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 award. Any unexpended funds must be returned to Health Research BC. Health Research BC will provide reporting information for these purposes in advance of the award end date.

Health Research BC reserves the right to contact award recipients after the award end date to determine the short and middle-term outcomes and/or impacts of the Research Trainee award.

Additionally, to inform evaluation and continued improvement of our award programs, award recipients will be invited to provide feedback to Health Research BC staff to determine areas of improvement for this funding opportunity.

15. Applicant Updates

If an applicant's project and/or research environment changes significantly after the application has been submitted, the applicant must notify Health Research BC immediately. Health Research BC will accept updates regarding new awards received following the full application deadline (February 14, 2021) until April 5, 2022.

Please email all relevant information, including confirmation of award, to trainee@healthresearchbc.ca.

Appendix A – Research and Travel Allowance

Payments and Usage

The research and travel allowance (\$4,500 per annum) will be paid on a quarterly basis to the recipient's primary supervisor's research account. Research and travel funds that remain unused at year-end can be carried over into the subsequent year of the award, but the funds may only be used within the term of the award. All receipts must be submitted to the primary supervisor **within three months** of the award end date, at which time any remaining funds must be returned to Health Research BC. No-cost extension requests for the Research and travel allowance will be approved on a case-by-case basis owing to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on research travel. Award recipients must contact Health Research BC to obtain approval. Research and travel allowance funds may not be used while the award is on hold.

Eligible Expenses

The research and travel allowance may be used for expenses that are directly related to an award recipient's research project only. All expenses must be approved by the primary supervisor and are subject to the travel and expenses reimbursement policies of the host institution. Award recipients should discuss the eligibility of expenses with their supervisor before expenses are incurred.

Eligible expenses may include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Costs associated with knowledge translation, including dissemination of research results (e.g. costs of attending a conference to present the research, page charges and the costs of preparing a research manuscript for publication, development and maintenance of web-based information, videos, toolkits, translation, etc.).
- Costs of attending career development events and activities.
- Costs of membership in professional associations or scientific societies, or those required to maintain compliance with provincial regulations when directly related to the research project.
- Purchase/lease and extended warranty of home office furniture, cell phones, tablets, computers, and other hardware and software required for the research (the host institution's policy on ownership of equipment will apply).
- Monthly charges for the use of the internet from the institution or home when this service is required for the purpose of research and not normally provided by the institution free of charge.
- Safety-related expenses related to the research project, such as protective gear, immunizations, etc.
- Costs related to improving workplace accessibility and/or career support for applicants who have a disability.
- In accordance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement 2 (TCPS 2 - Chapter 9 Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada), Health Research BC recognizes the importance of respecting the culture and traditions of Indigenous Peoples. Expenses related to the conduct of research and knowledge translation with Indigenous communities, including, but not limited to the following are eligible for reimbursement:
 - Costs related to community mobilization and engagement, including culturally relevant promotional items such as tobacco, cloth, feasting and gift giving for honoring ceremonies, and cash reimbursements (in a method acceptable to the individual or community being reimbursed) to compensate community participation.

- Contracts and/or consultant fees for knowledge translation and communication activities for Indigenous Elders, community members, and Indigenous Knowledge Holders involved in activities related to the Indigenous community.

Some examples of ineligible expenses include:

- Salaries for research or administrative personnel.
- Commuting costs between the residence and host institution or research location, or between two places of employment.
- Immigration and work permit fees.

Appendix B – Incentive Funding

Research Trainees who hold external stipend awards at the time of application or at the award start date, or who apply and receive such an award during the period that they hold a Health Research BC Research Trainee award, are eligible to receive incentive funding. Health Research BC considers a stipend award to be external if the award meets **all four** conditions below:

1. Is external to BC
2. Is granted through an open competition
3. Is peer-reviewed
4. Has a total value¹⁰ of 50 percent or more of the value of the Health Research BC Research Trainee award

The incentive funding is available for the duration of the Health Research BC Research Trainee award, or to the end of the external stipend award, whichever comes first. External research and travel awards without a stipend component are not eligible for incentive adjustments.

Award recipients who receive incentive funding are still required to complete the reporting requirements stated in Section 14.

Incentive Funding Scenarios

Incentive funding is applied when:

- The external award totals **less** than the Health Research BC Research Trainee award and is used to raise the combined salary award amount to equal the Research Trainee award, **OR**
- The external award totals **more** than the Health Research BC Research Trainee award and is used to provide an additional amount (\$7,000) on top of the external award.

Health Research BC stipend award	External stipend award received by award recipient	Effect on Health Research BC stipend award
\$45,000	\$22,500 or greater, but less than \$45,000	Health Research BC award reduced to the amount that, when added to the external stipend award, will equal \$45,000 per year, plus receives Health Research BC incentive award of \$7,000
\$45,000	Greater than or equal to than \$45,000	Health Research BC stipend award reduced to \$0 Receives Health Research BC incentive award of \$7,000 per year

¹⁰ Inclusive of match funding from other funding sources, if applicable. Total award value applies to the portion used for salary/stipend, i.e. it is not inclusive of other components above and beyond, such as research and/or travel allowances.

Appendix C – Frequently Asked Questions

Can research associates apply?

No. By definition, research associates are full-time or part-time appointees who primarily conduct research with no formal teaching duties and are not considered part of a formalized research training program. Therefore, for the purposes of this award, research associates are not considered trainees.

Am I eligible to apply for a Research Trainee award if I am a health professional?

You are eligible to apply in the health professional stream if you are active in clinical service and have not held your health professional degree for more than 11 years as of September 1, 2022. You are eligible to apply in the PhD (or equivalent) stream if you are not active in clinical service and you have not held your PhD or equivalent (i.e. your health professional degree) for more than 6 years as of September 1, 2022. (Please see Section 4 for instructions on how to calculate your eligibility.)

Applicants must also be eligible to hold a post-doctoral fellowship position (or equivalent) at an eligible BC host institution for the duration of the award. Please contact Yuliya if you have questions about your eligibility (trainee@healthresearchbc.ca).

I have a health professional degree but am not in active clinical practice. Am I eligible for 50 percent protected time for research?

No. A health professional who is not in active clinical practice must apply through the PhD or equivalent stream and commit to 75 percent protected time for research.

Am I eligible to apply for a Research Trainee award if my post-doctoral fellowship appointment at a BC institution is dependent on my getting the funding from Health Research BC?

Yes, you are eligible to apply.

I've had my PhD (or equivalent degree) for more than six years. Am I eligible to apply for a Research Trainee award?

You are not eligible to apply if you have held your PhD degree (or equivalent) for more than six years and do not have any justified post-degree career interruptions.

Can my post-doctoral supervisor and/or co-supervisor also provide a letter of reference?

No. Your current supervisor and co-supervisor (if applicable) will have to complete a supervisor form in ApplyNet as part of your application. Your current supervisor(s) are not allowed to submit a letter of reference. Applicants may consider asking former supervisors, former mentors, or former collaborators to provide letters of reference. Referees should know the applicant well enough to be able to comment on their potential to become an independent researcher.

There is someone I want to work with who is an expert in the area of my research. Should I add them as a co-supervisor or a collaborator?

Applications can have only one co-supervisor but there is no limit on the number of collaborators. Like collaborators, co-supervisors are expected to significantly contribute to the research project and/or knowledge translation activities, but they also commit to the professional development of the applicant.

A collaborator is an individual who significantly contributes to the conduct and/or direction of the research or knowledge translation activities. Collaborators may contribute to the professional development of the applicant, but to a lesser degree than would be expected by a supervisor or co-supervisor.

Will the stipend levels change during the term of the award?

No changes will be made to the stipend amount during the term of the award. The stipend for the award is valued at \$45,000 per annum. The research and travel allowance is valued at \$4,500 per annum. Health Research BC's financial contributions beyond year one of the awards is subject to future funding of Health Research BC by the provincial government and the annual budgetary approval by Health Research BC's Board of Directors.

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. You are advised to clearly and fully describe any interruptions or delays that affected the research and the dissemination of research results in the "Career Timeline" section of the letter of intent.

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

Health Research BC has introduced changes to our program eligibility, application and review process for the 2022 Research Trainee 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. Health Research BC 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 research project?

Health Research BC requires Research Trainee applicants from all disciplines to include KT activities, as appropriate, as part of the proposed research project. 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](#).

How do I indicate interest in a partnered award?

Applicants interested in being considered for partnered awards are encouraged to indicate this preference in [Health Research BC 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, Health Research BC 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.

For partnered awards, is the funding shared evenly between Health Research BC and the partner?

Normally it is a 50-50 funding share between Health Research BC and the co-funding partner. However, it is possible that a Health Research BC Research Trainee award may be funded by more than one partner, or that Health Research BC and a single partner may decide to contribute unequal portions to one particular award.

If I don't match with a partner will that affect my chances of receiving a regular Research Trainee award?

No. Your chances of receiving a regular Research Trainee award are not affected by your interest in a partnered award.

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

Health Research BC expects applicants to approach their research and knowledge translation activities with culturally safe practices that demonstrate humility, integrity, accountability and respect for Indigenous self-determination. 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.

Can I defer the start date of my Research Trainee award?

Deferrals may only be requested for the following reasons: relocation, 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 Health Research BC**. The deferred start date must be on the first day of any month and be no later than September 1, 2023. Deferred start dates, once confirmed by Health Research BC, cannot be revised.

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 supervisor (and co-supervisor, if applicable) must be uploaded in .pdf format to [Health Research BC ApplyNet](#).

If not provided in your full application at time of submission, successful applicants must provide proof of doctoral degree completion by the award start date. The same applies for the corresponding documentation for proof of active clinical service from health professional applicants who did not provide this at the time of application. If proof of degree completion or active engagement in clinical service is not provided by the award start date, the award offer will be withdrawn.

If you hold other external funding, you will also be 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.