

Guidelines for Postdoctoral Fellows Applying for Research Grants

Postdoctoral fellows with an appointment (Postdoctoral Fellow I or II) at Unity Health Toronto can apply for and hold select research grants provided that **all** of the following criteria are met:

- a. If a postdoc is paid from their supervisor's Tri-Agency grant, they are **not eligible** to simultaneously apply for and hold a Tri-Agency research grant. They may be eligible to hold research grants from other granting agencies.
- b. If a postdoc is paid from a Tri-Agency fellowship, they are **eligible** to apply for and hold a research grant should they meet the granting agency's eligibility criteria.
- c. The grant program guidelines explicitly indicate postdocs as **eligible Principal Investigators (PI)**.
- d. The postdoc's supervisor must approve and agree to be **Co-PI and account holder**.
- e. The term of the grant does **not exceed** the term of the postdoc's contract. Postdocs are eligible to apply for grants after successfully competing their **probationary period** (i.e. 6 months).
- f. The **institutional approvals** are obtained.

Important Notes

- Postdocs must discuss any grant applications with their supervisor, agreeing on the time commitment and use of any of the supervisor's or department's resources to carry out the proposed research activities.
- The postdoc's supervisor must agree to be Co-PI and account holder of the grant.
- Postdocs are **not eligible** to apply for or hold any NSERC grants, CIHR Project Grant or other grants that do not explicitly permit applications from trainees unless the postdoc will take up an academic appointment before the start date of the grant or within the timeframe permitted by the granting agency.
- If a postdoc grant holder accepts an academic appointment in an eligible postsecondary institution, their grant may be transferred to their new institution (if allowed by the granting agency).
- If a postdoc grant holder leaves their position prior to the end of their contract without securing an eligible academic appointment, their grant will be transferred to the supervising PI (pending obtaining the granting agency approval).

Tri-Agency Grant Programs

Under Tri-Agency guidelines, postdoctoral fellows are generally not considered independent researchers and are therefore ineligible to apply for most grant programs. However, there are specific grant programs where their guidelines explicitly name postdoctoral fellows, postdoctoral researchers or postdoctoral scholars as eligible applicants. Examples of these programs are listed below:

Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)

Planning and Dissemination Grant: The [Institute of Health Services and Policy Research \(IHSPR\)](#) provides support for dissemination activities that will contribute to the advancement of research consistent with the mandate of CIHR. The Planning and Dissemination Grants program is administered through ResearchNet and is launched twice per year: July and January. Postdocs are eligible to apply as Trainees. (Example: [Winter 2022 Competition](#))

For further details on application deadlines, eligibility requirements and how to apply, please visit the [CIHR Funding Opportunities Database](#) at the above-mentioned times to view the funding opportunity.

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)

[Insight Development Grants](#) are expected to respond to the objectives of the Insight program and support research in its initial stages. These grants are valued at \$7,000 to \$75,000 over one to two years. Postdocs can apply as [Emerging Scholars](#).

[Partnership Engage Grants](#) are expected to respond to the objectives of the Insight program and the Connection program. These grants provide short-term and timely support for partnered research activities that will inform decision making at a single partner organization from the public, private or not-for-profit sector. These grants are valued at \$7,000 to \$25,000 for one year. Postdocs are eligible to apply as [Applicants \(Principal Investigators/Project Directors\)](#).

[Connection Grants](#) are expected to respond to the objectives of the Connection program. These grants support events and outreach activities geared toward short-term, targeted knowledge mobilization initiatives. Connection Grants supporting events are valued at \$7,000 to \$25,000 over one year. Connection Grants supporting outreach activities are valued at \$7,000 to \$50,000 over one year. Postdocs are eligible to apply as [Applicants \(Principal Investigators/Project Directors\)](#).

For further details on application deadlines, eligibility requirements and how to apply, please visit the [SSHRC Funding Search Tool](#).

How to Apply

Eligible applicants must follow the application instructions as outlined below:

1. Find Funding and Confirm Eligibility

Search for research grant funding opportunities while ensuring that the “Eligibility” sections state that postdocs can apply.

2. Obtain Supervisor’s Approval

Complete the **Supervisor Agreement Form for Postdoctoral Fellows Applying for Research Grants** that confirms the supervisor’s commitment to cover the postdoc’s salary during the grant’s term. Postdocs must obtain the approval and signature of their supervisor on this form.

3. Obtain Institutional Approval

Send completed **Supervisor Agreement Form for Postdoctoral Fellows Applying for Research Grants** to Marianna Betro (Marianna.Betro@unityhealth.to).

4. Document Tracking Form and Internal Peer Review

Submit a complete and signed [Document Tracking Form \(DTF\)](#) to IPR@unityhealth.to. The Internal Peer Review process and guidelines for postdoc grant applications is similar to scientist grant applications.

5. Final Submission

Unless otherwise noted, applicants are responsible for making the final submission to the granting agency.

Questions? Please contact Marianna Betro (Marianna.Betro@unityhealth.to).