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Date: May 17, 2023

To: Associate Deans (Research), Faculties, Department Chairs

From: Award Services, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

Re: **2023-2024 Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship Competition**

The Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) is pleased to announce the details of the 2023-2024 Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships (PDF) competition at the University of Alberta. The objective of the [Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program](#) (\$70,000/year for 2 years) is to attract and retain top-tier postdoctoral talent, both nationally and internationally, to develop their leadership potential and to position them for success as research leaders of tomorrow, positively contributing to Canada's economic, social and research-based growth through a research-intensive career.

The competition has been formally launched by the Banting Secretariat; notification is hereby provided of the institutional application and nomination process. This memo supersedes the correspondence dated March 23, 2023.

Postdoctoral fellow candidates are to follow the University of Alberta's application process on [FGSR's website](#) to prepare an application for submission to their proposed Faculty for internal review. Faculties are required to review applications for completeness, and to pre-screen applications to ensure the fit with the Department/Faculty. Once nominated to FGSR, the Postdoctoral Fellowship Committee will then select a shortlist of candidates who will be invited to submit their completed application in ResearchNet for national level review.

Faculties and proposed supervisors are to take note of the following:

- The program is to support world-class postdoctoral researchers who will become the research leaders of tomorrow; only the highest-calibre researchers should be endorsed.
- Only in rare circumstances will a Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship be awarded to an applicant who is staying at the same institution or within the same research environment where they completed their PhD, PhD-equivalent or health professional degree. A very strong justification is required. Refer to the [Banting website](#) for complete details and examples of valid justifications.
- Host institutions are encouraged to consider diversity on multiple levels (e.g., research discipline, gender, official language (for Canadian host institutions), cultural background, citizenship) when considering which applicants to endorse for the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships program.
- In keeping with the aim of attracting postdoctoral researchers to Canada, Banting encourages universities to continue strengthening efforts to endorse new international candidates.
- Given the rigour of the selection process and the fact that the Banting awards only 70 fellowships nationally per year, institutions are expected to be highly selective and limit the number of applications

they endorse.

- The fellowship is a stipend that is awarded to the postdoctoral researcher. The annual stipend (\$70,000 per year, for two years) does not cover the cost of benefits for postdoctoral fellows. Applicants and their proposed supervisors should discuss the details of the fellowship appointment (any benefits offered to the postdoctoral researcher; any financial obligations associated with the appointment; availability of research and/or other support; rights and responsibilities), as well as any established research-related policies and protocols. Refer to the university's [PDF Collective Agreement](#) and [Benefits website](#) for information on postdoctoral fellow appointments.
- Proposed supervisors are to refer to the *2023-2024 Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship: Guide for Supervisors* (Appendix and [online](#)) for guidance on the following: Supervisor's Statement, selection committee, and research respectfully involving Indigenous communities).
- Applications for, and awards provided through, the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program are subject to the policies and guidelines for awards programs as outlined by each funding agency.
- Applicant and peer review guidance has been aligned with [DORA recommendations](#). Applicants can highlight a range of contributions in their applications.

Eligibility

Canadian citizens, permanent residents of Canada and foreign citizens are eligible to apply, provided they meet the following conditions: [Citizenship and location of host institution](#). Applicants must fulfill or have fulfilled all degree requirements for a PhD, PhD-equivalent or health professional degree: between September 15, 2020 and September 30, 2024 (inclusively), and before the start date of their award (note: dates to be confirmed by the formal announcement). The window of eligibility could be extended by a cumulative maximum of three years if the applicant had their career interrupted for extenuating circumstances: [Allowable extensions to eligibility window](#). Complete details about the program are available on the [Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships](#) website (subject to change).

Applicants and Faculties are to confirm eligibility and read all program information on the Banting website prior to applying. Nominations that do not meet all the eligibility criteria will not be accepted. The proposed timeline and process is as follows (subject to change):

Timeline 2023:

March – July	<p>Faculties may implement their own internal application deadline for postdoctoral applicants to submit their application for their internal review. Applicants are responsible for meeting any additional internal procedures and/or Department/Faculty deadlines. FGSR will not accept applications directly from applicants.</p> <p>Faculties are responsible for communicating any feedback generated from their internal review directly to the applicant to aid in revising their application. If the Faculty decides not to pursue an application further, they must notify the applicant and proposed supervisor.</p>
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<p>July 7</p>	<p>Deadline for Faculties to nominate candidates to FGSR. A complete nomination for university review and adjudication consists of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banting Faculty Nomination Form (one completed form for all faculty nominees) <p>For each individual nominee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banting Application Form • ResearchNet Application Details (PDF Application Preview pages; all fields are required) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Area of Research; must not be blank – applicants are to refer to Banting Application Instructions>Identify area of Research>Selecting the Appropriate Federal Granting Agency</i> ○ <i>All three fields Title of Research Proposal, Lay Title, Lay Abstract must be completed</i> ○ <i>Other Project Information - if sex and/or gender considerations are not applicable, an explanation must still be provided</i> • Research proposal (maximum 4 pages; 5 pages for French) • Bibliography (maximum 4 pages) • Significance of research contributions (maximum 1 page) • Significance of leadership contributions (maximum 1 page) • Special circumstances (if applicable; maximum 1 page) • Supervisor's Statement (maximum 4 pages; see <i>Appendix - Banting Guide for Supervisors</i> for guidance) • Canadian Common CV (CCV) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>the Vanier-Banting academic template must be used and submitted in draft format for the purpose of university internal competition only</i> • Banting Fulfillment of degree requirements form (1 page max; PDF form only) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>completed and signed by authorized designate at the applicants institution of doctoral degree</i> ○ <i>Banting degree requirements form is required; copies of doctoral certificate/diploma or substituted degree requirement forms from other verifying agencies won't be accepted. Authorized designate to sign the Banting PDF form may be the institutions' Faculty of Graduate Studies or equivalent.</i> <p>Note: Reference assessments are confidential and universities do not have viewing access. They are therefore not part of the institutional review process.</p>
<p>July 10 – 14</p>	<p>FGSR reviews nomination packages for eligibility and completeness.</p>
<p>July 17 - August 15</p>	<p>Review of nominations by the Postdoctoral Fellowship Committee members, and final adjudication meeting. Committee members select a shortlist of candidates to be forwarded for national review.</p>
<p>August 15 - 17</p>	<p>FGSR notifies all successful and unsuccessful applicants, and Faculty nominators of the results.</p> <p>The shortlist of candidates will be invited to submit a complete application in ResearchNet. To complete the application and be forwarded to the national level, the Institutional Letter of Endorsement and reference assessments are required:</p> <p>1) Reference Assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates should begin to contact their selected referees to seek their reference assessments. • Reference assessments must be submitted in ResearchNet directly by referees. The deadline date for submission is set by the applicant and will be noted on ResearchNet's online referee assessment page.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessments are to be submitted well in advance of the final national deadline. • Candidates must clearly explain to their referees that the online assessments must be uploaded to ResearchNet by the deadline, or the entire application cannot be submitted. • It is the candidate’s responsibility to provide referees with the information that they need to complete their assessments. • Note: the university does not have access to reference assessments <p>2) Institutional Letter of Endorsement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGSR will provide Faculties a draft Institutional Letter of Endorsement and instructions to complete and to return for university designate signatory. • 1 page max; do not format margins etc. • the content provided in the draft template must be used and not be altered; only use “Supervisor Paragraph” space provided • confirm agreement with the supervisor’s statement of synergy between the institution’s strategic priorities and the applicant’s proposed research program
August 18	The application (excluding the Institutional Letter of Endorsement) is to be submitted by the proposed Supervisor via a New Project Request through the Research Services Office’s (RSO) Researcher Home Page for department, Faculty, and RSO approval. Further instructions will be provided at this time.
August 28 (hard deadline)	Faculties are responsible for ensuring the New Project Request has been approved by all levels and is with the RSO for their review and approval. The New Project Request approval is required in order for FGSR to sign the Institutional Letter of Endorsement for the candidate.
August 31 (hard deadline)	Deadline for Faculties to return the completed draft Institutional Letter of Endorsement to FGSR. This is a hard deadline to allow enough time to prepare final Letters for shortlisted candidates. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return the Letter in word format; do not format margins etc.
September 1 - 13	FGSR will prepare and sign the Letters of Endorsement as the university designate, and return to the shortlisted candidates for submission in ResearchNet as part of their complete application. Candidates are responsible for ensuring the Letter of Endorsement has been uploaded properly, and that the reference letters assessments are completed in ResearchNet, or the entire application cannot be submitted.
September 20	Full application submitted by nominee to Banting Secretariat via ResearchNet by 20:00 EDT (6:00 pm MDT).
Mid-February 2024	Results of the 2023-2024 competition will be announced by the Banting Secretariat (anticipated date).
April – October 2024	Banting PDF’s take up their appointments

For any questions regarding this year’s competition, please contact grad.awards@ualberta.ca.

Sincerely,

FGSR Award Services

Supervisors should be highly selective and recommend only the highest-calibre postdoctoral researchers. Certain circumstances may legitimately affect an applicant's record of research achievement (e.g. availability of research/leadership opportunities). This should be factored into the selection process. Refer to the 2023-2024 Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship Competition Memo and FGSR's website for the university's internal process, timelines, and dates, and the requirements for a complete application. Faculty nominations are due at FGSR July 7, 2023. Note that Faculties may implement their own internal application deadline for postdoctoral applicants to submit their application for their internal review, therefore check with your Faculty for their internal process.

The following is a summary for the proposed Supervisor's role to prepare the candidates application:

- Identify candidates area of research
- If applicable ensure proposed research is in accordance with Tri-Council's policies and principles
- Provide a Supervisor's Statement as part of the candidates application
- The fellowship is a stipend that is awarded to the postdoctoral researcher. The annual stipend (\$70,000 per year, for two years) does not cover the cost of benefits for postdoctoral fellows. Applicants and their proposed supervisors should discuss the details of the fellowship appointment (any benefits offered to the postdoctoral researcher; any financial obligations associated with the appointment; availability of research and/or other support; rights and responsibilities), as well as any established research-related policies and protocols. Refer to the university's [PDF Collective Agreement](#) and [Benefits website](#) for information on postdoctoral fellow appointments.

After FGSR's Postdoctoral Fellowship Committee review of university nominations: if your applicant is successfully shortlisted to be forwarded to the national level, they will be invited to submit their application in ResearchNet. The application (excluding the Institutional Letter of Endorsement) is to be submitted by the proposed Supervisor via a New Project Request through the Research Services Office's (RSO) Researcher Home Page for department, Faculty, and RSO approval. Further instructions will be provided at this time. FGSR will provide a draft Institutional Letter of Endorsement to you and your faculty contact at that time; the Letter is required for the candidate to officially submit their application in ResearchNet for university approval and for national review.

Identify Area of Research:

The onus is on the applicant and their proposed supervisor to carefully consider which selection committee should review the application. For more details, consult the Banting [Application Guide > Identify area of Research \(Selecting the Appropriate Federal Granting Agency\)](#). If there is uncertainty, please send an email to banting@cihr-irsc.gc.ca with a one-page summary of the proposed research, and Banting staff will provide clarification.

Research Respectfully Involving Indigenous Communities:

The proposed research must be in accordance with the policies and principles outlined in the following two main documents:

- [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Chapter 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada](#)
- [SSHRC Guidelines for the Merit Review of Indigenous Research](#)
- [CIHR's Research Involving First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada – Webinar](#)

Proposed supervisors must describe how collaborations are developed and provide details corroborating information included in the research proposal. **In order to be funded, research involving and engaging with Indigenous communities must fulfill the pillars for respectful research engaging with Indigenous peoples.**

The research proposal should reflect that the candidate and the supervisor are aware of and referring to relevant principles and protocols established for this kind of research, such as, following the Principles of [OCAP®](#) (i.e., ownership, control, access and possession/protection), the [CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance](#), and/or other principles as determined by relevant communities.

For complete details, consult the Banting [Application Guide](#).

Supervisor's Statement

Maximum of 4 pages following [Banting Presentation Standards; on institutional UofA letterhead, signed by the supervisor](#). This document will be used to assess the degree to which the institution and supervisor are committed to the applicant, their capacity to enable the applicant to become a future leader in their chosen field, and their potential to build upon the institution's strategic priorities. The Supervisor's Statement, the professional development opportunities, and the description of the research environment coming from proposed supervisors are very influential in the selection committee's consideration of the candidates, and we appreciate you taking the time to provide this information.

Reminder from Banting: Given the competitive nature of the Banting PDF program and its role as a premier postdoctoral program in Canada, it is very important that institutions clearly outline the support that will be provided to the applicant. The supervisor should explain how this support goes above and beyond what is offered to regular postdoctoral researchers. Furthermore, the support should be reasonable and appropriate to the institution and should meet the applicant's needs and the requirements of the proposed research. Postdoctoral researchers must complete the Banting End of Award Report, which includes follow-up questions to confirm whether the support outlined in the application was granted to them during their award.

This application element speaks directly to the following selection criterion: [Institutional commitment and demonstrated synergy between applicant and institutional strategic priorities](#).

The following should be addressed in your Supervisor Statement In accordance with Banting regulations. Refer to the [Banting Application Guide > Attachment: Supervisor's statement](#) for complete details and guideline requirements of each section:

1. Supervisor's biography

Describe the supervisor's academic and research background, key contributions/accomplishments and funding to date. This section must be concise and include only information that is relevant to the application.

2. Appropriateness of the supervisor(s)

Describe the fit between the research interests/background of the supervisor and applicant, and the anticipated mutual benefits. In the description, provide specifics about how the proposed research complements the supervisor's ongoing projects and/or new research directions. Detail the contributions of the supervisor and applicant in the design and development of the proposed research.

3. Research environment

Provide details concerning the applicant's proposed research environment, clearly stating the supervisor's and laboratory/department's commitment. Examples of commitment include (but are not limited to) mentorship, opportunities for collaboration, dissemination, and/or knowledge translation, resources (e.g., funding, facilities, personnel) that will be available to support the applicant as they carry out their proposed research and develop their leadership potential.

In the case of applications in which the proposed research respectfully involves Indigenous communities, describe how respectful relationships are being developed to engage with relevant Indigenous communities in the proposed research and to promote reciprocity in terms of the benefits derived from the research process and outcomes that are meaningful and culturally appropriate. Describe any support provided to facilitate collaborations between the applicant, the host institution and Indigenous communities/partners. The supervisor **must** provide details corroborating information provided in the research proposal.

For more information, see Banting's [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion page](#).

4. Professional development

Supervisors are to edit and customize the following for each applicant under this section (i.e. to "Describe the institution's commitment to the applicant's professional leadership development"):

Professional development opportunities at the UofA

The University of Alberta, through the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) and other campus units, provides a series of Professional Development opportunities for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. The majority of sessions are offered at no cost.

Communication training is available from a many sources. The FGSR Community Volunteer program offers sessions on how to develop and prepare research presentations for general audiences, as well as hands-on opportunities. The Centre for Writers and the Student Success Centre host numerous writing sessions, such as "Writing an Effective Funding Proposal" to "Writing for Clarity" that allow participants to focus on specific writing needs. A multi-tiered teaching program directed through FGSR also provides exceptional training for communication in the classroom, and skills training that can transfer to any area of employment. The Alberta Innovates SPOR group provides webinars and training specific to Knowledge Translation throughout the year including topics of integrated KT, end-of-grant KT and evaluation in KT. Online resources have been available through MyGradSkills, and more recently through MITACS. Sessions include Academic and Professional Communication for New Researchers and Communicating Your Research. FGSR has also recently developed a module on Transitioning into the Workplace: A multicultural perspective that will be available to postdocs.

Career development sessions are typically met through the Career Centre, FGSR, and Postdoctoral Fellows Association. FGSR hosts PD events that include topics such as "Building Your Professional Brand, Networking, and Finding Success in an Uncertain Job Market. The Career Centre provides one-on-one career advice on interviews, LinkedIn and CV's, as well as hosts many networking and career sessions with government and industry employers. The Postdoctoral Fellows Office is developing an Individual Development Plan to assist postdocs with their career planning and will offer postdoc specific sessions for career development. The Postdoctoral Fellows Association also hosts an annual Research Day to encourage postdocs to network with employers, as well as to gain career advice through sessions they have offered.

Other professional skills training on campus includes entrepreneurship, research management, teaching, and mentoring. Entrepreneurship training has been available primarily through sessions offered by TEC Edmonton, MentorUp and Mitacs. Sessions include a "Lab2Biz" and "Discovering the Entrepreneur Within" workshops. TEC Edmonton also offers an online resource on "How to bring your product to market". The Environmental Health and Safety offers a Supervisory EHS Development Course plus various courses from safety to "Helping Individuals at Risk". The Field Research Office also offers specific training for the field research activities. The International Institute for Qualitative Methodology hosts a workshop series to learn about specific methods, techniques and approaches to qualitative research. Our UofA Libraries

also host regular workshops on data management/storage, citation software, where to publish, and maximizing your literature searches. The Research Services Office provides training for grant administration and several grant writing workshops are coordinated through the Grant Assist Program. The collaborative Institutional Training Initiative provides nine on-line training courses, such as Clinical Research Coordinator and Responsible Conduct of Research. Our Peter Lougheed Leadership College offers our PDFs a number of drop-in, workshop, and cohort leadership development programs in addition to a regular leadership lecture series. The PLLC offerings include the innovative adaptive “DIVE” leadership program where participants work in an interdisciplinary cohort during monthly workshops to dive beneath the surface of their leadership failures and challenges to consider how their own experiences and histories contribute to them.

Training related to strengthening teaching abilities for postdoctoral fellows are offered by FGSR and the Centre for Teaching and Learning. For example, sessions on how to incorporate technology into the classroom, instructional strategies, workshops concerning teaching and learning theory, how to develop a new course, and how to develop a teaching philosophy and portfolio are all offered through these two centres. Mentoring is made available through the Career Centre where postdocs can receive or serve as a mentor and the Undergraduate Research Initiative also provides an excellent opportunity for postdocs to serve as supervisors.

5. Institutional synergy

Describe the institution's documented strategic priorities and demonstrate the synergy between these priorities and the applicant's proposed research program. Clearly justify the institution's endorsement of the applicant in light of the institution's strategic priorities and articulate how the institution and applicant will benefit from this engagement.