# UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
# GUIDE FOR SUPERVISORS FOR APPLICATIONS TO
# THE 2021 BANTING POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS
# COMPETITION

The objective of the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program 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 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 your taking the time to provide this information.** The University of Alberta uses a two-part process for determining applications that will be submitted to the Banting competition.

## 1) Preparation of Preliminary Packages for Internal Adjudication

For the 2021 competition, preliminary packages will be due at the Faculty level by **May 03**. This package will consist of the CVs of both the applicant and yourself; along with the complete University of Alberta 2021 Banting PDF Assessment Form.

Those preliminary packages going forward for internal institutional review are due at the Office of the Vice-President (Research and Innovation) from Faculties by **May 17**. At this point, the VPRI Office will prepare a spreadsheet documenting the applications for each agency and will forward that information to the appropriate Agency-based subcommittee by **May 31**.

By **June 25** the Agency-based subcommittees will select the applicants to prepare full packages for submission. Feedback will be provided by the subcommittee for those applications going forward; those candidates not invited to prepare a full package will be advised and will also be given the subcommittee's feedback.

## 2) Preparation of Full Applications

The **primary responsibilities** for completion of the full application elements are as follows:

- Administrative form, research contributions, leadership contributions, CV, degree confirmation, special circumstances (if applicable) – Nominee
- Proposal, summary, bibliography, names and contact information of referees – Nominee and Supervisor
- Supervisor's statement (maximum 4 pages, see below) – Supervisor
- Completion of Request for new Application/Proposal/Project on the Researcher Home Page – Supervisor
- Draft Institutional letter of endorsement (including synergy) – Associate/Vice Dean (Research) and Supervisor
- Submission of all application documents to bantingpdf@ualberta.ca for completion of Institutional Letter of Endorsement– Faculty
- Signature on Letter of Endorsement – Vice-President (Research and Innovation)
- Submission of all documents via ResearchNet – Nominee

In accordance with Banting regulations your **Supervisor Statement** should address the following:

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 <u>respectful relationships</u> 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. 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 our <u>Equity, Diversity and Inclusion page</u>**.

4. **Professional development**

   Describe the institution's commitment to the applicant's professional leadership development, clearly indicating the resources and/or mentoring activities that are available through the institution to support career development. These could include, but are not limited to:

   - career counselling
   - training in preparing grant proposals, publications and presentations
   - training in knowledge translation/mobilization
   - training in intellectual property regulations
   - guidance on ways to improve teaching and mentoring skills
   - guidance on how to effectively collaborate with researchers and knowledge users from diverse backgrounds and disciplinary areas
   - opportunities for collaboration and networking
   - training in responsible professional practices
   - teaching opportunities

5. **Institutional synergy**

   Describe the institution's documented strategic priorities, and illustrate 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.

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.

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.

This document must be on the institution's letterhead and signed by the supervisor.

This application element speaks directly to the following selection criterion: <u>Institutional commitment and demonstrated synergy between applicant and institutional strategic priorities</u>

For further information, please contact bantingpdf@ualberta.ca.

Please note: 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.

**Professional development opportunities at the UofA**

Please **edit** and **customize** for each applicant.

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.