

Background

The Discovery Fund is dedicated to finding innovative solutions to major challenges in the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of mental illness and improving outcomes for those affected, now and in the future. The Discovery Fund Talent Development Competition, supporting prospective postdoctoral fellows, reflects an investment in the future generation of world class researchers in mental health.

Award Guidelines

The Discovery Fund is hosting a Talent Development Competition to provide support for postdoctoral fellows pursuing basic and clinical research to better identify, diagnose, prevent and treat mental illnesses. Postdoctoral fellows are expected to make independent contributions to knowledge during their appointment. These may be in the form of a contribution to an existing project, or through the development of an original project. Projects will be assessed and awarded under the research themes below, listed alphabetically. These research themes have equal weight of importance and no theme is favoured over another.

1. Basic and pre-clinical neuroscience
2. Brain and/or behavior interventions (including technology-based interventions)
3. Clinical measure and/or biomarker identification
4. Community-based research
5. Health policy or health services research
6. Implementation science
7. Social and epidemiological research
8. Translation of clinical neuroscience (i.e. the study of mechanisms of disease and new ways of diagnosis and treatment) into clinical treatment

The Discovery Fund strategic priorities are listed below. All applications (including basic and clinical research projects) must identify the relationship to at least one of these three priority areas:

1. Suicide Rate Reduction

- a. Community/public health-based interventions
- b. Hospital-based interventions
- c. Endophenotypes of suicidal behaviour

2. Reducing Disability Associated with Mental Disorders

- a. Addressing cognitive dysfunction associated with mental disorders across the lifespan
- b. Decreasing disability associated with depression and other common disorders

3. Improving Psychosis Prevention and Outcomes

- a. Primary prevention/early intervention
- b. Improving functional outcomes associated with chronic psychotic illness

One-Year Fellowship

One-year awards of \$60,000 CAD stipend + \$5,000 CAD research allowance are available (conditional on availability of funds). Applications will be evaluated by a team of independent researchers, based on CIHR standards of excellence. The final selection of awards will be made by the Discovery Fund Steering Committee.

Two-Year Fellowship

The intention of this fellowship is to provide opportunity for postdoctoral fellows to generate new international and

national collaborations by holding a fellowship that requires two co-supervisors from different institutions. **Two-year awards of \$60,000 CAD stipend + \$5,000 CAD research allowance each are available** (conditional on availability of funds). During the first year of this stipend, awardees will be located at an institution external to CAMH (University of Toronto is acceptable, but another institution would be preferable) and during the second year, the awardee will be located at CAMH. Selection of awards will follow the same process as for the one-year fellowship outlined above.

Eligibility Criteria

- This award is intended to support candidates who are seeking **full-time** post-doctoral studies.
 - One-year fellowship: Eligible candidates must have the primary supervision of a CAMH scientist.
 - 2-year fellowship: Two supervisors are required, one from CAMH, and one from another institution. Candidates must demonstrate that the two supervisors have not had a long-standing collaboration and that these are two distinct research groups. Two supervisors from different hospitals in Toronto but within the same university department may be eligible but not ideal. Preference will be given to applicants pursuing international training. For questions related to eligibility, please contact internal.funding@camh.ca
- Applicants must obtain sponsorship of a primary supervisor who holds a scientific appointment at CAMH as Independent Scientist, Senior Scientist or Clinician Scientist only. Applicants are encouraged to reach out to potential CAMH supervisors. Information regarding CAMH scientists can be found at the CAMH [staff directory](#).
- Only one applicant per primary supervisor will be permitted to apply for the Discovery Fund Postdoctoral Fellowship (DF PDF).
- Current DF PDF awardees are not eligible to apply. Postdoctoral Fellows may receive a maximum of two DF PDF awards; however, these awards cannot be held in two consecutive years (new awardees must wait one year to re-apply following receipt of the award) and each application will be considered independently.
- Applicants must have a PhD and/or regulated health professional degree at the time they start the award. For examples of health professions, please consult CIHR's list of [Eligible Health Professions](#). Any interruptions, delays or post-degree clinical training in post-PhD/ regulated health professional degree cumulative experience may be taken into account in determining eligibility if detailed information on the interruption, including specific dates, is provided. Post-doctoral fellows that completed their doctoral program more than 5 years ago must first consult with internal.funding@camh.ca regarding eligibility before applying. Proof of degree fulfillment will be required for those applicants that are successful.
- Interested applicants who are currently employed by CAMH must contact internal.funding@camh.ca in advance of the deadline to confirm eligibility.
- Applicant's supervisor(s) must agree to provide the applicant with a minimum of 75% protected time for research.
- Applicants with external funding support that overlaps the period of the DF PDF award are not eligible to apply (i.e. external funding that continues past December 31, 2023).
- The Discovery Fund welcomes applications from First Nations, Métis and Inuit, racialized and 2SLGBTQ+ communities, women, people with disabilities (including people who have experienced mental health and substance use challenges), and those not listed who may contribute to the further diversification of ideas.

Conditions of Award:

- To be eligible for the 2023 Discovery Fund Postdoctoral Fellowship award, applicants must apply to at least one external agency for stipend support in the time period between April 1, 2022 and December 31, 2023. If there are particular circumstances that prevent this, please first consult with internal.funding@camh.ca.

You will be asked to provide proof should you be successful in receiving a 2023 Discovery Fund Postdoctoral Fellowship award.

- If the applicant is successful in obtaining a fellowship offer from an external agency, the applicant will accept the external offer and free up the DF PDF for other possible applicants. In situations where the value of the external award is less than the DF PDF, a top-up may be provided by the Discovery Fund. The amount of the top-up will depend on funding availability. **Under no circumstances will fellowship funds be used to cover gaps in funding between the time when existing funding ends and the external funding begins.**
- All DF PDFs are to commence during the period of July 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023.
- For the one-year fellowship, successful applicants are expected to be located at CAMH during the one-year period of the award. For the two-year fellowship, successful applicants are expected to be located at another institution during the first year of the award and at CAMH during the second year of the award.

Instructions

1. Notice of Intent

Applicants must submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) online using the following form:

<https://form.jotform.com/223064281252246> by **January 31, 2023**. The NOI must identify the supervisor(s), include a brief description of the proposed project (250 words), identify Discovery Fund research themes and strategic priority areas, answer self-identification* and project representation questions, and provide 3-5 project area and methodology keywords. Information from the NOI will assist the Grants & Awards team with matching applications to academic experts in the review process.

*Information collected will be confidential, cannot be accessed by reviewers, and will not be linked to personnel data. Data regarding the applicant pool will be reported only to the Discovery Fund selection committee and a small number of ROSS staff members for the purposes of program administration, process improvement, and reporting requirements.

2. Research Assurances and Approvals Form (RAAF)

A RAAF must be submitted via the [eRA Portal](#) by **February 28, 2023**. For guidance on RAAF submission, please see the [Research Portal](#).

3. Full Application

Applicants must submit their application online (link to be provided following NOI submission and confirmation of eligibility) using the guidelines below. The full application must be submitted by **March 7, 2023**.

a) Project Information:

- **Project Title – Limit of 640 characters, including spaces.**
- **Lay Title – Limit of 200 characters, including spaces.** Provide a title for the project that is in a language clear to the general public.
- **Lay Abstract - Limit of 2,000 characters, including spaces.** Describe the project in a way that is accessible to a lay audience.

- ##### b) Training Plan Training Plan - Limit of 7,000 characters, including spaces.
- Provide an overview of how your previous research training relates to the present proposal and elaborate on your career goals. Describe how the training you expect to acquire will build upon your previous training and contribute to your productivity, the research goals you hope to achieve and how this award will enable you to establish yourself as an independent investigator. Highlight the novelty and originality of the training plan relative to prior training and experience and provide further justification if the award is intended to support on-going work at CAMH. Indicate why you decided on the proposed training location and what you expect to learn from your training experience.

- c) Research Project Summary - Limit of 4,000 characters, including spaces, references included.** The research project summary should be written in general scientific language, and should include the specific hypothesis of the research and describe your role in the proposed project. Make sure that it provides a concise account of the subject matter; an overview of each part of the research plan, specific project aims and the methodology. The summary should reflect the significance of your project and should clearly state an explanation of the relevance of your project to the goals of the Discovery Fund. Please use the following headings:
- **Background** – summarize the stage of knowledge relevant to the proposal.
 - **Hypotheses/research questions** – state these clearly and concisely.
 - **Methods** – give essential details of methods; describe the data to be collected and the method of data analysis proposed. Clearly define the population.
 - **Impact** – state how the project will advance knowledge if completed as planned.
 - **Relevance to the goals of the Discovery Fund** – demonstrate your proposed projects alignment with the research themes and strategic priorities of the Discovery Fund.
 - **Role on proposed project** – address how the proposed research will support your training goals.
 - **Timetable** – include a timetable for the work in your description

d) Research Training Environment - Limit of 1,750 characters, including spaces.

Describe the space, facilities and personnel support that will be available to you. This section should be written with the input of the proposed supervisor and should demonstrate the commitment of the proposed supervisor(s) to support the development of the applicant's research project (funding, facilities, equipment, etc.) and professional development. It should also demonstrate a commitment to developing your research, technical and professional skills and networks over the training period by providing career planning, skills development and networking opportunities to prepare for an impactful career.

e) Most significant contributions (if applicable) - Limit 3,000 characters, including spaces.

Please highlight any relevant publications, awards and recognitions or knowledge translation that are not covered by the CCV.

f) Interruptions and Delays (if applicable) - Limit of 1,500 characters, including spaces.

This section should describe any interruptions, delays or post-degree clinical training experience that has taken place post-PhD and/or MD or residency. Make sure to include specific dates.

4. Curriculum Vitae (CV) – uploaded as PDF attachments.

a) Applicant CV

Provide a **CIHR Academic CV**. Please consult CIHR's [instructions](#) for completing the Academic CV template via the [Canadian Common CV \(CCV\)](#) interface.

b) Supervisor CV

- Supervisor CVs should also be in the Canadian Common CV format using the CIHR [Academic](#) or [Biosketch](#) templates.
- Other CV templates will also be accepted, with a limit of 6 pages.

5. Letters of Reference - max 1 page each, using 12-point font. Two referees must provide an assessment of the applicant. These assessments should come from people under whom you have trained and/or who have had a good opportunity to assess your potential for research. Applicants should refer their selected sponsors to CIHR's [Information for Sponsors](#) web page for useful tips.

- Two letters of reference must be submitted by 5 p.m. on the application due date.
- Reference letters from the candidate’s Supervisor or Co-Supervisor will **not** be accepted.
- Letters must be submitted using the link to be provided.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that letters of reference are sent by the submission deadline.

6. Submitting the Application

The application must be submitted online (link to be provided following NOI submission) **by March 7, 2023**. If you have any questions regarding the application guidelines or submission process, please contact Elizabeth Mueller via internal.funding@camh.ca.

Note: Supplemental material and material exceeding the specified length will not be considered in the review process. The reviewing committee consists of academic experts but not necessarily specialists in the applicant’s specific subject area.

DEADLINES AT A GLANCE

Notice of Intent: January 31, 2023

RAAF: February 28, 2023

Full Application: March 7, 2023

Notice of Award: May 2023