

Dear Colleague:

On behalf of my fellow presidents of the three federal research funding agencies, I am delighted to send this information package about the **Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program**. Over the past several months, our agencies – the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council – have been working closely together to develop this prestigious new program, first announced in the Government of Canada's 2010 budget.

The Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program will award 70 postdoctoral fellowships each year distributed equally among the three agencies. Fellowships will be of two-year duration, valued at \$70,000/year (taxable). Uniquely, the program requires that research institutions be closely involved in endorsing applicants and be committed to providing the research environment and professional development successful applicants require in order to become the research leaders of the future.

We want to recruit the highest-quality applicants from both Canada and abroad. In light of the small number of awards in the program, and the demands of both the application process and the peer-review process, however, potential applicants must be carefully selected. Banting Fellowships will ultimately be awarded to an elite group of researchers who have demonstrated both research excellence and leadership.

Two attachments are included with this letter: a description of the program, including eligibility requirements and institutional responsibilities; and an annex with a preview of the key application elements. This information will be useful in helping guide the applicant selection and endorsement process. This material can also be disseminated within and outside your institution and/or organization to promote the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship Program.

My fellow presidents and I are very excited about this prestigious new program and its potential to develop tomorrow's research leaders. Any questions about the program should be directed to [Banting@researchnet-recherchenet.ca](mailto:Banting@researchnet-recherchenet.ca).

Sincerely,

Alain Beaudet  
President,  
Canadian Institutes of Health Research

## **Program Description**

### **Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program**

#### **Introduction**

The Government of Canada allocated \$45 million over five years in Budget 2010 to establish a high-profile, prestigious Postdoctoral Fellowships Program.

The fellowships will be known as the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships, in memory of Sir Frederick Banting, the Canadian physician, researcher, Nobel laureate and war hero who, together with his assistant Dr. Charles Best, is credited with the discovery of insulin. The program is jointly administered by Canada's three federal granting agencies: the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). CIHR has been designated as the operational lead for the implementation of the program.

#### **Program Objective**

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.

#### **Unique Application Requirements**

The Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program will be distinguished from existing postdoctoral fellowships programs by its emphasis on the synergy between an applicant's individual merit and potential to launch a successful research-intensive career and the host institution's commitment to the research program and environment with which the applicant is to be affiliated. As such, an applicant's application to the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program must be completed in full collaboration with the proposed host institution.

#### **Program Scope**

The program will fund 70 new awards annually with a total of 140 awards active at any one time at full program implementation (at program maturity). The fellowships will be distributed equally across the three federal granting agencies.

#### **Value and Duration of Fellowships**

The Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships will be valued at \$70 000 per year (taxable) for two years.

#### **Eligibility**

##### ***Citizenship***

Canadian citizens, permanent residents of Canada and foreign citizens are eligible to apply to the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program.

##### ***Eligibility Window for Degree Completion***

All applicants for the 2010 Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program must fulfill or have fulfilled all degree requirements for a PhD, PhD-equivalent or Health Professional Degree<sup>1</sup> on a date within the eligibility window of November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2007 through December 31, 2010. Applicants who have not fulfilled all requirements for their degree at the time of application

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<sup>1</sup> As recognized by CIHR as an eligible health profession.

must do so not later than December 31, 2010 and submit related proof to the Banting program accordingly not later than January 15, 2011. Applicants who do not submit such proof will be automatically withdrawn from the competition.

***Eligibility Requirements Related to Host Institution***

Institutions eligible to host a Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship award holder include universities, affiliated research hospitals, colleges and not-for-profit organizations with a research mandate, both nationally and internationally.

Applicants who are not Canadian citizens or permanent residents may only hold their Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship at a Canadian institution.

Applicants who are Canadian citizens or permanent residents and who obtained their PhD, PhD-equivalent or Health Professional Degree from a foreign university may only hold their Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship at a Canadian institution.

Applicants who are Canadian citizens or permanent residents and who obtained their PhD, PhD-equivalent or Health Professional Degree from a Canadian university may hold their award at either a Canadian institution or an institution outside of Canada. *Note that the number of Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships that may be awarded annually to those who apply in collaboration with a foreign institution is capped at 5 per federal granting agency (15 in total of the 70 annual awards).*

If an applicant decides to apply for their Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship in collaboration with the same institution at which they obtained their PhD, PhD-equivalent or Health Professional Degree, a solid justification – related for example to availability of highly unique equipment - will be an absolute requirement. Such special circumstances are expected to be exceptionally rare in the context of the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program.

***Eligibility Restrictions Related to Prior Funding through NSERC, SSHRC or CIHR Postdoctoral-level Programs***

All applicants must meet the *Eligibility Window for Degree Completion* described above. Applicants who meet this requirement and who currently hold or have held agency-specific awards at the postdoctoral level are eligible to apply to the 2010-11 Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program ONLY if the original term of that funding officially ends on or before March 31, 2011. Early termination of the agency specific postdoctoral award for the purposes of application for Banting postdoctoral funding is not permitted.

Note that applicants to the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program remain eligible to apply to agency-specific Postdoctoral-level Fellowship Program competitions.

**Location and Timing of Award Tenure**

Without exception, the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships are tenable ONLY at the institution which supported the original application for the program.

Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships 2010-2011 must be taken up as early as April 1, 2011 and no later than October 1, 2011. All awards are for two years from the date of up-take.

**Selection Criteria**

Successful applicants for the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program will be selected on the basis of the following selection criteria.

**Research excellence and leadership in the research domain** – demonstrated capacity for research excellence based on track-record to date as defined by quality of the applicant's research contribution, and demonstrated capacity for leadership in the research domain defined by the sphere of influence achieved to date by the applicant.

**Quality of the applicant's proposed research program** – examined in terms of the potential of the proposed research program, executed in the proposed institutional environment, to position the applicant for significant impact through a research-intensive career (*potential for significant impact*).

**Institutional commitment and demonstrated synergy between applicant and institutional strategic priorities** – examined in terms of:

- Demonstrated commitment of the institution to support development of the applicant's research and leadership capacity through institutional support (funding, facilities, equipment, etc.) and professional development; and
- Demonstrated alignment and synergy between the applicant's research ambitions and the Institution's potential to benefit strategically from engagement with the applicant (alignment with institution's strategic priorities).

### **Application Process and Deadlines**

Without exception, all applicants, in collaboration with their proposed host institutions, will be required to submit a complete electronic application, including referee assessments, via *ResearchNet* on or before November 3, 2010. Late or incomplete submissions will not be considered. Note that the application includes an applicant CV which must be completed on the Canadian Common CV platform.

Complete details of the application requirements and access to the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships e-submission platform on *ResearchNet* to complete an application will be available in mid-August.

### **Review and Decision Process – Roles**

#### **Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program – Agency Peer Review Committees**

All applications will undergo a peer review evaluation by an agency-specific interdisciplinary peer review committee. Applications will be reviewed in relation to the stated selection criteria and each agency committee will recommend to the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship Program Selection Board an un-ranked short list of the 35 most meritorious applicants based on those criteria.

#### **Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program – Selection Board**

The Selection Board will make final recommendations to the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program Steering Committee. In making their recommendation to the Steering Committee, the Selection Board will be asked to specifically assess Institutional commitment and alignment of the applicant's research ambitions with the Institution's strategic priorities.

#### **Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program – Steering Committee Decision**

The Steering Committee is responsible for approving the final slate of 70 awardees annually and will base its decision on the recommendation of the Selection Board.

## Notification of Decision

The federal granting agencies will notify successful applicants of the competition results in late March, 2011.

The names of recipients of the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships and other basic award information will be published on the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program website. For more on the posting of and access to information, please refer to the *Access to Information Act* and the *Privacy Act*.

## Performance Measurement

CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC are committed to demonstrating results to Canadians for the money invested through the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program. Therefore, processes for monitoring progress and appropriate use of funds, as well as for performance measurement and program evaluation are in place. Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship recipients will be expected to contribute to the review and evaluation of the program and associated policies and processes by participating in evaluation studies, surveys, workshops, audits and providing data or reports as required for the purpose of collecting information to assess progress and results.

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## Preview of Key Application Elements

An application to the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program will include the following elements. While individual peer reviewers will read the full application and will base their rankings on their assessment of the application as a whole, the application elements have been designed to ensure that sufficient information is provided to allow assessment against each of the stated criteria. Elements are structured as unique documents (rather than as a single bundled document) in order to facilitate the development of application materials, some of which must be completed by the applicant and some by the proposed host institution. This structure also enables peer reviewers to compare same or similar information between applications more easily.

<p><b>Criterion: Research excellence and leadership in the research domain</b> – demonstrated capacity for research excellence based on track record to date as defined by quality of applicant's research contribution, and demonstrated capacity for leadership in the research domain defined by the sphere of influence achieved to date by the applicant</p>
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The key application elements will include:

- Research Contributions of applicant (max 3 pages)
  - Part 1: List of contributions
  - Part 2: Choose up to three contributions and describe their significance
- Leadership Contributions of applicant (max 1 page)
  - Part 1: List of key contributions
  - Part 2: Choose up to three contributions and describe their impact and importance
- Applicant Banting CCV – to be completed via the Common CV  
[http://www.commoncv.net/index\\_e.html](http://www.commoncv.net/index_e.html)
- Fulfillment of Degree Requirements - Confirmation Letter (max 1 page)

- Official confirmation letter from degree institution confirming completion and *date* of completion of PhD, PhD equivalent or health professional degree requirements. The confirmed date will be used for assessing eligibility.
- Special Circumstances (max 1 page – optional)
  - To address eligibility timeline issues (bereavement period, parental leave, etc)
  - To address justification for “same institution” for exceptional circumstances where applicants wish to undertake postdoctoral level training in the same research environment in which they received their PhD, PhD equivalent or health professional degree

**Criterion: Quality of applicant’s proposed research program** – examined in terms of the potential of the proposed research program, executed in the proposed institutional environment, to position the applicant for significant impact through a research-intensive career (*potential for significant impact*).

- Career Aspirations and Choice of Institution (max 1 page)
  - Description of career aspirations of applicant and rationale for decision to pursue a postdoctoral research experience at the proposed host institution and in association with the proposed supervisor.
- Research Proposal (max 4 pages)
- Lay Summary of Research Proposal (max ½ page)
- Bibliography, citations included in the “Research Proposal” (max 5 pages)

**Criterion: Institutional commitment and demonstrated synergy between applicant and institutional strategic priorities**

- Demonstrated commitment of the institution to support development of the applicant’s research and leadership capacity through institutional support (funding, facilities, equipment, etc.) and professional development; and
- Demonstrated alignment and synergy between the applicant’s research ambitions and the Institution’s potential to benefit strategically from engagement with the applicant (alignment with institution’s strategic priorities).

- Institutional Synergy and Letter of Endorsement (max 1 page)
  - To be completed by the proposed host institution
  - Describe the institution’s documented strategic directions and illustrate the synergy between that strategy and the applicant’s proposed research program
  - In order to ensure that gender equity issues are considered in an institution’s decision to support a given applicant, proposed host institutions will be required to confirm their commitment to gender equity and involve institutional equity officers (or equivalent) in the endorsement of applicants for these awards
  - The statement must be signed by the institution’s President or her/his official delegate.
- Supervisor’s Statement (max 2 pages)
  - To be completed by the proposed supervisor
  - Provide evidence that the supervisor is well positioned to provide the required support to the applicant in relation to the research proposed
  - Includes Supervisor’s description of their academic and research background, key contributions/accomplishments to date (Note that a full CV for the supervisor is not requested)

- Research Environment (2 pages)
  - To be completed by the proposed host institution
  - Provide details concerning the applicant's proposed research environment. These details should clearly state the Institution's commitment, for example in terms of the funding, facilities/resources and personnel that will be available to support the applicant.
- Professional Development (1 page)
  - To be completed by the proposed host institution
  - Describe the institution's commitment to the applicant's professional development, clearly indicating the resources and/or mentoring activities that are available through the institution to support career development.

### **Referee Assessments**

In addition to the above, a complete application will include three referee assessments (which must be completed through a ResearchNet supported interface). Referees selected to participate must each address all three stated selection criteria. Specifically:

- Assessment of research excellence and leadership in the research domain
- Assessment of quality of the applicant's proposed research program
- Assessment of suitability of proposed research environment

Applicants are encouraged to consider the full range of potential referees who could provide relevant evidence, perspectives and insight to support the review of the candidate's application in light of the selection criteria.