

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
GUIDE FOR SUPERVISORS FOR APPLICATIONS TO THE 2019-2020
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 2019 competition, preliminary packages will be due at the Faculty level by May 06. This package will consist of the CVs of both the applicant and yourself; along with the complete [University of Alberta 2019 Banting PDF Assessment Form](#).

Those preliminary packages going forward for internal institutional review are due at the Vice-President (Research) Office from Faculties by May 24. At this point, the V-P(R) 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 28 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 (see below) – Supervisor (maximum 5 pages)**
- **Completion of Request for new Application/Proposal/Project on the [Researcher Home Page](#) – Supervisor, Nominee, Chair and Associate/Vice Dean (Research)**
- **Draft Institutional letter of endorsement (including synergy) – Associate/Vice Dean (Research) and Supervisor**
- **Submission of all application documents to VP Research Office for completion of Institutional letter of endorsement– Faculty**
- **Signature on letter of endorsement – VP Research**
- **Submission of all documents via ResearchNet – Nominee**

In accordance with Banting regulations, your [Supervisor Statement](#) should address the following:

i) Biography

Should describe your academic and research background, key contributions/accomplishments and funding to date (please note that a full CV is not required). This document must provide evidence that you are well-positioned to provide the required support to the applicant in relation to the research proposed. A contribution is understood to be a publication, literary or artistic work, conference, patent or intellectual property rights, contract or creative activity, commission etc. A complete description may include the organization, position or activity type and description, from and to dates, and the basis on which this contribution is significant (i.e., relevance, target community and impact).

ii) Appropriateness of the supervisor(s)

You must clearly discuss the significance of the applicant's contributions and proposed research. 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 on-going projects or new research directions.

iii) Research Environment section should address the following:

This document should provide details concerning the applicant's proposed research environment. These details should clearly state the supervisor and laboratory/department/institution's commitment. Examples may include (but are not limited to) funding, facilities/resources and 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 involving Indigenous research, outline any support provided to facilitate collaboration between the applicant, the host institution and Indigenous communities/partners.

iv) Professional Development: example provided

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 preparation of 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

See attached Sample

v) Institutional Synergy

And finally, the statement must 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 only recommend the highest-calibre postdoctoral researchers.

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

This application element speaks directly to the following selection criterion:

[Institutional commitment and demonstrated synergy between applicant and institutional strategic priorities](#)

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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.

Sample text discussing professional development opportunities at the U of A.

Please edit and customize as appropriate.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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 without cost to attendees.

Communication training is available from 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 a 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 unit 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 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.

Training related to strengthening teaching abilities of 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 units. 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.