
PROGRAM GUIDE:

GRADUATE STUDENTSHIPS AND POSTGRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS IN HEALTH INNOVATION

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Background

The health sector is a major contributor to well-being and economic prosperity^{1,2}. With an emphasis on advancing scientific knowledge and translating it into more effective treatments, services, and solutions, health sector performance is dependent on Highly Skilled People (HSPs). However, in an increasingly complex, globally competitive and digitally-enabled environment, there is uncertainty about which combinations of education, skill and experience will be most advantageous for emerging talent and Alberta's health research and innovation (R&I) ecosystem³.

To enhance the recruitment, development and retention of the Province's next generation of health R&I leaders, Alberta Innovates administers a portfolio of Training and Early Career Development (TECD) programs. This guide outlines the 2019/2020 suite of programs available to graduate students (Masters and PhD) and postgraduate (postdoctoral) scholars engaged in **health-related** research and training (collectively referred to as '**Trainees**') at post-secondary institutions in Alberta.

Alberta Innovates supports health-related research capacity development to contribute to an innovation-driven economy in the Province.

1 Advisory Panel on Federal Support for Fundamental Science. Investing in Canada's Future: Strengthening the Foundations of Canadian Research. Advisory Panel on Federal Support for Fundamental Science, 2017.

2 Expert Panel on the State of Science and Technology Industrial Research and Development in Canada. Competing in a Global Innovation Economy: The Current State of R&D in Canada, 2017.

3 The Expert Panel on STEM Skills for the Future. Some Assembly Required: STEM Skills and Canada's Economic Productivity, 2015.

Program Details

Alberta Innovates will support health Trainees in 2019/2020 through Graduate Studentships and Postgraduate Fellowships. These programs combine a Research Training Stipend (“the **Stipend**”) with mentorship and a Career Development Allowance (“the **Allowance**”) to better position emerging talent for high-impact careers in Alberta’s health R&I ecosystem.

The Stipend component is intended to help attract top-tier Trainees to post-secondary institutions in Alberta, while protecting time for full immersion in the research training environment. In addition to serving as a mechanism for increasing the vibrancy and competitiveness of Alberta’s health research ecosystem, research capacity development helps prepare talent for leadership positions in R&I.

Yet careers in R&I also involve considerable uncertainty and serendipity. Cultivating networks beyond one’s immediate field of study and complementing research skills with other professional competencies are key strategies for resiliency and success. Many universities and funders now encourage earlier and more proactive forms of career planning and development. Alberta Innovates goes a step further, offering Graduate Studentship and Postgraduate Fellowship holder’s Allowances to implement broader career development plans. These plans must include engagement with mentors outside of one’s research supervisory committee that can provide advice, learning opportunities, and connections.

Time Commitment

It is expected that Trainees will engage in full-time studies. Graduate Studentship and Postgraduate Fellowship holders are to allocate no more than 200 hours per year to non-research-related activities.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

Eligibility

Program	Trainee Eligibility	Project Eligibility
Graduate Studentships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Currently enrolled in a graduate program at a post-secondary institution in Alberta.✓ Will have completed at least one year of graduate training at the time of award implementation.✓ Application supported / sponsored by a Primary Research Supervisor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Health-related research Project associated with a thesis-based graduate degree (i.e. master’s or doctoral degree, or the research portion of a combined MD/PhD).
Postgraduate Fellowships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Will have completed a PhD at the time of award implementation.✓ Have accepted or currently hold a post-doctoral appointment at a post-secondary institution in Alberta.✓ Application supported / sponsored by a Primary Research Supervisor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Health-related research activities.

Primary Research Supervisor Eligibility Criteria

Trainees are required to complete their training with the support of a Primary Research Supervisor in Alberta. The Primary Research Supervisor will sponsor the Application and ensure adherence to the terms and conditions of the award. He or she must possess both a record of productive health-oriented research and sufficient resources to ensure satisfactory conduct of the research. He or she must provide direct supervision.

Program Objectives and Performance Measurement

Alberta Innovates' Graduate Studentships and Postgraduate Fellowships in Health Innovation are designed to deliver meaningful return on investment to the Province by serving as a catalyst for the growth of R&I leaders in the health sector in Alberta.

While Graduate Studentship and Postgraduate Fellowships represent investments in people, they are tied to the completion of research Projects embedded in training programs. Each Trainee will develop research Project goals and metrics in collaboration with their Primary Research Supervisor.

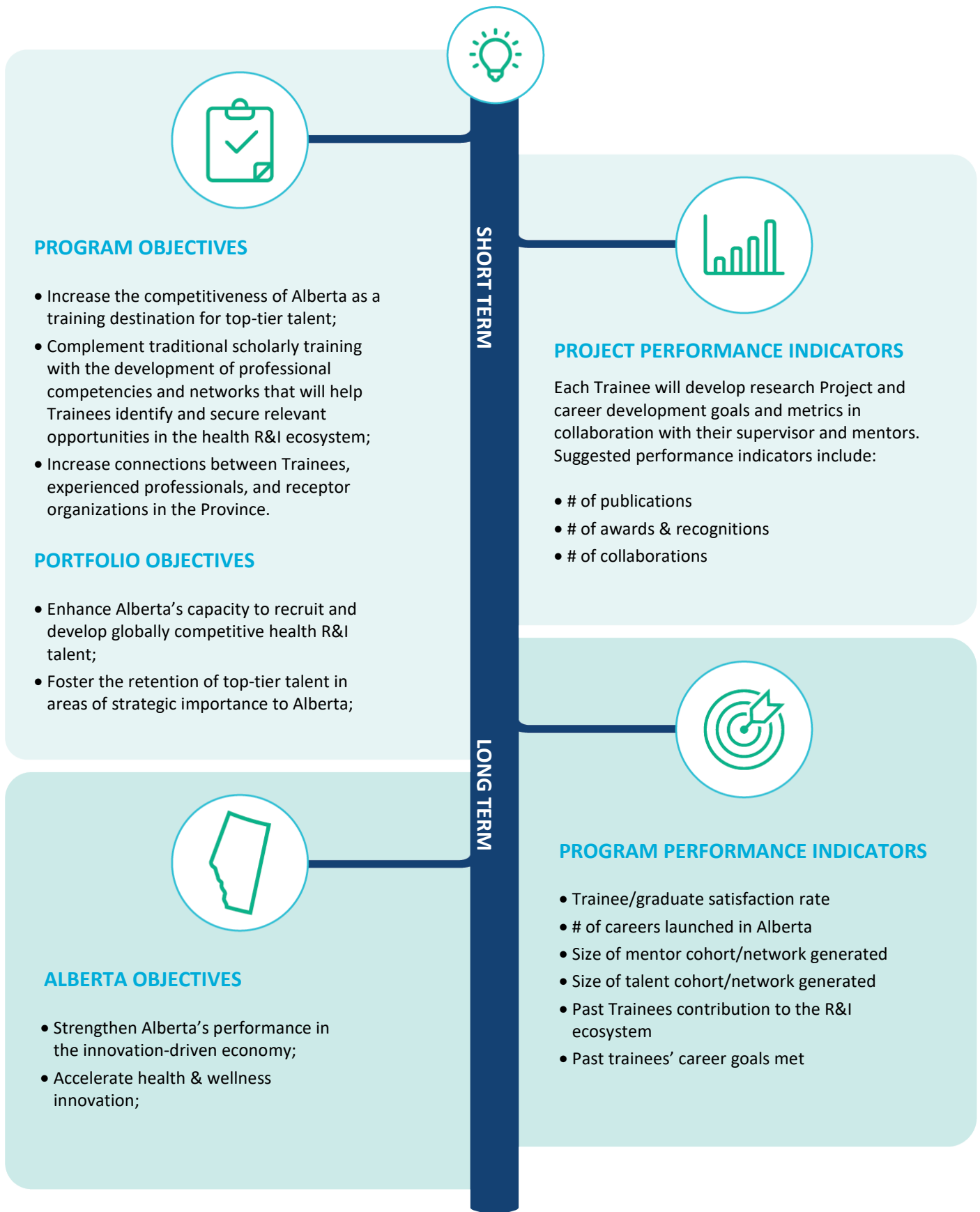
Over the life of a Project, Alberta Innovates employs an active project management philosophy, regularly monitoring performance and supporting the Trainee to reach their objectives.

Once Projects are completed, Alberta Innovates may continue to monitor performance for five (5) years to accurately evaluate the economic, social and environmental benefits realized for the province.

All Investment Agreements outline performance indicators tracked over the course of the Project and the responsibilities of the Trainee to report on outcomes subsequent to the completion of the Project.

Alberta Innovates has a common set of performance metrics it monitors, both at the individual Project level and for the aggregate Program. These are highlighted on the next page.

Objectives and Performance Metrics



How Funding Works

(a) Project Funding

Funded Trainees must implement their award March 1, 2020. Alberta Innovates' Investment is disbursed as follows:

Graduate Studentships: A \$30,000 per year Stipend and an Allowance of \$2000 annually for a maximum of 36 months across all graduate training. A maximum of twelve months of support is available towards a master's degree and up to 36 months of support towards a Doctoral degree. Support will not be provided beyond the sixth year of enrollment in a doctoral program or third year of enrollment in a master's program.

Postgraduate Fellowships*: A \$50,000 per year Stipend and an Allowance of \$5000 annually for up to 36 months.

*Stipends may be subject to the Income Tax Act and Regulations of the Government of Canada.

Stipend Incentives are available for Trainees with multiple awards.

(b) Stipend Incentives

Alberta Innovates encourages Trainees to apply for and accept awards from other national or international agencies. Trainees and their Institution must inform Alberta Innovates of receipt of any other major comparable awards secured during the tenure of a Graduate Studentship or Postgraduate Fellowship award.

If a Trainee receives another major comparable award, he/she will not be eligible to receive the full value of the Graduate Studentship or Postgraduate Fellowship award at the same time. Instead he/she will be eligible to receive a Stipend Incentive, which is structured to enable receipt of funding from both sources, while ensuring the combined total is equal to or greater than the value of the original award offered by Alberta Innovates (subject to any maximums allowed by the other funding agency). The following conditions apply:

Graduate Studentships: The minimum Stipend Incentive offered is \$12,000 CAD per year, plus use of the Allowance. Alberta Innovates will increase the Stipend Incentive as necessary to ensure the combined value of the awards does not fall below \$30,000 CAD per year.

Postgraduate Fellowships: The minimum Stipend Incentive offered is \$15,000 CAD per year, plus use of the Allowance. Alberta Innovates will increase the Stipend Incentive as necessary to ensure the combined value the awards does not fall below \$50,000 CAD per year.

Trainees should note that Stipend Incentives are still considered Graduate Studentship or Postgraduate Fellowship Awards. All forms of these awards are covered by (i.e., count equally towards) the maximum eligible terms for graduate and postgraduate training support from Alberta Innovates.

Award recipients may not receive simultaneous support from another Alberta Innovates trainee program.

(c) Eligible and ineligible expenses

The Stipend portion of the Award is to be used exclusively to pay the Trainee and the Trainee may use it without restrictions. The Allowance is restricted for the implementation of career development plans by the Trainee. Approved uses of the Allowance include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ Career development activities including coursework and other supplementary training that are not part of the requirements of obtaining the graduate degree (must be supported by the trainee's mentorship advisors);
- ✓ Career development services or memberships (e.g., premium LinkedIn membership).
- ✓ Travel and expenses associated with professional development activities.

Ineligible uses of the Allowance include, but are not limited to:

- ✗ Coursework or supplies that are part of the requirements of the degree or training program.
- ✗ Laptop and/or computer equipment for coursework and/or general use.
- ✗ Travel and expenses for someone other than the Trainee (e.g., a partner or child).

(d) Leaves, Suspension and Terminations

Alberta Innovates can accommodate leaves under certain circumstances. This includes paid parental leaves of up to six months. Unpaid leaves of no more than eight months may also be approved.

Funding will cease under the following circumstances:

- When the Trainee has successfully defended his or her thesis prior to the official award end date. In this case the award will be terminated on the last day of the month in which the defense examination occurs.
- When the Trainee is no longer able to engage in full-time research activities.
- If the terms and conditions of the award are not met, or if there is evidence of unsatisfactory progress.

For more information please refer to the sample Investment Agreement on our website.

HOW TO APPLY

STEP 1

Application

Trainees who have gained the support of their Primary Research Supervisors and two mentors may apply online at via the [application portal](#) by October 11, 2019.

STEP 2

Evaluation & Agreement Execution

Each Application will be evaluated & successful Trainees notified of next steps. Results announced in early 2020 (anticipated).

STEP 3

Project Management

Trainees will complete and submit annual Progress Reports. A Final Report will also be required from the Trainee at the end of the award.

EVALUATION PROCESS

All Applications undergo a rigorous review process by a committee whose membership is both interdisciplinary and intersectoral. Alberta Innovates leverages internal staff and external expert reviewers to evaluate the Applications submitted. Alberta Innovates retains the sole right to determine the evaluation process and does not disclose the names of its external reviewers to ensure their objectivity and impartiality. All external parties are subject to both confidentiality and conflict of interest policies set by Alberta Innovates.

Refer to the 2019/2020 Graduate Studentships and Postgraduate Fellowships in Health Innovation application forms for more detail on the criteria by which Applications will be assessed.

The assessment criteria and all investment decisions are at the sole discretion of Alberta Innovates.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This Program Guide is intended as a high-level overview of the Program. Should you have any questions about this guide or what is expected, please contact Alberta Innovates. Please be aware Alberta Innovates may modify this guide from time to time in keeping with any changes to the program.

Alberta Innovates will only correspond in writing and provide copies of the Application to the person named in the application form as the one authorized to speak for the Applicant, and the Trainee named in the Application.

Once we have evaluated and approved an Application for funding, Alberta Innovates will require the Applicant to sign our standard form Investment Agreement. A copy of an example Investment Agreement is available on the Alberta Innovates website. The Investment Agreement sets out in detail the roles, responsibilities and obligations of the various Parties to ensure a successful Project. Alberta Innovates will not provide any funding until the Investment Agreement has been signed by all Parties.

Alberta Innovates will only fund Trainees who have satisfied all eligibility criteria. Meeting the eligibility criteria does not guarantee access to funding, and all funding decisions will be made by Alberta Innovates at its sole discretion.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Should you have any questions about this guide or the Health TECD Portfolio in general, please contact Alberta Innovates at grants.health@albertainnovates.ca.

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