2024 CAMH Koerner Graduate Award

Background

The Koerner Graduate Award is dedicated towards finding innovative solutions to major challenges in the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of mental illness. The Koerner Graduate Award Competition reflects an investment in graduate trainees: highly qualified personnel working towards clinical discovery are vital for the innovation and growth of mental health research in diagnosis, treatment, and prevention.

CAMH is hosting the Koerner Graduate Award to provide support for graduate trainees applying concepts of research to better identify, diagnose, prevent and treat mental illnesses. The objective of this competition is to provide graduate trainees with a comprehensive training program in the fields of mental health and/or substance use health, with practical training in research techniques.

This program is open to applicants who are completing a full time Master or PhD program. Applicants can be external or internal to CAMH.

Award Guidelines

The Koerner Graduate Award will provide salary support for graduate trainees at CAMH, who are completing graduate level research and training in mental health and/or substance use health, with practical training in research techniques. Research trainees are expected to make independent contributions to knowledge during their award. 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

One year PhD level awards of $35,000.00 CAD and one year Masters level awards of $17,500.00 will be available. Supervisors are responsible for checking the academic institution's requirements for graduate student funding to ensure compliance with all applicable rules (e.g., base amounts and top-up policies).

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 Koerner selection committee. Two awards will provide direct supports to applicants from underrepresented groups in mental health and substance use health research. Koerner is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion for trainees at CAMH.

Eligibility Criteria

- This award is intended to support candidates who are seeking **full-time** graduate studies

under the primary supervision of a CAMH Scientist.

- Applicants must obtain sponsorship of a primary supervisor who holds a scientific appointment at CAMH as Associate Scientist, Staff Scientist, Senior Staff Scientist, Scientist, or Senior Scientist. Applicants are encouraged to reach out to potential CAMH supervisors. Information regarding CAMH scientists can be found at the CAMH staff directory. Please contact internal.funding@camh.ca to clarify eligibility if your potential supervisor's scientific appointment type is not listed here.
- Only one applicant per primary supervisor will be permitted to apply for the Koerner Graduate Award
- Applicants must be completing a Masters or PhD and/or joint professional program at the time they start the award. An eligible graduate program must include a significant research component that leads to the completion of a thesis, major research project, dissertation, scholarly publication, etc. that is merit/expert-reviewed at the institutional level as a requirement for completion of the program. Joint programs with a professional degree (for example, MD/PhD) as well as clinically oriented programs of study, including clinical psychology, are eligible if they have a significant autonomous research component as described above. Master's programs that are based on course work not eligible since they do not include a significant research component.
- CAMH Employees are ineligible to receive remuneration from a training award and their employment role concurrently. Interested applicants who are currently employed by CAMH under a position other than a trainee must contact ResearchHR@camh.ca and internal.funding@camh.ca in advance of the deadline to confirm eligibility.
- Applicants with external funding support that overlaps the period of the Koerner Graduate Award are not eligible to apply (i.e., external funding that continues past December 31, 2024).
- To be eligible for the Koerner Graduate Award, applicants must apply to at least one external agency for stipend support in the time period between April 1, 2023 and December 31, 2024. 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 an award.
- If the applicant is successful in obtaining a Research Award offer from an external agency, the applicant will accept the external offer and free up the Koerner Graduate Research Award for other possible applicants.
- The Koerner Graduate Award 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
- All Koerner Graduate Awards are to commence during the period of July 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024.
- Applicants must indicate the period that the funding is received. In choosing to accept an award, an applicant will be required to provide the CAMH Research Operations, Services and Support Office with an annual update of their current clinical or academic positions/affiliations for a total of five years.
- Successful applicants are expected to be located at CAMH during the one-year period 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/232644171220243 by **November 22, 2023 by 5:00pm (EST).** The NOI must identify the supervisor(s), include a brief description of the proposed project (250 words), identify Koerner Graduate Award 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. Late NOIs will not be accepted.

*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 Koerner Graduate Award 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 **January 12, 2024 by 5:00pm (EST)**. For guidance on RAAF submission, please see the Research Portal. If you are applying as an external applicant, please reach out to internal.funding@camh.ca for instructions on how to create an account for the eRA 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 **January 19, 2024. by 5:00pm (EST).** Late applications will not be accepted.

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 – Limit of 7,000 characters, including spaces.**
   Applicants are to:
   - Describe their professional, academic and extracurricular experiences/achievements and how it will contribute to their training success.
   - Describe how the training they expect to acquire will contribute to their productivity and to the research goals they hope to achieve.
   - Describe how their expected training strives to foster impacts within and beyond the research environment and will contribute to the Canadian research ecosystem during and beyond the tenure of the award.
   - Indicate why they decided upon the proposed training location and what they expect to learn from the training experience.

- If registered in a joint doctoral program (e.g. MD/PhD) or a clinically-oriented doctoral program, they must provide a description of how their program contains a significant research component.

c) **Research Project Summary – Limit of 4,000 characters, including spaces, references included.**
The research project summary should clearly describe the applicant's role on the project; should be written in general scientific language, which is an important skill to acquire for future success in the research environment as applications can be reviewed by multi-disciplinary committees; should be specific, focused, and include feasible research questions and objectives, and provide a clear description of the proposed methodology. The summary should reflect the relevance of your project to the goals of the Koerner Graduate Award. 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 Koerner Graduate Award –** demonstrate your proposed project's alignment with the research themes and strategic priorities of the Koerner Graduate Award.
- **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 Supervisor Statement – Limit of 1,750 characters, including spaces.**
The description should be detailed and include information related to space, facilities, and personnel support that will be available to carry out the proposed research; relevant grant support, research training opportunities, and other sources of income should be specified. This section should be written by the proposed supervisor(s) and should demonstrate their commitment to support the applicant's research development. A description of the particular role and responsibilities of the applicant in the supervisor's research, including opportunities for independent work and professional development, should be included.

e) **Publications List (max. 2 pages)**
This section allows the applicant to include supplemental information for each entry made under the "Publications" section of their CCV, that is:
- For each multi-authored publication, define their role in the publication and indicate their percent contribution to the team effort.
- Only include publications that have been accepted or are in press. Do not include publications in preparation or submitted, unless available in a recognized scientific public archive (e.g., preprints).
- Applicants are also invited to comment on environmental factors that affected their capacity to publish.

f) **Special Circumstances (if applicable)**
Applicants are encouraged to explain any personal circumstances (including when gender, race, diversity, ability, sexuality, health disparities, educational access, etc.) have played a role

in shaping their path to allow for a fair assessment of their research productivity. All information about interruptions to their academic career and choice of nominating institution should be included, which may include administrative responsibilities, maternity/parental leave, childrearing, illness, cultural or community responsibilities, socio-economic context, trauma and loss, pandemic impact or health-related family responsibilities) or the Research Proposal (which may include additional training taken outside of a degree-granting program, relevant work experience, co-ops and internships, etc.).

- Include the start and end dates; the impact areas; and the reason(s) for or a brief explanation of the absence. However, applicants are not required to justify circumstances when noting considerations related to personal identity considerations. Should an applicant choose to include this information, it will be reviewed by selection committee members.
- Part-time studies must be outlined in this section. If you have been enrolled part-time during your PhD studies, specify which semesters. The information must be reflected in the transcripts.
- If you are registered in a joint program (e.g., MD/PhD), provide a timeline of your undergraduate/graduate versus doctoral program studies, broken down by semester. This calculation must be consistent with the transcripts provided.

4. **Curriculum Vitae (CV) – uploaded as PDF attachment.**
Applicant CV
Provide a CIHR Biosketch CV (completed via the Canadian Common CV interface) or NIH Biosketch.

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 by email from the referee's email to internal.funding@camh.ca. The Reference Letter must be on institutional letterhead and signed by the referee.

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

6. **Academic Documentation**
   a) **Transcripts:** applicants must provide up-to-date official transcripts of their complete academic record (this includes all undergraduate and graduate studies, completed or ongoing). Transcripts must be scanned and uploaded with the application, and include a copy of the legend.
   b) **Proof of registration:** applicants must upload a letter from the University registrar indicating they are registered in an eligible graduate program, or equivalent proof of registration. If the applicant is not yet registered at the time of application, this letter is required prior to acceptance of the award.

7. **Submitting the Application**

The application must be submitted online (link to be provided following NOI submission) **by January 19, 2024.** 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
Notification: November 22, 2023
RAAF: January 12, 2024
Full Application: January 19, 2024
Notice of Award: June 2024