

General Policies and Conditions for Legacy Trainee Awards

This document provides a detailed description of the general policies and conditions that apply to Alberta Innovates – Health Solutions (AIHS) trainee awards that were awarded prior to July 1, 2012.

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1.0 Trainee Award Structure

1.1 Award Types

Research Training Awards are available to individuals in one of the following categories:

Graduate students pursuing Master's or Ph.D. degrees:

- Full-Time Studentships
- MD-PhD Studentships

Individuals who hold Ph.D., M.D. or D.D.S. degrees:

- Full-Time Fellowships
- Clinical Fellowships



1.2 Term of Awards

1.2.1 Studentships

Full-Time Studentship awards are tenable for a maximum of five years total; a maximum of three years of funding are available at the master's level.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Where the trainee is to successfully defend his/her thesis prior to the official award end date; the award will be terminated on the last day of the month in which the defense examination occurs.

MD-PhD Studentship awards are tenable for a maximum of six years. Applicants must be currently enrolled at an Alberta university in a combined MD-PhD program. Support is available only to candidates who have completed their first year of medical school or graduate training. AIHS recognizes that the MD-PhD programs differ between the University of Calgary and the University of Alberta. Training plans can be customized to meet the requirements of the specific program as well as the trainee's career goals.

1.2.2 Fellowships

Full-time Fellowship awards are tenable for a maximum of three years.

Clinical Fellowships are tenable for a maximum of three years. The term may be extended if the trainee is registered in a graduate program.

1.3 Components of Awards

Studentship and Fellowship awards consist of a stipend and a research allowance.

Stipends are subject to the Income Tax Act and Regulations of the Government of Canada.

Stipend Values

1.3.1 Studentships

As of October 1, 2011 the stipend value for studentship awards is increased to \$30,000 per annum.

1.3.2 Fellowships

As of October 1, 2011, the stipend value for fellowship awards is increased to \$50,000 per annum.

Upon approved renewal **AFTER** July 1, 2012, the stipend value for clinical fellowship awards is \$70,000 per annum.

1.3.3 Research Allowance

The research allowance will be administered by the university with the expectation that the supervisor will approve any expenses drawn from the allowance. Approved uses of the research allowance include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- i. the purchase of scientific materials, supplies and expendables;
- ii. the purchase of minor equipment (note: the policies of the host institution with respect to ownership of equipment will apply to equipment bought with these funds);
- iii. computer software programs;
- iv. costs for the use of libraries, or computers;
- v. costs associated with the publication of research results;
- vi. travel expenses to attend scientific meetings;
- vii. purchase of books, periodicals and journals.

If the award is terminated prematurely, unused funds must be returned to AIHS. The research allowance cannot be used for salary support or tuition.

1.3.4 Studentships

The research allowance for full-time studentships is \$1,500 per annum. Upon approved renewal **AFTER** October 1, 2011, the research allowance is increased to \$2,000 per annum.

1.3.5 Fellowships

The research allowance for fellowships is \$3,000 per annum. Upon approved renewal **AFTER** October 1, 2011, the research allowance is increased to \$5,000 per annum.

1.3.6 Supplemental Income

Students and Fellows may receive supplemental income equal to 40% of the value of their AIHS awards from any single external agency. Supplemental income from different sources is not **additive**; as long as the value of any single award does not exceed 40% of their AIHS awards, students, fellows and clinical fellows may receive an unlimited number of awards. However, trainees must ensure that no more than 200 hours per year are committed to non-research activities.

1.3.7 AIHS Incentive Award

This program awards students, fellows and clinical fellows a stipend supplement.

- i. If an AIHS Studentship or an AIHS MD-PhD Studentship recipient receives another major comparable, peer-reviewed award, they may be eligible to receive a minimum stipend incentive of \$12,000 per year or more to a maximum combined award value of \$30,000 per year; or the maximum allowed by the other agency.
- ii. If an AIHS Fellowship recipient receives another major comparable, peer-reviewed award, they may be eligible to receive a minimum incentive of \$15,000 per year or more to a maximum combined award value of \$50,000 per year; or the maximum allowed by the other agency.
- iii. If an AIHS Clinical Fellowship recipient receives another major comparable, peer-reviewed award, they may be eligible to receive a minimum incentive of \$15,000 per year or more to a maximum combined award value of \$70,000 per year (for awards renewed on or after July 1, 2012); or the maximum allowed by the other agency.

The trainee will also receive the AIHS research allowance.

Individuals who receive an AIHS traineeship in the form of an Incentive Award should note that this uses up their eligibility for support. Candidates have the option of canceling their AIHS awards in order to accept awards from another source. In such cases, AIHS may accept an application for the same type of award at a later date, if the candidate continues to meet the eligibility criteria. Should an award be approved upon re-application, the period of support will depend on his/her eligibility, and be determined by the maximum support period allowed minus the period of support already used up.

1.3.8 Healthcare Benefits

Trainees in Alberta and other provinces:

AIHS does not provide additional funds for health-care benefits. The payment of such benefits is the responsibility of the awardee.

Trainees in other countries:

The payment of such benefits is the responsibility of the awardee.

2.0 Eligibility

2.1 Studentships

2.1.1 Full-Time Studentships

Candidates must have been accepted into, or be currently engaged in, a full-time, thesis-based, graduate program at an Alberta-based university in a health-related discipline leading to a master's or doctoral degree. This award is not available to students registered in a course-based graduate program.

Support will not be provided beyond six years of enrollment in graduate school. Candidates who have interrupted their training for parenting or other reasons and who have consequently exceeded this time limit, may be eligible to apply for studentship support. In such cases, however, the candidate is advised to clearly explain the nature of his/her particular circumstances at the time of application.

2.1.2 MD-PhD Studentships

Applicants must be currently enrolled at an Alberta university in a combined MD-PhD program. Support is available only to candidates who have completed their first year of medical school or graduate training.

2.2 Fellowships

2.2.1 Full-Time Fellowships

Candidates must have a Ph.D., M.D., D.D.S., D.V.M. or D.Pharm. degree.

Applicants with an M.D. or D.D.S. may wish to consider applying for an AIHS Clinical Fellowship award. Please note the special eligibility criteria for this award.

Support will not be provided beyond six years after receipt of the Ph.D. degree, or beyond eight years after receipt of the M.D., D.D.S., D.V.M., or D.Pharm. degrees. Candidates who have interrupted their training for parenting or other reasons and who have consequently exceeded this time limit, may be eligible to apply for fellowship support. In order to be considered, however, the candidate must clearly explain the nature of his/her particular circumstances at the time of application.

2.2.2 Clinical Fellowships

To be eligible for a Clinical Fellowship, candidates must meet one of the following criteria:

- i. they must have completed all Canadian clinical requirements and they must be licensable by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta or by the Alberta Dental Association;
- ii. they must be enrolled in, and nearing completion of, a subspecialty program recognized by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada;
- iii. they must have completed the Fellowship program of the Canadian College of Family Practice.

Clinical Fellows are expected to commit to a minimum of two years full-time research.

3.0 Location of Training

3.1 Full-Time Studentship:

Full-time Studentship awards (biomedical) are only tenable at an Alberta-based university.

3.2 Full-time Health Research Studentship

Full-time Health Research Studentship awards are normally tenable at an Alberta university. AIHS will consider requests for training outside Alberta from Albertans who have demonstrated outstanding academic performance, and who can provide strong justification for their selection of training environment outside Alberta.

3.3 MD-PhD Studentship

MD-PhD Studentship awards are only tenable at the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary.

3.4 Full-Time and Clinical Fellowships

Full-time and Clinical Fellowship awards are tenable at an Alberta university. AIHS will consider requests for training outside of Alberta from Canadian citizens or permanent residents who meet ALL of the following criteria:

- i. they have received the majority of their training in Alberta, and have demonstrated exceptional research performance;
- ii. they have superior academic records;

- iii. they have strong institutional support at an Alberta-based institution (eg. dean at a university, CEO of a hospital, or medical officer of a health region) as demonstrated by an interest in the Fellow's future re-recruitment to the province.

IMPORTANT: It should be noted that there are a very limited number of fellowship awards that are supported for placements out-of-province. Only candidates who have clearly met ALL of the eligibility requirements and have exceptionally highly rated applications are likely to receive out-of-province fellowship funding.

4.0 Supervisor

All trainees are required to complete their training under the faculty advisor who sponsors their application, and to adhere to the research project outlined in the application.

4.1 Studentship

A faculty supervisor possessing both a record of productive health-oriented research and sufficient resources to ensure the satisfactory conduct of the research must sponsor the candidate. He/she must provide direct supervision and should not supervise more than four full-time AIHS-supported trainees simultaneously.

4.1.1

Under special circumstances, consideration may be given to a change in supervisor. This will be assessed on a case by case basis. To request a change in supervisor the trainee must obtain prior written approval from AIHS. This includes having the agreement of a new supervisor who satisfies AIHS's conditions for supervisors and the development of a new project proposal.

4.1.2

AIHS reserves the right to terminate support if its continued requirements for supervision are not met.

4.2 Fellowship

A faculty supervisor possessing both a record of productive health-oriented research and sufficient resources to ensure the satisfactory conduct of the research must sponsor the candidate. He/she must provide direct supervision.

Candidates will not receive approval for fellowship training in the same department or with the same supervisor as those associated with the majority of their doctoral training.

5.0 Research Project

5.1

The research project should not be substantially altered from that proposed in the original application. If significant changes should become necessary, the trainee must obtain prior written approval from AIHS. The supervisor must agree with the proposed changes and the original aims and conditions of the award must be satisfied.

5.2

AIHS reserves the right to terminate support if changes to the proposed research project are not approved.

6.0 Application Process

The original application must be submitted on up-to-date application forms.

The downloadable forms are the only forms that will be accepted by AIHS. Please read the instructions carefully before filling out the form.

6.1 Studentships

This program is now closed to new entry. Please see the [Training and Early Career Development Programs](#) for application opportunities.

Please note that unsuccessful applicants may apply a maximum of two additional times for a Studentship Award.

Applications for the MD-PhD Studentships must include a letter of support from the office of the program coordinator.

6.2 Fellowships

This program is now closed to new entry. Please see the [Training and Early Career Development Programs](#) for application opportunities.

Please note that unsuccessful applicants may apply a maximum of one additional time for a Fellowship Award, regardless of fellowship award category.

6.3 Clinical Fellowships

This program is now closed to new entry. Please see the [Training and Early Career Development Programs](#) for application opportunities.

Please note that unsuccessful applicants may apply a maximum of one additional time for a Fellowship Award, regardless of fellowship award category.

7.0 Peer Review Process

All applications undergo a rigorous review process completed by committees made up of Alberta-based researchers. The assignment by committee is as follows:

- i. Studentship Advisory Committee;
- ii. Fellowship Advisory Committee;
- iii. Clinical Advisory Committee;
- iv. Health Trainee Advisory Committee;

All applications are assessed using the Pro-Grid(TM) tool to assist in evaluating the proposals for training awards. This system considers the candidate's application based on their academic and research record, the training environment, and the proposed project.

8.0 Release of Competition Results

Awards are approved by the President and CEO of AIHS. The results are posted on the AIHS website according to the timelines outlined below. Results are not released over the phone.

8.1 Studentships and Fellowships

Results of the Trainee competitions are usually available on the AIHS website approximately 2 1/2 months after the close of the competition. Official letters with the competition results and Pro-Grid ratings are sent to the applicants shortly thereafter.

9.0 Commencement of Funding

9.1 Studentships

Studentship awards may be implemented at any time within six months of the date of offer. Offers will be withdrawn for any award not implemented within this time period.

9.2 Fellowships

Fellowship awards may be implemented at any time within 12 months from the date of offer.

10.0 Time Commitment Expectations

10.1 Full-Time Studentships and Fellowships

Trainees may undertake a maximum of 200 hours of non-research related activities per year ONLY with the approval of their faculty supervisors, in subjects relevant to the research project. This limit could include direct participation in:

- i. teaching;
- ii. preparation time;
- iii. contributions to laboratory supervision.

10.2 Clinical Fellowships

Clinical Fellows are expected to commit to a minimum of two years of full-time research.

10.3 Vacation

Vacation entitlements are in accordance with the policies of the host institution and must be taken during the term of the award.

11.0 Renewal of Awards

11.1 Studentship

Studentship awards are normally provided for an initial period of 24 months and are renewable (upon submission of annual progress reports that are satisfactory to AIHS) to a maximum total period of support of five years, determined by eligibility.

MD-PhD Studentship awards are normally provided for an initial period of 24 months and are renewable (upon submission of annual progress reports that are satisfactory to AIHS) to a maximum total support period of six years, determined by eligibility.

11.2 Fellowship

Fellowship awards are normally provided for an initial period of 24 months and may be renewed for one additional year upon submission of a progress report that is satisfactory to AIHS.

11.3 Clinical Fellowship

Clinical Fellowship awards are normally provided for an initial period of 24 months and may be renewed for one additional year upon submission of a progress report that is satisfactory to AIHS. Candidates enrolled in a graduate program (Masters or Ph.D.) may be eligible to receive additional years of support.

12.0 Progress Reports

12.1 Annual Report

Awardees for multi-year awards are required to submit an annual progress report. Failure to submit this report will result in suspension of the funding and may lead to cancellation of the award.

Awardees will receive a reminder letter outlining the required submission date along with the required report forms from AIHS along with the required submission deadline.

12.2 Final Report

The trainee and the supervisor must complete and submit the final report form within one month of the termination or completion of an award.

13.0 Extended Leaves

13.1 Maternal and Paternal Leave

For awardees who have renewed their award **PRIOR** to July 1, 2012:

AIHS full-time Studentship and Fellowship awardees may receive up to 20 weeks of paid maternity leave.

Paid parental leave may be awarded to an AIHS Studentship or Fellowship recipient when the mother works. The duration of such a leave will be up to 20 weeks, **less** any period of maternity leave taken by the mother.

An additional 20 weeks can be taken as a leave of absence without pay.

Following the maternity/parental leave, and upon the request of the trainee and supervisor, the term of the AIHS training award may be extended by an amount of time equal to the duration of the leave.



AIHS awardees who take a maternity or parental leave during the tenure of their award must notify AIHS **PRIOR** to the commencement of the leave period.

There is no limit to the number of maternity/parental leaves that can be taken during the tenure of a given award.

Time added to the award is a maximum 40 weeks.

Upon the approved renewal of your award **AFTER** July 1, 2012, AIHS full-time Studentship, Fellowship and Clinical Fellowship recipients may receive up to one year of paid parental leave.

When each parent is taking a portion of the leave, the AIHS awardee is eligible for up to one year less any period of leave taken by the other parent. Leave must occur within the first year of the child's life and cannot be taken simultaneously with the other parent. Combined leave must total no more than 12 months.

To be eligible, recipients who take a parental leave during the tenure of their awards must notify AIHS **PRIOR** to the commencement of the leave period.

There is no limit to the number of parental leaves that can be taken during the tenure of a given award.

13.2 Leaves of Absence

Unpaid leaves of absence of up to six months may be granted following a formal request to AIHS outlining the purpose of the leave. The support of the supervisor and the host institution is required. Each request will be considered on a case by case basis by AIHS.

AIHS reserves the right to terminate the award should the required approval not be met.

Upon the trainee's return, AIHS will extend the award by the duration of the approved leave.

14.0 Communications

14.1

All publications, including public messages, arising from research supported by AIHS grants or awards must acknowledge the support of AIHS. Please see the Alberta Health – Solutions website for downloadable logos.

14.2

Awardees are asked to inform the AIHS communications staff in advance if their research will be published in a major journal such that it might result in a press release from the university and/or the journal.

14.3

AIHS reserves the right to publish and/or disseminate information regarding its grants and awards.

15.0 Termination of Award

AIHS reserves the right to terminate any award if the conditions of the award are not met, or if there is evidence of unsatisfactory progress.

The trainee and/or supervisor must immediately notify AIHS of any changes to the training status that could affect the candidate's eligibility for an award. This includes termination of enrolment or of employment, completion of the requirements for the degree for students, or leave of absence.

16.0 Support of Research Integrity

16.1

AIHS supports Alberta research institutions in their efforts to promote and ensure the highest standards of research and scholarship practice and behavior.

16.2

It is incumbent upon each applicant to adhere to all research policies and procedures in place at his/her institution, including those regarding integrity in research and scholarship.

16.3

AIHS reserves the right to confirm, through independent means, representations of authorship, credentials or research support.

16.4

In the event of material deviations in the submitted information, including citation sources (in the case of authorship), issuing organization(s) (in the case of credentials), or granting agencies (in the case of research support), AIHS reserves the right to disqualify any applicant from the competition in question. Further AIHS actions may include disqualifying the applicant from future AIHS competitions for a time period to be set at AIHS's sole discretion, withdrawal of any remaining installments of support for any existing AIHS grant or award for which misrepresentation appears in the submission, and seeking partial or full repayment of any past financial support under any AIHS grant or award for which misrepresentation appears in the submission.

17.0 Contact Information:

If you have any questions or concerns and would like to speak with someone at AIHS, please contact our Programs department at 780-423-5727 or grants.health@aihealthsolutions.ca

Dr. Ryan Perry
Director, Programs