AIHS Vision

Transform Health and Well-being through Research and Innovation
AIHS Mandate

“Support, for the economic and social well-being of Albertans, health research and innovation activities aligned to meet Government of Alberta priorities, including, without limitation, activities directed at the development and growth of the health sectors, the discovery of new knowledge and the application of that knowledge.”
AIHS Funding Allocations

- **Studentships**: $3,487,110 (33%)
- **Postgraduate Fellowships**: $1,312,200 (13%)
- **Summer Studentships**: $397,514 (4%)
- **Clinician Fellowships**: $880,240 (8%)
- **HYRS**: $4,339,617 (41%)
- **Forefront**: $98,852 (1%)

**Total Funding Allocations**: $8,598,071
Summer Studentship

Objectives

- AIHS Summer Studentships offer motivated students with exceptional academic records an opportunity to participate in medical or health research in Alberta during the summer months.
- The award is meant to encourage students to consider pursuing formal training and a career in health-related research.
Summer Studentship

Description

- Tenable for a minimum of two months and a maximum of four months
  - Provides a stipend of $1,400 per month
- The application form and program guidelines can be found on the AIHS website: [http://www.aihealthsolutions.ca/funding/training-and-early-career-funding/undergraduate-high-school/summer-studentships/](http://www.aihealthsolutions.ca/funding/training-and-early-career-funding/undergraduate-high-school/summer-studentships/)
- **Deadline:** February 2, 2015 (internal institutional deadlines may apply – check with your institution)
Summer Studentship

Eligibility

- Registered in an Alberta-based undergraduate degree program in a biomedical or health-related field
- Registered in an undergraduate degree program outside of Alberta, and desiring to engage in research during the summer at an Alberta institution
- Registered in an M.D. program, and who may also hold an undergraduate or graduate degree
- Exceptional high school students with records of participation in the healthcare system, and a clear interest in pursuing a health research career
- Currently in the last term of their undergraduate degrees and who have applied either to Medical School or to a graduate program that would start in the coming fall
Summer Studentship

Expectations

Students

- Students must be willing to participate full-time in the project for the duration of the award and agree not to change supervisor or project during the term of the award.

Supervisor

- Limit of two applications may be submitted by a faculty supervisor
- Separate research project must be submitted for each student
- Supervisor must be prepared to provide direct and continuous supervision during the term of the award
Summer Studentship

Competition History

AIHS Summer Studentships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competition</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>% Funded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992/93</td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992/94</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993/94</td>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993/95</td>
<td></td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994/95</td>
<td></td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995/96</td>
<td></td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995/97</td>
<td></td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996/97</td>
<td></td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **APPLIED**
- **APPROVED**
- **% SUCCESS**
How Do I Apply?

- Must have a supervisor and proposed project
- Finding a supervisor
  - Only two applications per supervisor
  - Set up a meeting with your potential supervisor to express your interest
  - Important to do this early. Do not wait.
How Do I Choose a Project?

- Project will largely be determined by you and your supervisor in an area of interest
- Active involvement in writing the project proposal
How is Your Application Reviewed?
The AIHS approach considers three main things:

- The candidate
- The supervisor/environment
- The project

Reviewed by:
AIHS Summer Studentship Review Committee
Pro-Grid Decision-Assist Tool

Pro-Grid decision-assist tool used by AIHS to assess Summer Studentship applications since 2000

- Increasing number of proposals
- Increasing demands on reviewers’ time
- More turnover on committees
- Consistency in application of review criteria
- Discrimination with existing rating scale was limited (>75% between 3 and 4.25)
- Request for more feedback from applicants
The Pro-Grid Approach

- Based on matrix of performance factors developed to align with values, priorities and expectations of AIHS
- Uses set of calibrated performance levels (language ladder)
- Designed for high number of proposals
- Graphical representation of strengths and weaknesses: improved feedback
# Pro-Grid Summer Studentship Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Candidate</td>
<td>The Environment</td>
<td>The Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Academic Record</td>
<td>Supervisor’s Resources</td>
<td>Overall Impression of the Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Letter of Reference</td>
<td>Supervisor’s Research Track Record</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How Pro-Grid Works

Each criteria has a **language ladder**

Each step on the ladder is given a value
(A=0.1, B=1, C=2 and D=3)

Ratings from reviewers (3) averaged

Candidate: A1 and A2 assigned to y axis
Environment: B1 and B2 assigned to x axis
Project: C1 assigned equally to both
A1 – Academic Record

A. The candidate meets the minimum expectations for applicants to the Summer Studentship program.

B. The candidate has a good academic track record, with mostly average to above-average grades in all courses.

C. Very good academic record with consistently above-average grades, especially in relevant courses.

D. Outstanding academic record throughout candidate’s academic training, especially in courses relevant to the AIHS objectives.
Transcripts

- Submit transcripts of current university or high school program

- Transcripts must be up-to-date and official, or certified true copies of the official

- Foreign transcripts must be accompanied by certified English translation and clear explanation of the grading system
A2 – Letter of Reference/Support

A. Letter provides **general information** about the candidate’s personal characteristics and/or academic strengths.

B. Letter is **supportive** of the candidate, and speaks in **general** terms of his/her personal characteristics (motivation, intellectual capacity, maturity, etc.) and academic strengths.

C. Letter is **very positive** and provides **considerable detail** about the candidate’s relative strengths. Candidate has accumulated some **research experience**, and the letter comments on the candidate’s competence/abilities in this area.

D. Candidate’s **research experience has been significant**. Letter is **very strongly supportive** of the candidate and communicates an element of excitement about his/her future prospects in conducting research.
B1 – Supervisor’s Resources

A. From the information provided, it is not clear that adequate resources are available to support the student’s work.

B. The supervisor receives an adequate and on-going level of peer-reviewed funding. Other useful resources appear to be available within the general environment.

C. The supervisor is well funded for his/her projects. Candidate will have access to all necessary tools within the immediate environment.

D. The supervisor currently receives strong funding from recognized agencies. All equipment and/or support systems required by the candidate and his/her program of research are in place.
B2 – Supervisor’s Research Track Record

A. The supervisor’s level of productivity in the recent past is modest.

B. The supervisor has a good/solid record of publication.

C. The supervisor has a very good/strong and consistent track record of publications.

D. The supervisor’s track record is excellent in terms of both quantity and quality of published work, and has received national/international recognition.
C1 – Overall Impression of Project

A. The project appears to be commensurate with the level of the candidate’s training.

B. The project is relevant to health and is well written, providing sufficient rationalization and methodological detail.

C. The project is relevant to health and is well written, providing sufficient rationalization and methodological detail. In addition, this work will potentially produce an original contribution to existing knowledge in this field.

D. The project is clearly defined, and is hypothesis driven. The description provides enough methodological detail to evoke confidence that the goals of the project will, in all likelihood, be achieved. The project is related to an important area of health research, and has the potential to contribute substantially to knowledge in this field.
The Pro-Grid Output

Chart 1 - Proposal Grid

Chart 2 - The Database
Some realities…

- Each application is reviewed by three reviewers
- The reviewers have to review many applications
- The reviewers will have lots of applications to compare to each other
- They will likely not be experts in your field and may have difficulty assessing the quality of your publications, importance of project, etc.

Peer review chooses:
- the most competitive students,
- working with the most competitive supervisors,
- with the most competitive projects,
- who submit the most competitive applications.

All conditions **must** be satisfied to “guarantee” success
Follow Your Instructions

- The application must be a font size not less than 10 point
- Be sure to submit:
  - Original application form (with signatures)
  - Up-to-date official transcripts
  - One letter of reference (sealed envelope)
- Extra information will not be sent to committee
- Candidates in final year of high school or undergraduate program **must** submit evidence of registration in or application to undergraduate or graduate program
General pitfalls

- Not understanding how the review system works
- Submitting uncompetitive applications
- Missing information
- Missing material
- Not following the instructions
- Poorly written
- Poorly assembled
- Integrity of Information
Integrity of Information

“AIHS supports Alberta research institutions in their efforts to promote and ensure the highest standards of research and scholarship practice and behaviour. By his/her signature below, each applicant asserts that this application adheres to all research policies and procedures in place at his/her sponsoring institution, including those regarding integrity in research and scholarship. AIHS reserves the right to confirm this assertion through independent means. AIHS wishes to alert applicants to the consequences of misrepresentation in this application, including misrepresentations of authorship, credentials or research support. In the event of material deviations of the information in this application from reference sources, 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 the 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.
Timeline

- Deadline for applications – **Friday, February 2, 2015**

- Release of competition results
  - Posted on the AIHS website - late March

- Release of funding - **May 1, 2014**

- Awards are administered by the University
Summer Studentship Contacts

Kari Larson
Program Coordinator, Programs
780-429-9334
E-mail: kari.larson@albertainnovates.ca

Carla Weyland
Assistant Director, Programs
E-mail: carla.weyland@albertainnovates.ca

AIHS website: www.aihealthsolutions.ca