

Answers to Pre-Submitted Questions

CIHR 2026

Question & Answer

SESSION FOR

Trainees and Postdoctoral Researchers
in **Health Research**

English:

Tuesday **June 2, 2026**, at 1:00 PM ET

French:

Thursday **June 4, 2026**, at 1:00 PM ET



Q & A – General

What resources are available to determine whether research fits better for CIHR or SSHRC if focused on a CIHR priority from a critical social science lens?

Response:

Applicants may consult the following resources to determine which federal agency's research mandate best aligns with the subject matter of their application.

The Government of Canada provides overarching guidance in Selecting the Appropriate Federal Granting Agency (<https://science.gc.ca/site/science/en/interagency-research-funding/policies-and-guidelines/selecting-appropriate-federal-granting-agency?OpenDocument>).

Additional agency-specific resources include:

- For CIHR applications: CIHR's mandate and subject-matter guidance (<https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/48801.html>).
- For SSHRC applications: the Subject Matter Eligibility (<https://sshrc-crsh.canada.ca/en/funding/policies-regulations-and-guidelines/subject-matter-eligibility.aspx>)



Q & A – General

Can you elaborate more on how much technical and detailed the proposal should be? I wonder about the accessibility of the language of my proposal.

Response:

The level of technical detail expected in a proposal depends on the specific funding opportunity and its evaluation criteria. Applicants are encouraged to consult the program guidelines to understand expectations regarding content and level of detail.

In general, proposals should be sufficiently detailed to allow reviewers to assess the feasibility and rigor of the approach, while remaining accessible to a broad scientific audience. Reviewers may not all be experts in your specific area, so it is important to clearly explain key concepts, limit the use of jargon, and ensure that the overall objectives, approach, and significance are easily understood.

Q & A – General

Is preliminary data necessary for a project involving AI applications in oncology?

Response:

Preliminary data is generally not a requirement for award programs. Please refer to the specific funding opportunity instructions for details.



Q & A – General

Does CIHR plan to structure grants to allow for full participation by college & polytechnic applied researchers (allowing funds to be used for course release)?

Response:

Colleges and polytechnics are eligible institutions under CIHR, however, CIHR follows the Tri-Agency Guide on Financial Administration, which generally does not permit using grant funds for teaching release unless stated in a specific funding opportunity.

Q & A – General



How can applicants strengthen their applications for Indigenous health equity funding focused on harm reduction?

Response:

Applicants may strengthen their applications in various ways for Indigenous health equity funding focused on harm reduction but should always keep in mind the specific program's objectives, evaluation criteria, and instructions, as these provide essential guidance.

In this context, it is important to recognize that harm reduction in Indigenous health equity settings may be broad and may extend beyond addressing immediate risks. It can also involve approaches that are culturally grounded, distinctions-based, and responsive to the unique contexts and priorities of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities, including holistic concepts of health and wellness.

Applicants should be able to demonstrate how their proposed work reflects the meaningful inclusion of Indigenous Peoples, including culturally safe approaches, appropriate and respectful engagement, co-development, and alignment with Indigenous knowledge systems and relevant principles of self-determination, as well as how the work is relevant to the communities they aim to serve.

Q & A – CGRS M

Are the eligibility criteria based solely on the grade obtained in the master's program and the thesis topic?

Response:

For the CGRS M program, one of the eligibility criteria's is to have achieved a first-class average, as determined by the host institution, in each of the last two completed years of study (full-time equivalent). This means any studies whether or not they were completed at the degree-granting institution and this may include undergraduate studies depending on your situation. However, institutions may (at their discretion), accept CGRS M applications from individuals who have not obtained a first-class average.

It is also important to note that an applicant's academic record is part of the evaluation criteria of "Academic Excellence".

I would encourage you to reach out to your proposed host institution for further information.



Q & A – CGRS D

In the PhD competition research project summary, are references included within the one-page limit or can they be attached separately?

Response:

You can include references in your Research Project Summary and/or Training Expectations, but these must be included within the page limits.

For English applications, there is a maximum of 1-page limit for the Research Project Summary and a maximum of 2 pages for the Training Expectations. However, note that should you make the choice to write your application in French, then extended limits are granted.

Please consult the specific application instructions for details.



Q & A – CGRS D

Can I still apply for and hold the PhD training award in this 2026 cycle if my current graduation date is in 2028 and I plan to extend my degree?

Response:

If you apply for the upcoming Fall CGRS D competition, your choices of start date are May 1 2027, Sept 1 2027 or Jan 1 2028. These awards are 3 years in length but if you graduate prior to the end date of your award, it will be terminated on your graduation date.

Since this is a specific question, I encourage the person who asked this question to communicate with CIHR's Contact Centre for answers to their specific question.

Q & A – CGRS D



What are the priority areas for PhD funding this year?

Response:

The priority research areas are:

- Advanced digital technologies (including AI, quantum, and cybersecurity)
- Health, including biotechnology
- Clean technology and resource value chains
- Environment, climate resilience, and the Arctic
- Food and water security
- Democratic and community resilience
- Manufacturing and advanced materials
- Defence and dual-use technologies

The priority area specific to CIHR is "Health, including Biotechnology".

Q & A – CGRS D

I was informed that PhD trainees are able to observe/participate in adjudication (not for their application cycle/committee). Is this still possible?

Response:

CIHR invites postdoctoral fellows (PDFs) to gain valuable hands-on experience by participating as peer reviewers for the CGRS Doctoral program.

Interested PDFs should contact the College of Reviewers for more information about the Program.



Q & A – CGRS D

Are the previous publications before joining the Canadian institution can be counted and taken into consideration for doctoral students ?

Response:

Publications are included as part of the "Research Potential" Selection Criteria for the evaluation of CGRS D applications.

Applicants should include all publications within the past 5 years that are accepted or are in press (regardless of the institution the applicant was at when publishing).



Q & A – CGRS D

What If I want to take maternity leave during the 3 years of funding ?

- 1) Is those fees months will be paused from my progress?
- 2) Is there any stipend to live ?

Response:

CIHR provides paid parental leave for up to 12 months, based on the recipient's current stipend value.

This support is not automatic; recipients must request it and obtain approval from CIHR, who will review the request and determine eligibility.

For more information, please consult the Tri-Agency Research Training Award Holder's Guide, that is listed as one of the useful links for the CGRS D program.

Q & A – CGRS D

How can I prepare my application to obtain a doctoral award?

Response:

ResearchNet will open for applications for the CGRS D program on July 8th. At that time, our literature will also be updated so I encourage you to read the harmonized CGRS D webpage as well as CIHR's CGRS D Funding Opportunity on our website.

We also have a few documents that are excellent resources such as the Application Instructions and FAQ webpage.

If you have any questions after consulting these resources, please reach out to CIHR's Contact Centre.



Q & A – CGRS D

With a postdoctoral degree in organic chemistry, is it possible to apply for a PhD position, even if the area of the PhD is different from the diploma?

Response:

Applicants are eligible to apply for a CGRS D award even if they have previously completed a different degree.

However, it is important to remember that all studies completed that are transferred to the doctoral degree that the applicant is requesting funding for will be counted towards the maximum number of months when determining eligibility.

Q & A – CGRS D / CPRA

What is the allocation for international PhD competitors this year? Are there any resources about last year(s) winners' demographics/stats?

Response:

- For CGRS-D program: - Up to 15% of all doctoral awards will be available to international applicants.
- For the CPRA program - Up to 20% of all postdoctoral awards will be available to international applicants.

CIHR does not currently publish any resources on awardee demographics.



Q & A – CGRS D / CPRA

What considerations will be made for international applicants within the fundable score range who just miss out due to the international cap?

Response:

If an international applicant declines an award, it will be offered to the next international candidate on the ranking list, subject to available funding.



Q & A – CPRA

Are applicants expected to justify staying at the same academic institution where they completed their PhD?

Response:

Applicants can pursue a post-doc at the same institution where they completed their doctoral degree.

The research the applicant will propose must be significantly different and distinct from, or add significantly to, that related to your doctoral thesis.

Additionally, applicants should provide a justification if they are planning on holding their award in the same research environment (i.e., research/paid institution (or its affiliate), supervisor or co-supervisor) where they completed their previous degree under the Training Expectations section of their application.



Q & A – CPRA

Are post-health
professional degree
applicants
considered trainees?

Response:

Applicants who do not hold a doctoral (PhD) degree but hold either a Health Professional (HP) or an Allied Health Professional (AHP) degree are eligible to apply to the CPRA program to pursue post-degree research training.

Consult the list of CIHR-Eligible Health Professions to determine if your degree qualifies as an HP or AHP degree.

Would an academic
affiliation with the
University as
Research Associate
be sufficient?

Applicants cannot hold or be on leave from a tenure-track or tenured faculty position. Generally, "tenure or tenure-track" refers to an open-ended academic position in which the holder can form a research group, apply for externally funded research as a principal investigator and teach.

Q & A – CPRA

I am expecting to finalize my PhD program in April 2027. Am I able to apply and start the program after that date if I am selected?

Response:

Applicants who expect to complete all PhD requirements by April 2027 remain eligible for the CPRA program. If selected, they may begin their CPRA award once all degree requirements are fully completed and official confirmation of completion has been provided.

Please note that successful applicants must begin their award within 12 months of the earliest possible start date and must start on the first day of any month between April 1 and March 1 following the offer of award.



Q & A – CPRA

For the postdoctoral trainee awards, I see that up to 30% of all postdoctoral awards are available to be held abroad. Can you explain how these are selected?

Response:

The top 30% of awardees on the final ranked list who selected an institution outside of Canada for their postdoctoral training are offered the awards.



Q & A – CPRA

If I do a postdoctoral fellowship in the same University as my PhD, how can I improve my proposal?

Response:

The research application proposal must be significantly different and distinct from or add significantly to, that related to your doctoral thesis.

Applicants are to provide a justification if they are planning to hold this award in the same research environment (i.e., research/paid institution (or its affiliate), supervisor or co-supervisor) where they completed their previous degree.

Please refer to the Application Instructions.

The launch of the postdoctoral program will take place on July 8, which will allow applicant to begin preparing their applications for the program. At that time, our documentation will also be updated; I therefore encourage applicants to consult the harmonized CPRA page as well as the CIHR CPRA funding opportunity on our website.

We also have several documents that serve as excellent resources, such as the application instructions and the frequently asked questions. If you have any questions after reviewing these resources, please contact the CIHR Contact Centre.

Q & A – CPRA

What are the requirements and considerations if we have two supervisors?

Response:

A Supervisor is an individual who: is a mentor; and holds an independent research appointment with a status that permits the supervision of trainees (Masters, PhD, Postdoc) in areas of investigation related to the proposed research training.

CPRA programs allows for up to 2 supervisors; but both must meet these requirements.



Q & A – CPRA



Are postdocs considered students for international students needing to apply for study or work permits?

Response:

We do not have such expertise at CIHR.

We strongly recommend for you to consult the Government of Canada - Study in Canada as an international student webpage (<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada.html>) for information about study and/or work permits.

Q & A – CPRA

Will applicants to the CIHR PhD fellowships this year (and their supervisors) require an Academic CCV or a Narrative CV?

Response:

Applicants to the CPRA competition are required to submit an Academic CV (validated for CIHR) using the Canadian Common CV (CCV) website.

As for supervisors, they do need to be identified (so they still need a CIHR PIN); however a CV is not a requirement.

For details on how to complete the CCV, applicants should consult the Canada Postdoctoral Research Award program (CPRA) – Application Instructions.

Q & A – CPRA

Is a GPA of 4.0 at the doctoral level required to be eligible for the CPRA competition or to receive the award? If not, how is the cumulative GPA taken into consideration?

Response:

There is actually no GPA requirements for eligibility purpose under the CPRA program and/or to receive the award. CIHR does not use a GPA cutoff for the CPRA program neither do we require transcripts.

Applications are assessed according to the established selection criteria—(1) Research potential and experience and (2) Quality of the proposed research program—and are reviewed in alignment with DORA principles.



Can faculty employed in a post-secondary institution apply for CIHR or SSHRC funding without holding a PhD?

Response:

At CIHR, not holding a PhD does not automatically make a faculty member ineligible for CIHR; eligibility depends on meeting the program's eligibility requirements.

We suggest you reach out to the CIHR Contact Centre at support-soutien@cihr-irsc.gc.ca with more detail so that your question can be answered.

As for SSHRC, we recommend contacting SSHRC directly.



Q & A – CPRA

I obtained my PhD in 2022.
Am I still eligible for postdoctoral research awards?

Are individuals with a PhD degree for over 6 years eligible?

Response:

These two questions are quite specific to individual's situations. We will address them in a way that will be helpful to a broader audience.

To be eligible to apply to the CPRA program, you must have completed all requirements of your doctorate or health professional degree no more than three years before September 1 of the year in which you apply. For this 2026 competition, this means that applicants who obtained their PhD earlier than September 1, 2023 are not eligible.

Also note that this is not the conferred or convocation date indicated on your transcript, but rather the date on which all the requirements of your degree were met, including the successful defense and submission of the corrected copy of your thesis.

Exceptions to the eligibility window are granted up to a maximum of three years only if the applicant meet one or more of the criteria described under the eligibility section of the funding opportunity.

For the participants who asked, we suggest you reach out to the CIHR Contact Centre at support-soutien@cihr-irsc.gc.ca, and with more specific details so that your question can be answered.

Q & A – CPRA

For those with a PhD in natural product chemistry, are they eligible?

Response:

Applicants holding a PhD in natural product chemistry may be eligible, provided their proposed research aligns with CIHR's mandate in health research. CIHR supports a broad interpretation of health research, including work that contributes to biomedical, clinical, health systems, or population and public health outcomes.

With respect to postdoctoral training, it is possible to undertake a postdoctoral position without prior expertise in a health-related field.

However, applicants must ensure that their proposed research is clearly situated within CIHR's health research mandate and demonstrates relevance to human health.

Is it possible to obtain a postdoctoral position without expertise in the health area?

Applicants are encouraged to clearly articulate the health-related aspects of their research and how their background and training support their proposed project.



Q & A – CPRA / HSIF

How is CIHR
broadening
trainee/postdoc
eligibility to
include applied
academic
research centres
in health systems
not tied to a
university?

Response:

CIHR is broadening eligibility by expanding the range of institutions that can administer funds (e.g., hospitals, research institutes, and not-for-profit organizations) and by designing programs like the Health System Impact Fellowship that embed trainees and postdoctoral researchers directly within health system organizations outside universities.

This includes settings such as health authority–based research units, hospital-embedded research centres, government or ministry policy labs, quality improvement and learning health system teams, and independent not-for-profit research organizations focused on health services and policy, even when not formally university-affiliated. These models often combine health system and academic supervision, allowing applied research centres to participate while maintaining research training requirements.

In practice, non-university environments can qualify if they demonstrate strong research capacity, supervision, and appropriate administrative oversight, reflecting CIHR's recognition of the growing importance of applied, health system–based research in training the next generation of researchers.

Q & A – HSIF

What will the competition launch and submission deadline dates be for the next postdoctoral round of the Health Systems Impact Fellowship?

Response:

The anticipated launch for the next Health System Impact Fellowship competition is early fall.

For the most up-to-date information, including the exact launch and submission deadline dates, please keep an eye on our channels and stay tuned to our social media for announcements.



Q & A – HSIF

Does my supervisor need to have a university affiliation if I'm conducting research at a health institution, for example?

Response:

Yes, you still need an academic supervisor with a university affiliation, even if your main research is in a health system organization.



Q & A – HSIF

Does CIHR consider trainees and postdocs from universities that are actively collaborating with applied academic research centers integrated with colleges?

Response:

Yes, CIHR generally considers trainees and postdoctoral fellows from universities that collaborate with applied research centres integrated with colleges, as eligibility is determined primarily by the applicant's status and their formal affiliation with an eligible academic institution.

Such collaborative models are consistent with the Health System Impact Fellowship's emphasis on applied, partnership-based research and can be beneficial.

The key requirement is that the university remains the official academic host, able to administer CIHR funds and provide appropriate supervision, while the integrated research environment supports the fellowship's health system impact objectives.



Q & A – HSIF / REDI

The budget breakdown in the supplementary file is quite general.
Can we develop our own more detailed, project-specific budget instead?

Response:

For the HSI-ECR program, applicants are not expected to create a more detailed, project-specific budget.

The required budget breakdown is intentionally limited to reporting the annual distribution across the predefined categories (salary award and research/professional development allowance, along with partner contributions), within fixed parameters such as the \$70,000 salary cap, minimum \$30,000 research allowance, and the structured 1:1 matching requirement. As such, the form is designed to capture totals at a high level, and applicants should ensure their planned expenses fit within these prescribed categories and limits.

As for the REDI program, there is a budget template available in ResearchNet or a free-form budget can be uploaded. The budget should only be for the \$20,000/year in research allowance.

Q & A – REDI

Applying for CIHR postdoctoral award fellowship while in my 3rd year of PhD (award start after defense). Can I apply for the REDI CIHR award the following year?

Response:

The next REDI application Deadline is June 16, 2026, which is fast approaching.

Eligibility for multiple CIHR funding opportunities depends on the specific requirements and restrictions outlined in each funding opportunity. Applicants are encouraged to carefully review the eligibility criteria for both programs to determine whether they may apply to REDI in a subsequent year.

At this time, it is not yet confirmed when the REDI program will be relaunched, nor whether changes may be made to eligibility requirements or funding conditions in future competitions. The answer to this question is therefore unknown at this time.

Q & A – REDI

Does the one-page Summary of Research Proposal need to cover both Phases 1 and 2?

Response:

Yes, the one-page Summary of the Research Proposal should cover both Phase 1 and Phase 2, aligning with the objectives and selected funding pools and providing an overview of the research program and how the two phases are connected.



Q & A – REDI

How should we handle submitting narrative CVs for mentors when the ResearchNet requires a PIN for a Common CV profile? Some mentors may be from the community and may not have a narrative/Common CV or PIN.

Response:

For the REDI program, both the applicant and primary mentor, as well any additional identified mentors, are required to submit a Tri Agency (narrative) CV.

The applicant is responsible to collect and submit all TCVs with their application.

Should any of your mentor not have a CIHR PIN, you will need to inform them they must register with CIHR to obtain their PIN.





Q & A – REDI

Do all proposal documents need to include elements from phase 1 and 2?

Would it be expected to focus more on phase 1 in certain documents than others?

Response:

Your research plan must address both Phase 1 and Phase 2 and build on your previous research and expertise. Identify which specific aims you will tackle in each phase of the award. Enough detail must be provided for the research planned for each phase (including experimental details and research approaches) for reviewers to evaluate this part of your application.

Demonstrate you have a long-term vision for your independent research program and articulate how the research proposed for Phase 1 will build a foundation for this program.

We recognize your plans for Phase 2 may change prior to securing your independent research position, so write your Phase 2 plans as you see them at the time of application.

You will also need to include a knowledge mobilization plan. We encourage you to consult the REDI FAQ, which provides more details.

Q & A – REDI

Could the information on the primary mentor support letter be applied to letters from the additional mentors?

Response:

The letters from additional mentors should describe the mentor's area of expertise, their responsibilities and how they will support the applicant in the proposed Mentorship and Career Development Plans.

Additional mentors should also describe how they will coordinate with the Primary and other Mentors to support the execution of the plans to provide an integrated mentoring effort (as appropriate).

NPA's who have identified additional mentors must submit a letter of support from each additional mentor.

Q & A – REDI

For the Supplemental Budget Form, do you want us to list out how the research allowance will be spent? Or just the division between allowance and stipend?

Response:

For the REDI program, the supplemental budget form should only outline how the research allowance will be spent (\$20,000/year).



Q & A – REDI

For a REDI award, if I am planning to hold Phase 1 at a U.S institute, do I just upload a blank signature page document with my application?

Response:

The signature pages must be downloaded only after, at a minimum, the following information have been entered in ResearchNet:

- ☐ Name of Applicant - Name of Primary Mentor - Name of additional Mentor(s) - Project Title - Primary location where research to be conducted (Research Institution) - **and If award to be held in Canada:** Institution which will administer projects funds (Institution Paid).

Once the information above is recorded, applicants must download the signature pages, which is found on ResearchNet under the task called "Print/upload Signature Pages", where you will need to collect all required signatures, that is:

- ☐ Primary Mentor's signature - Any additional Mentors' signature(s) - Signature of an individual with signing authority from the Primary location where research to be conducted (Research Institution) - **AND if award to be held in Canada:** Signature of an individual with signing authority from the Institution which will administer projects funds (Institution Paid).

Note that as the application is submitted electronically in ResearchNet by the applicant, their signature is not required.

Do you still have questions that were not addressed during the session?

For questions concerning the following programs, please contact:

Canada Graduate Research Scholarships –
Master's Awards (CGRS M)



cgrsm-besrcm@cihr-irsc.gc.ca

Canada Research Training Awards Suite –
Research Travel Supplements (CRTAS-RTS)



crtasrts-bfrcssr@cihr-irsc.gc.ca

***** All Other Programs, please contact CIHR Contact Centre *****

- Telephone: 613-954-1968
- Toll Free: 1-888-603-4178
- Email: support-soutien@cihr-irsc.gc.ca

For service hours, please consult our [CIHR Contact Centre](#) page.



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