

MEMORANDUM

TO: Deans and Associate Deans of Graduate Studies
Vice-Presidents and Associate Vice-Presidents (Research)

C.C.: Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships University Contacts
University Scholarships Liaison Officers
University Research Grants Officers
Kelly Taylor, Executive Director, Vanier-Banting Secretariat
Serge Villemure, Director, Scholarships and Fellowships Programs, NSERC
Valérie Laflamme, Director, Research Training Portfolio, SSHRC

FROM: Julie Conrad, Manager, Vanier-Banting Programs and CIHR Awards

DATE: April 18, 2018

SUBJECT: 2018-2019 Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships (Banting PDF) program launch and competition update

Please distribute to all parties at your institution who would benefit from this information.

The 2018-2019 Banting PDF competition has been launched! This memo is to inform you of program news for this competition.

I) 2018-2019 competition timelines

These timelines are similar to the last competition. Key dates are highlighted below.

	Banting PDF
Competition launch	April 18, 2018: Posting of updated program literature on program website and activation of ResearchNet (electronic application system)
Application deadline	September 19, 2018 (8:00 p.m. EDT)
Funding decision release	Mid-February 2019

II) Competition administration

FOR ACTION — Single signatory for the institutional letter of endorsement

As part of the Banting PDF application process, each institution is required to identify the individual responsible for signing the letter of endorsement on behalf of the institution (i.e., the President, their equivalent, or a single delegate). Having this information will help us to ensure that the proper, single authority has signed off on all applications from your institution. Please provide the name of your institution's signatory by sending it to program staff at banting@cihr-irsc.gc.ca no later than **September 1, 2018**.

For more information specific to host institutions, please consult [the Banting PDF website](#).

III) Program news

NEW: Diversity, equity and inclusion

The Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships (PDF) program encourages equity, diversity and inclusion, as part of the Tri-Agency's broader commitment to excellence in research and research training in Canada.

New guidelines and resources will be available by June 1, 2018.

NEW: Extensions to eligibility window for degree completion

In order to encourage equitable access to excellent candidates additional allowable reasons of career interruptions have been added.

NEW: Eligible referees

An assessment can no longer be completed by the proposed supervisor, unless that person is currently the applicant's primary supervisor or has been their primary supervisor in the past.

NEW: Supervisor's statement (page limit)

The maximum length of the statement has been reduced to four (4) pages

Reminder: Implicit/Unconscious bias in the selection process

Equity and diversity must be considered at all levels of the selection, recruitment, endorsement and review processes of a Banting application. The Vanier-Banting Secretariat is actively engaged in increasing awareness of implicit (or unconscious) bias with everyone involved in the selection of a Banting Fellow. The following links can be very useful:

- 1) [Overview on unconscious bias that was developed by Westcoast Women in Engineering, Science and Technology \(WWest\)](#)
- 2) Harvard Test on [Implicit Bias: Gender – Science test, and/or the Gender – Career test](#).
- 3) [CIHR's Training Module for Reviewers on Implicit Bias](#)
- 4) [Tips for Banting Selection Committee Members on reducing gender bias in the review process](#)

Reminder: Mandatory arm's length referee

All applications must have at least one arm's length referee from among the three invited referees. For more information, please consult the [Application Guide: Task 8 Identify Referee](#).

Reminder: Subject matter eligibility (research area)

The onus is on the applicant and their proposed supervisor to carefully consider which selection committee should review the application. For more details, please consult the [Application Guide- Task 6: Identify area of research](#). If there is uncertainty, please send an email to banting@cihr-irsc.gc.ca with a one-page summary of the proposed research, and Banting staff will provide clarification.

Reminder: Supervisor's statement (support from institutions)

Given the competitive nature of the Banting program and its role as a premier postdoctoral program in Canada, it is very important that institutions clearly outline the support that will be provided to the applicant. The supervisor should explain how this support goes above and beyond what is offered to regular postdoctoral fellows. Furthermore, the support should be reasonable and appropriate to the institution and should meet the applicant's needs and the requirements of the proposed research.

Following the [evaluation](#) of the Banting program, the Banting End of Award Report includes follow-up questions to confirm whether the support outlined in the application was granted to the Banting Fellow during their award.

Reminder: Institutional endorsement (selectivity and diversity)

We would like to remind you to continue to be highly selective in your endorsement of applications. In this way we can work together to ensure that we receive very high-quality applications and, in turn, that the program is indeed supporting world-class postdoctoral fellows who will become the research leaders of tomorrow.

Proposals from all research areas and in both official languages are encouraged. In addition, careful consideration must be given to ensure gender equity in the endorsement process.

Reminder: International recruitment

In keeping with the aim of attracting postdoctoral fellows to Canada, we encourage you to continue strengthening your efforts to endorse new foreign candidates. Your collaboration is essential in branding the Banting PDF program as Canada's most valuable, prestigious and sought-after postdoctoral funding opportunity.

Reminder: Mobility and choice of host institution

All applicants should clearly justify their choice of host institution and supervisor, and they should highlight the anticipated benefits with respect to fulfilling their career aspirations. If they are already at the proposed host institution, they must justify their decision to remain at the same location. There should be a direct correlation between the strength of the justification and the amount of time already spent at that institution. Only in rare circumstances will a Banting PDF be awarded to an applicant who is staying at the same institution or within the same research environment where they completed their PhD, PhD-equivalent or health professional degree.