

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
Pierre Côté, Executive Director, Vanier-Banting Secretariat
Serge Villemure, Director, Scholarships and Fellowships Programs, NSERC
Roxanne Dompierre, Director, Research Training Portfolio, SSHRC

FROM: François Zegers, Lead, Vanier-Banting Programs and CIHR Awards

DATE: June 1, 2020

SUBJECT: 2020-2021 Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships competition launch and program update

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

The 2020-2021 Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships (Banting PDF) competition has just been launched. This memo serves to inform you of program news for this competition.

I) 2020-2021 competition timelines

Key dates are highlighted below.

	Banting PDF
Competition launch	June 1, 2020: Posting of updated program literature on program website and activation of ResearchNet (electronic application system) June 15, 2020: Activation of ResearchNet (electronic application system)
Application deadline	October 1, 2020 (8:00 p.m. EDT)
Anticipated funding decision release	Mid-February 2021

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 who is responsible for signing the letter of endorsement on behalf of the entire 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, 2020**.

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

III) Program news

NEW: [Extension to eligibility window for degree completion](#)

In order to encourage equitable access to excellent candidates, the window of eligibility can now be extended by a cumulative maximum of **three years, if the applicant had their career interrupted for extenuating circumstances**. Examples of such circumstances include but are not limited to: parental leave, illness, health-related family responsibilities, mandatory military service, disruptions due to war, civil conflicts and/or natural disasters in the country of residence, socio-economic reasons, etc. **The list of specific allowable reasons for extending the window has been removed.**

NEW: Sex- and Gender-based Analysis Plus (SGBA+)

In order to ensure the research we fund is impactful and relevant to the diversity of the population we now require applicants to systematically examine how differences in identity factors, such as sex, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age and mental or physical disability, affect the outcomes of research and the impacts of research findings. Applicants are now encouraged to take SGBA+ principles into account in their proposed research (see Application guide -[Task 10 – Research Proposal](#)).

Reminder: Research respectfully involving Indigenous communities

The proposed research must be in accordance with the policies and principles outlined in the following two main documents:

- [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Chapter 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada](#)
- [SSHRC Guidelines for the Merit Review of Indigenous Research](#)

Proposed supervisors must describe how collaborations are developed and provide details corroborating information included in the research proposal.

Reminder: Institutional endorsement (selectivity and diversity)

We would like to remind you to continue being 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 equity in the endorsement process.

Confirmation of the institution's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion must be included in the letter of endorsement.

Reminder: Diversity, equity and inclusion

The Banting PDF program encourages equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI), as part of the Tri-Agency's broader commitment to excellence in research and research training in Canada. EDI considerations must be taken into account throughout the Banting PDF competition, including during the selection committee member recruitment process and during the selection, endorsement and review processes of an application.

The [EDI page](#) of the Banting PDF website provides guidelines and resources geared towards applicants, host institutions, referees, and reviewers and readers, and addressing the following topics: research respectfully involving Indigenous communities; reducing unconscious bias; and promoting equity, diversity and inclusion more generally.

Reminder: Eligible referees

An assessment cannot be completed by the proposed supervisor unless that person is already the applicant's primary supervisor at the time of application or has been their primary supervisor in the past.

One of the three referees must be at arm's length (see [Application Guide-Task 8](#)).

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](#). 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 PDF 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.

[Task 10](#) of the application guide provides instructions for this document.

Fellows must complete the Banting End of Award Report, which includes follow-up questions to confirm whether the support outlined in the application was granted to the fellow during their award.

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.