UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Interdepartmental Correspondence

Date: October 3, 2024

To: Department Chairs, Associate/Vice Deans (Research)

From: Award Services, Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS)

Re: **2024 Alberta Innovates Postdoctoral Fellowships Program: Recruitment Stream- 2nd Intake**

GPS is pleased to announce the 2nd intake of the Recruitment Fellowships stream, in health-related priorities, of the 2024 Alberta Innovates Postdoctoral Fellowships (AI PDF) Program. Alberta Innovates (AI) is the innovation engine of the province, working with researchers, industry, and entrepreneurs to forge a healthy, sustainable, and prosperous future for Albertans. With the province-wide launch of the AI PDF program, Alberta is taking the lead in transforming postdoctoral supports and opportunities to reflect a changing research and innovation landscape. This includes offering more prestigious awards to attract top talent to the province, as well as supporting a broader range of applied work related to developing, testing, and scaling up use of digital and data-driven technologies in the health sector.

This is a direct application whereby potential postdoctoral fellow applicants are to submit their completed application directly to GPS. Faculties/Departments are not required to review applications and submit eligible nominees to GPS; however to assist in the promotion of this fellowship, we request Faculties and Departments disseminate this year's competition details to faculty members and their potential postdoctoral trainees from outside of the University of Alberta.

The AI PDF Recruitment Fellowships will assist with the strategic recruitment of top incoming postdoctoral fellows with health related work to the university. Additional fellowship streams supported by the AI PDF program will be launched at a later date.

AI's investment in the AI PDF Program enhances Alberta's knowledge workforce in areas with high potential to diversify the economy and improve the health and well-being of citizens. To ensure the Program builds capacity in areas of strategic importance to the province, the following areas are prioritized:

Priority 1 - Digital & Data-Enabled (D&DE) Health Research: leveraging advances in connected devices, computational intensity, and data generation to enhance health research.

Priority 2 - Advancing D&DE Tools and Methods: developing advanced approaches to unlock greater value from health information.

Priority 3 - Health Technology Acceleration: activities to increase the rate at which discoveries and promising academic outputs (e.g., IP, data assets, processes) are transformed into commercially viable health products or services.

Priority 4 - Technology & Data-Enabled Health System Transformation: Advancing the use of health technologies to enhance health and wellness outcomes, health system sustainability, or health care.

Recruitment Fellowship Value

$70,000 CAD per year for up to two years. Incoming postdoctoral fellow's appointment must start within 6 months of receiving a fellowship offer by the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Results of the competition and award offers are expected to be announced by May 2024.

Top-Up: $15,000 - For Trainees in receipt of any other major comparable award (i.e. Killam, Notley, Tri-Council fellowships, etc.). The Stipend Incentive may be increased as necessary to ensure the combined value of the awards does not fall below $70,000 CAD per year.

Supplemental benefits (includes health and dental coverage, WCB, CPP and EI) are not an allowable expense under the AB Innovates funding contract. As per the PDF Collective Agreement, the supervisor or department will be responsible for covering the cost of supplemental benefits for the postdoctoral researcher. A speed code benefits can be charged to will be required to be provided to GPS if the applicant is offered a fellowship.

Eligibility

To be eligible for this award one must be an incoming postdoctoral fellow. Incoming applicants must not already hold, or have held, a postdoctoral position at the UofA or be employed at the UofA. In the context of this competition, "incoming" means having an appointment start date than the AI RF commencement date in which they were offered the award. Applicants who were unsuccessful in the previous intakes may reapply provided they still meet the eligibility criteria. Applicants may use the same references and application documents from the prior intake, or they may submit a revised application; they are to contact grad.awards@ualberta.ca to notify of their intent to reapply. There are no citizenship restrictions on this fellowship.

Refer to GPS's website for complete information regarding eligibility criteria and descriptions of the priority areas.

Application Process

Applicants and their potential supervisors are to review GPS's website for the complete application process, information, and timelines. Should Faculties/Departments want a copy of the potential fellow's application for advisement purposes, they may request this directly from them prior to December 10, 2024.

A complete application includes:
1. AI RF Application form
2. Project proposal with statement on relevancy to AI priority areas (1 page maximum). References may be on an additional page(s)
3. Summary of career goals (1 page maximum)
4. Applicant CV
5. Supervisor statement of support (on institution letterhead and signed by the supervisor; can be included in the application by the applicant). One letter maximum; for co-supervision, either the supervisor or the co-supervisor may provide one letter but not both.
6. If applicable, copy of fellowship competition results from any competitions that the applicant has applied to previously for the same project (e.g., CIHR competition results)

7. Copy of doctoral degree certificate. If the degree certificate is not yet available, written confirmation from the Graduate School or Registrar of the university that all the degree requirements have been met and that the doctoral degree is forthcoming

8. **Three Letters of Reference**. As these letters are confidential, they must be submitted directly by the referees via email to grad.awards@ualberta.ca. Letters submitted by the applicant will not be accepted:

   - Three references are in addition to the Supervisor Statement of Support; reference letters should not be from the proposed supervisor (or co-supervisor), as the Supervisor Statement of Support is already provided
   - Applicants are responsible for supplying their referees with the documents necessary for them to write their respective letters.
   - Applicants should contact their referees well in advance of the application deadline date.
   - Applicants are to instruct referees to request Award Services to confirm receipt of their letters upon email submission. GPS will not follow up regarding missing reference letters.
   - It is the applicant's responsibility to follow up with referees to ensure the assessments are submitted in sufficient time prior to GPS's deadline.

The GPS may leverage internal review processes for other competitions (e.g., Banting, Killam, tri-council) to triage applications for further consideration by AI for an AI Fellowship. Fellowship applicants identified in this way may be required to submit additional documents to assist in assessing relevancy to AI priorities.

December 10, 2024: Deadline for applicants to submit their complete application. Points 1-7 noted above must be submitted as one PDF via email to grad.awards@ualberta.ca. The three letters of reference (point 8 noted below) are also to be sent directly to GPS by applicants referees by the respected deadline. To avoid lost/spammed emails, applicants are to request Award Services to confirm receipt of their application upon email submission. Applicants who do not receive an email reply from grad.awards@ualberta.ca confirming receipt of their application within 2-3 business days are responsible for following up with GPS.

We expect results of the first intake to be announced by March 2025.

We wish all applicants success in the upcoming competition!

Sincerely,

GPS Award Services