
PETRO-CANADA EMERGING INNOVATOR AWARD

Terms of reference and application process

The Petro-Canada Emerging Innovator Award recognizes and supports outstanding and innovative early career researchers at the University of Alberta whose academic work benefits the learning environment of their department and whose research has the potential to be of significance to society at large. The award consists of a \$10,000 grant that can be used for any justifiable research-related expenses (see administrative section below).

This award reflects the joint commitment of Petro-Canada (now Suncor Energy Inc.) and the University of Alberta to support researchers in launching their scholarly careers and in carrying their research forward.

Eligibility

Full-time faculty members from any faculty who completed a doctoral degree (or equivalent qualification) no more than eight years ago are eligible. Candidates must have completed their doctoral degree (or equivalent qualification) on or after January 1, 2017, to be eligible.

If a full-time faculty member completed their doctoral degree (or equivalent qualification) more than eight years ago, but their appointment at the University of Alberta is their first academic appointment, the candidate is eligible to apply within four years after taking up their faculty position. Their first academic appointment must have started on or after January 1, 2021 to be eligible.

Selection Process

The award is adjudicated by a committee chaired by the Vice-President (Research and Innovation) or delegate. The committee includes one or more of the Associate Vice-Presidents (Research and Innovation) and members from the university's research community who are suitably representative of the diversity that exists across the institution. All adjudicators complete unconscious bias training.

The Office of the Vice-President (Research and Innovation) will confirm that recipients are members of good standing in their Faculty prior to notification of award.

Selection criteria are based on how the candidate's academic work benefits the learning environment of their department, their academic achievement and overall research potential, quality of the proposal, potential impact of the proposed research project, as well as commitment to [Access, Community, and Belonging](#) (ACB).

Grant Administration

Awards must be used for the research project described in the application and funding must be spent on the items listed in the proposed budget. Eligible research expenses include salary/benefits for research personnel, research travel, direct research expenses (e.g., lab expenses), small equipment, dissemination of research results, etc. Any unspent funds at the end of the award must be returned to the source. Ethics and environmental approval for the proposed research project, if required, must be in place prior to the release of any funding.

The award will be effective for a period of twelve months. Extensions will be granted only under exceptional circumstances (e.g., major illness or parental leave). If an extension is required, a request with a detailed explanation of the reason for extension, the length of extension needed, and an update on the current progress of the research activities should be sent to parsad@ualberta.ca.

Each recipient is required to submit a one-page final report within three months of the research project end date describing how funds aided the recipient in carrying their research forward, how the research project enriched the learning environment, and the broader academic and societal impacts of the research project. Reports should be sent to Leslie Parsad at parsad@ualberta.ca.

Application Process

Applications from candidates of all backgrounds and disciplines are welcome to apply. Full-time faculty members can submit one application to this award per year.

The following information must be submitted, in the following order, as part of the application:

- Written proposal identifying Research Project Description, Budget, and Budget Justification (maximum 4 double-spaced typed pages, font size 12 or greater).
- One-page statement that includes a description of how the proposed research project is innovative in its field and the potential impacts of the research. Research impact is the demonstrable contribution of research processes and outputs to scholarship and society. See [Research Impact Definition](#) for more information.
- One-page statement of how the candidate's research project incorporates the principles of [Access, Community, and Belonging](#). Access ensures all have the opportunities to succeed and flourish, by dismantling barriers. Community emphasizes connection and shared purpose. Belonging creates an environment where individuals feel seen, valued, and supported. Principles of Access, Community, and Belonging can also strengthen research design (e.g., using Gender Based Analysis Plus) to identify and attend to disparities that your research could address.
- One-page Community Engagement Statement outlining how community

engagement will enhance the research project as well as the reputation of the university. Community engagement can consist of engagement with other academic disciplines, other academic institutions, service providers, industry, community groups, government, etc.

- Current curriculum vitae

Recognition

- Recipients must agree to the publication of the award and a description of their proposed research project.
- Suncor Energy Inc. must be recognized in any publications resulting from work supported by the award.
- The recipient will be known as a Petro-Canada Emerging Innovator.

Deadline

The deadline for submissions is **4:00 p.m. on Friday, July 11, 2025**. Please submit the application as a single PDF to Leslie Parsad at parsad@ualberta.ca.

Records from this competition will be managed in accordance with the Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.