

Brain Canada-Kids Brain Health Network

Training Awards

Developmental Neurosciences Research

Request for Applications (RFA)

About Brain Canada

Brain Canada is a national non-profit organization that enables and supports transformative, original and outstanding brain research in Canada. For more than a decade, Brain Canada has made the case for the brain as a single, complex system with commonalities across the range of neurological disorders, mental illnesses and addictions, brain and spinal cord injuries. Looking at the brain as one system has underscored the need for increased collaboration across disciplines and institutions, and a smarter way to invest in brain research that is focused on outcomes that will benefit patients and families.

The Canada Brain Research Fund is an innovative collaboration between the Government of Canada (through Health Canada) and Brain Canada to encourage Canadians to increase their support of brain research, and maximize the impact and efficiency of those investments. Brain Canada is raising up to \$120 million from private and non-federal sources, which is being matched by the Government of Canada on a 1:1 basis. The Fund supports “the very best Canadian neuroscience, fostering collaborative research and accelerating the pace of discovery, in order to improve the health and quality of life of Canadians who suffer from brain disorders.”

About Kids Brain Health Network

Kids Brain Health Network, formerly known as NeuroDevNet, is a national multi- and trans-disciplinary network dedicated to bringing hope to children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Cerebral Palsy (CP), Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and related neurodisabilities, as well as to their families and caregivers. Kids Brain Health Network is funded by the Networks of Centres of Excellence of Canada program and has a focus on integrated, team-based research initiatives in the developmental neurosciences related to cause, early diagnosis, and interventions. Engaging families, clinicians, other stakeholders and partners both nationally and internationally, Kids Brain Health Network leverages and enhances the talents of new and seasoned researchers to translate research findings into effective therapies and changes in policy and practice.

A specific objective of the Network’s training program is the promotion of a national strategy to increase capacity in developmental neurosciences. Through a trans-Canadian network of institutional and organizational partners, Kids Brain Health Network supports the training of graduate students and fellows, and fosters the development of internships and practice that will help launch the next generation of researchers, child health advocates and service providers, through mechanisms including funding, focused training opportunities, courses, workshops and symposia.

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Rationale

Brain health is one of the most pressing health challenges facing Canadians. One in three individuals – over 11 million people – will face a psychiatric disease, a neurological disorder or a brain or spinal cord injury at some point in their lives. In one out of six children, brain disorders take the form of a neurodisability with lifelong implications. Advances in neurodevelopmental disorder research are leading to an understanding of the etiology of these disabilities, better diagnostics and screening, therapeutic interventions, and improved frontline care and social support services. In order to advance our understanding of all aspects of these disorders, Brain Canada and Kids Brain Health Network are joining together with Research Institutes across Canada to support and enhance the training of talented scientists conducting research focused on these key aspects of developmental neurosciences under the direction of leading Canadian researchers.

Brain Canada and Kids Brain Health Network are pleased to announce a competition for training awards in developmental neurosciences co-funded by Brain Canada (through the Canada Brain Research Fund) and Institutional Sponsors. The awards will be made to outstanding predoctoral and postdoctoral fellows undertaking a program of research training that incorporates original research into **the origins, early detection and effective treatment of disorders of brain development.** Fellows with programs of study with a concentration on knowledge translation and in neuroethical issues in the developmental neurosciences and neurodisabilities are also encouraged. These programs of study will further our understanding of normal brain development as well as disorders of the developing brain when disrupted by genetic, environmental or acquired injury factors, and ultimately lead to new strategies for prevention and mitigation through early intervention. However, areas of non-developmental origins or neurodegeneration will not be considered for this competition. This support for excellence in predoctoral and postdoctoral fellows training will contribute considerably to building Canadian capacity and leadership in translational research and therapeutic approaches to neurodevelopmental disorders.

Award Details

This competition has an overall envelope of up to \$1,500,000 (including Sponsor matches). Predoctoral fellowships valued at up to \$30,000 per year for a maximum funding term of two years, and postdoctoral fellowships valued at up to \$50,000 per year for a maximum funding term of two years. All awards include an additional \$5,000 per year career development supplement. In addition, all awardees will be required to attend the Kids Brain Health Network Annual Brain Development Conference as well as training courses and workshops organized through the Kids Brain Health Network Training Program.

The Career Development Supplement

An amount of \$5,000 per year is provided to each award holder for the purpose of career development. The parameters of the career development supplement include, but are not limited to attending Kids Brain Health Network conferences and workshops, the exploration of career options, or acquisition of additional skills and research experience.

Engagement in Training Program Activities

The Training and Educational arm of this Fellowship Program, hosted by the Kids Brain Health Network Training Program, is aimed to provide value-added career and training opportunities for all successful awardees. The principal emphasis of the Kids Brain Health Network Research Training Program is to develop cross-disciplinary and collaborative skill sets for the next generation of scientists, clinicians, and health service professionals. A cross-disciplinary approach will help provide young researchers with the diverse vocabulary and experience to interact with the neurodevelopmental disorders research community.

For more information, see: <http://www.neurodevnet.ca/training>. A full description of the training opportunities will be provided by Kids Brain Health Network to all successful awardees.

Disbursement of the Award

Awards will be provided in trust to the Host Institution where the awardee is registered to disburse to the award recipient as a stipend. Brain Canada does not pay institutional overhead on its grants or awards, and any tax liability generated by the award is the responsibility of the recipient. Up to 10% of a postdoctoral award may be used to pay the employee's contribution to compulsory benefits, if this is institutional policy for postdoctoral fellows.

Other Details

It is the responsibility of the awarded trainee to notify Brain Canada of any change in status or change in Institution. Trainees may apply for a leave of absence (e.g. maternity leave), or temporary conversion to a part-time award, for personal reasons. If approved, the award will be temporarily suspended or prorated during this period, and the duration extended accordingly. For example, an individual who requests conversion of an award to half-time for six months will have the stipend reduced by 50% for six months and extended for three months at 100%.

Funding Sponsors

Brain Canada grants and awards are derived 50% from the Canada Brain Research Fund (CBRF) that are matched with 50% from funding sponsors. **This competition is sponsored, meaning the institution of an applicant needs to identify the matching sponsor.**

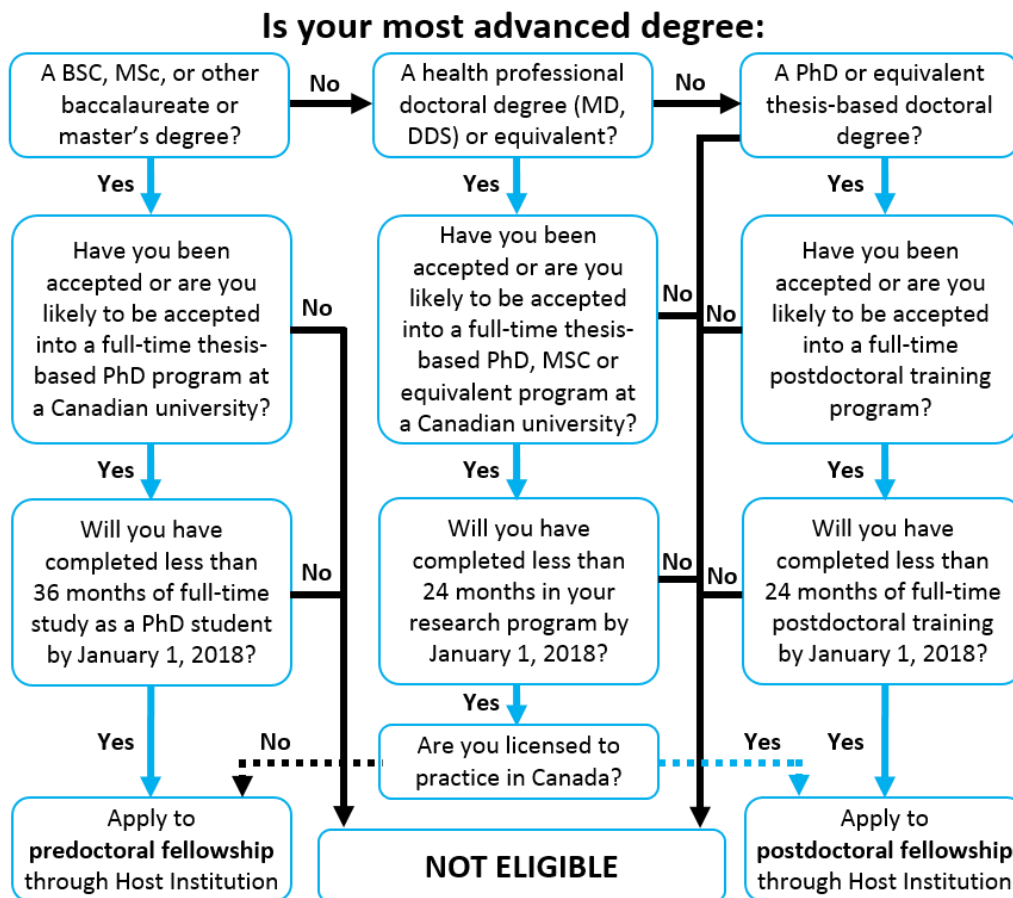
- For training awards, primary eligible sponsors include research institutions, hospitals and health-care organizations. Other eligible sponsors include provincial government agencies and ministries, for-profit enterprises, individual donors, charitable organizations, or any other entities, including foreign entities or organizations, that receive 50% or less of their funding from the Government of Canada.
- The role of the Host Institutions in this competition is to solicit the predoctoral and postdoctoral trainees eligible to apply to the competition and determine which applicants it will support. **The Host Institutions must provide a letter to Brain Canada confirming the number of predoctoral and postdoctoral fellowships that they are able to support for this Initiative. Furthermore, the Host Institution will provide a letter confirming eligibility for each of their applicants to include with their online application materials.** Brain Canada and the Host Institutions will jointly support the awarded predoctoral and postdoctoral fellowships

as well as the career development supplement for up to the maximum allowable amount and funding term per competition.

- The Brain Canada Funds will be in the form of a matching contribution and will be conditional on the prior payment of the sponsor's funds (cash only; not in-kind contributions) to the Host Institution with confirmation of payment thereof, for up to the maximum allowable amount and funding term per competition.
- If the sponsor is the Host Institution, the matching 50% from the Canada Brain Research Fund will be sent to the Host Institution, once Brain Canada receives confirmation that the Host Institution has allocated the funding contribution to the specific awarded project.
- As an alternative, sponsor contributions can be provided in cash, not in-kind, to Brain Canada, which will add the matching 50% from the Canada Brain Research Fund, and Brain Canada will administer the award.
- While it is Brain Canada's policy to deduct a 5% fee from our sponsors' funds to offset the costs associated with delivering a program, for this program, we are waiving the fee. This is in recognition of Kids Brain Health Network contributions to key aspects of the program.
- Brain Canada and Kids Brain Health Network will acknowledge sponsors' support of training awards in all relevant presentations and publications, and Brain Canada will advise partners of any impending media opportunities related to the Training Awards, and vice-versa. Sponsors must acknowledge the financial support of Brain Canada and Health Canada in their publications and announcements.

Eligibility

- Citizens of any nation may apply; however, training must be undertaken at a participating institution located within Canada. Please follow the decision tree below to determine your eligibility to apply for an award.



- The training awards are intended to support full-time research and related study. However, trainees may devote up to 10% of the working week for complementary paid or unpaid activities such as teaching or consulting, and health professionals licensed to practice in Canada may engage in clinical work **related to their research** for up to 20% of the working week.

Additional Conditions

Other funding:	May hold another salary award if the combined annual amount does not exceed \$40,000 (Predoctoral Fellowship) or \$60,000 (Postdoctoral Fellowship) ¹
Supervisor:	Permitted by employer to supervise research trainees, and eligible to receive funding from the granting councils
Training location:	A research institution that is a member of the developmental neurosciences training program, located in Canada, eligible to receive funding from the granting councils ²

¹A trainee who accepts another salary award that would cause him/her to exceed the income limits shown in the eligibility table must notify Brain Canada immediately. Brain Canada will reduce its award so that the combined amount does not exceed the limit.

²Short visits to industrial, governmental, and international research institutions are permitted to enhance the training experience, upon approval by the supervisor.

Criteria for Assessment

The Applicant's area of training must incorporate original research into **the origins, early detection and effective treatment of disorders of brain development**. Research with concentration on **knowledge translation** and in **neuroethical issues** in the developmental neurosciences and neurodisabilities are also accepted. However, areas of non-developmental origins or neurodegeneration will not be considered for this competition.

The review panel will adjudicate applications based on the following criteria:

- The candidate's **potential for future contributions** to the area of research, based on an assessment of research productivity and quality, and letters of reference.
- The **originality and feasibility** of the planned program of research.
- The **potential impact** on one or more areas related to developmental neurosciences such as: concepts, paradigms, or theories advancing the field of research; the health and well-being of Canadians; the Canadian economy.
- The **quality of the training environment**, including the supervisor's previous record of trainee supervision and research productivity, and opportunities for interdisciplinary or cross-sectoral enrichment (such as working in collaboration with industry, health professionals, community organizations, or governmental agencies).

Review Process

Applications will be reviewed by a Peer Review Panel including Canadian and international experts in the relevant fields. Brain Canada and the Chair of the Peer Review Panel will work to ensure conflicts of interest are resolved; and past, present, and proposed supervisors will not review applications in the competition in which their trainees are participating.

The Peer Review Panel will provide a merit score for each full application, and recommend to Brain Canada those applications that have received a sufficiently high merit score to deserve funding. Awards will be conditionally approved by Brain Canada in descending order of merit until the available funding from the partner(s), plus the matching Canada Brain Research Fund contribution, is exhausted, or all recommended candidates have received an award, whichever occurs first.

Brain Canada will notify all candidates of the outcome of the competition. Should a successful applicant withdraw for any reason, the conditional award will revert to the next most meritorious applicant recommended for an award.

How to Apply

1. The institutions will provide a commitment letter to Brain Canada (to be sent electronically to programs@braincanada.ca) confirming the number of predoctoral and postdoctoral fellowships with required career development supplement for each Sponsor's funding contribution is available. A template of this letter can be found here: http://www.braincanada.ca/files/BC_KBHN_institute_commitment_letter_final.docx. The

deadline for letters is listed below.

2. The institutions will solicit the predoctoral and postdoctoral trainees eligible to apply to the competition and determine which applicants it will support. The institutions will provide a letter of support to the applicant, confirming that he had been vetted (or approved) to submit an application for this competition.

3. All applications must be submitted using Brain Canada’s electronic grant management system (https://braincanada.smartsimple.ca/s_Login.jsp). The applicant must submit the institutional letter of support along with completing all required application fields in the Brain Canada’s electronic grant application system before 16:00 ET on the deadline dates listed below.

For enquiries about the application process, please contact Brain Canada at: programs@braincanada.ca

Timeline

Launch of Request for Applications	April 27, 2017
Deadline for Institutional Agreement Letter	June 30, 2017 at 16:00 ET
Deadline for receipt of Applications	August 15, 2017 at 16:00 ET
Notification of Award	November 2017
Funding begins (earliest date)	January 1, 2018

Application Components

The Application will need to be formatted using 12 point Arial or Georgia font, single-spaced, on a letter-size page with 1" minimum margins. The font size for figures and legends must be a minimum of 10 points. Use of a condensed font and spacing is not permitted. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure the submission is acceptable and received before the deadline. Those received in another format, exceeding the page limits, incomplete, or late, will be deemed ineligible.

Project Summary:

- Project Title
- Project Start and End Dates
- Award Type (predoctoral or postdoctoral fellowship)
- Sponsor’s funding contribution providing match funding for this application
- Institution and department where research training will take place
- Name and job title of supervisor
- Keywords and keywords freeform (up to ten)

The Research Proposal (maximum two-page document, excluding references)

Summarize the research project to be undertaken during the award. Emphasize its novel aspects and feasibility, and its potential impact on developmental neurosciences in one or more area: the concepts, paradigms, or theories advancing the field of research; the health and well-being of

Canadians; the Canadian economy. Describe how the project builds on your former training, and how it will provide you with the research skills required to achieve your research ambitions. Explain the relative contribution that you and your supervisor, or others, made to the development of the project.

Applicant's Statement (maximum 500 words)

- Provide the best possible evidence of the research creativity, productivity and quality to include a description of major research achievements and other research distinctions. Include a statement that elaborates on the results and impact of past work on the present proposal as well as in the field of research and career path. Additionally, include any other information that is believed could persuade the reviewers of the exceptional research potential.
- Please note that transcripts from previous academic programs are not required.
- If the applicant is continuing postdoctoral training in the same department or under the direction of the same supervisor as for their doctoral studies, they should provide explanation of how the training is substantially different and is of significant benefit to their career development.

Applicant's CV

Provide an abbreviated CV with Publication List (format should use the Common CV - Vanier-Banting Academic CV, preview and printed as a PDF).

Supervisor's Statement (to be completed by the supervisor; maximum 2 pages)

- List the number of trainees that have been under training with the supervisor, and at what level (summer/undergraduate, MSc, PhD, PDF, etc.) during the last five years.
- Explain how the supervisor will acquire sufficient operating funding to sustain the candidate's research project through to the end of the awarded funding term.
- Outline the opportunities that the candidate will have during the training for enrichment through interdisciplinary or intersectoral collaboration.
- Outline how the supervisor mentorship method and research environment will ensure the success of the trainee and the proposed project.
- List five of the supervisor publications that are considered the most significant (three must have been published in the last five years). Each item should be annotated with a brief reason for the selection. Include a DOI, URL or PMID where applicable so that reviewers can more easily access them.
- The supervisor must click "I Agree" for the following statement "I agree to supervise [name of candidate] for the duration of the award if the application is successful, and I will advise Brain Canada immediately if (s) he terminates research training or otherwise experiences a significant interruption. I permit Brain Canada to share the information about me contained in this application with actual or potential funding partners, under a confidentiality agreement".

References and Reference Letters

- List the names, phone numbers, institutional and email addresses of three individuals, **excluding the intended supervisor**, who have agreed to provide reference letters

- These three individuals, familiar with the applicant achievements as a scholar and researcher, must provide one-page reference letters on the applicant behalf. At least one letter should be from a previous research supervisor, if applicable. The most relevant letters explain the nature of the interaction between the candidate and the referee, and provide specific examples of situations where the applicant demonstrated creativity, initiative, collaboration, and other qualities predictive of a successful researcher. They also mention areas of knowledge, skill, or attitude where the applicant would benefit from further training. Reference letters must be received by Brain Canada on or before the deadline for applications of **16:00 ET, August 15, 2017**.
- **Letter of support to the applicant from the Host Institution, confirming that the applicant had been vetted (or approved) to submit an application for this competition. The letter has to describe the academic program through which the student is applying.**

Signature

The applicant must click “I Agree” for the following statement “I certify that I am eligible to apply for this award, and I allow Brain Canada to share my application with actual and potential funding partners, under a confidentiality agreement”, with signature, typed name, and date.

Confidentiality and Ownership

Brain Canada will keep all materials submitted to it for this funding opportunity confidential, and will take reasonable steps to keep these materials confidential, and divulge them only to reviewers, Selection Committee members and observers, who have signed confidentiality agreements. Funded applications will be retained for comparison of intended and actual outcomes, as part of the final evaluation of the Canada Brain Research Fund.

Brain Canada does not claim any rights to intellectual property developed through research supported by its grants or awards.

Reporting, Communications, and Evaluation

In order to demonstrate to its funding partners and Canadians generally that they are obtaining value from Brain Canada grants and awards, Brain Canada will require a brief annual progress report from recipients of training awards outlining their progress and achievements. Progress reports will be reviewed by members from both Brain Canada and Kids Brain Health Network Research Training Committees, with continued funding based upon a satisfactory review. Should Brain Canada and Kids Brain Health Network deem any portion of the progress report unsatisfactory, they are entitled to discuss the progress with the trainee and supervisor and, may cancel or postpone further funding, if deemed necessary. Brain Canada will share the progress reports with the Sponsors upon request.

Trainees must contact Brain Canada and Kids Brain Health Network within 30 days of notice of acceptance of manuscript for Publication, so that a press release or other publicity can be prepared in coordination with official publication (e-pub or print). Embargoes will be strictly respected. Trainees and sponsors must acknowledge support of Brain Canada, Health Canada through the Canada Brain Research Fund, Kids Brain Health Network, and Sponsor must

accompany all publications, presentations, or press releases of such research results. Sponsors will be informed of any upcoming media and communications opportunities in advance and provided with the opportunity to be involved in any publicity activities regarding the Sponsored awards.

For Further Information

For any other information or questions:

- About this competition and application process, please contact programs@braincanada.ca
- Brain Canada will acknowledge receipt of the full application within two working days. Please contact programs@braincanada.ca if you do not receive acknowledgement
- About Brain Canada and the Canada Brain Research Fund: <http://www.braincanada.ca/>
- About Kids Brain Health Network: <http://www.neurodevnet.ca> .