



## Brain Canada Rising Stars Trainee Awards 2024 Request for Applications (RFA)

### About Brain Canada Foundation

Brain Canada Foundation (Brain Canada) is a national registered charity that enables and supports excellent, innovative, paradigm-changing brain research in Canada. For more than two decades, 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, and brain and spinal cord injuries. Looking at the brain as one system has underscored the need for increased collaboration across disciplines and institutions, and to ensure that Canada has a robust pipeline of talent to remain at the forefront in the field of brain research. Brain Canada's vision is to understand the brain, in health and illness, to improve lives, and achieve societal impact.

The Canada Brain Research Fund (CBRF) is an innovative arrangement between the Government of Canada, through Health Canada, and Brain Canada Foundation, designed to increase support of brain research on behalf of Canadians, and maximize the impact and efficiency of those investments. 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 those who suffer from brain disorders. To date, Health Canada has invested over \$155 million through the CBRF which has been matched by Brain Canada Foundation and its donors and partners.

[www.braincanada.ca](http://www.braincanada.ca)



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## Rationale

Supporting the next generation of brain researchers in Canada is needed to ensure the success of the Canadian brain research ecosystem. Trainees are the learners of today and the leaders of tomorrow, but the increasing competitiveness of the Canadian research environment and the limited financial support from granting agencies and institutions can make it difficult to attain the resources needed to excel.

In response to the need voiced by the academic community, the *Brain Canada Rising Stars Trainee Awards* aim to recognize the excellent research being conducted at Canadian institutions by graduate students (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellows, and medical residents in all fields spanning neuroscience research. With the goal of helping trainees launch their academic careers and pursue their professional goals, the *Rising Stars Trainee Awards* aim to broaden the funding opportunities available to trainees. For details on the available award opportunities for this year's program, please consult the [2024 Trainee Awards Opportunities](#) section.

## General Information

### Eligibility

- A trainee is defined as a full-time graduate student (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellow, or medical resident conducting neuroscience research at a Canadian institution.
- Trainees can apply to all 2024 Trainee Award Opportunities available, if eligible. However, should they be selected to receive funding for more than one award, they will be required to accept only one.
- Multiple trainees from the same supervisor can apply.
- Individuals who hold an academic position are not eligible to apply.
- For travel awards: Trainees must be enrolled as a full-time graduate student (M.Sc., Ph.D.) or postdoctoral fellow at the time of conference/ symposium or training course attendance.
- For stipend awards: Trainees must be enrolled as a full-time graduate student (M.Sc., Ph.D.) postdoctoral fellow, or medical resident for the entire duration of the award (i.e., until September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025).

Additional eligibility criteria may be included within the specific funding opportunities.

### *Recognizing the importance of research to support women's brain health*

The prevalence, incidence, reported symptoms, diagnosis, progression, and response to treatment for certain diseases differs between men and women; this is especially true for brain conditions.

Brain Canada recognizes the need for and importance of including sex (i.e. biological) and gender (i.e. socio-cultural) considerations in research that span the range of basic, translational and clinical approaches. Trainees applying for a [Stipend Award](#) whose research considers sex and/or gender will have the opportunity to receive additional funding to provide further support and recognition for their efforts to incorporate sex- and gender-based analysis (SGBA) in their research.

In order to be considered eligible for this top-up, applicants must provide a brief explanation for how their research project incorporates SGBA-driven research hypotheses (see [Applications Requirements](#) for more details). Up to 12 trainees with a successful application to any of the available Stipend Awards will have the opportunity to receive a top-up of \$2,000 CAD.



Funding for this top-up has been made possible by the Canada Brain Research Fund (CBRF), an innovative arrangement between the Government of Canada (through Health Canada) and Brain Canada Foundation.

### Timeline

Launch of Request for Applications	March 21, 2024
Deadline for Receipt of Applications	May 16, 2024 at 17:00 ET
Notification of Award	By September 30, 2024
2024 Award Start Date	October 1, 2024

### How to Apply

Applications are to be submitted through Brain Canada's electronic grant management system, SmartSimple ([https://braincanada.smartsimple.ca/s\\_Login.jsp](https://braincanada.smartsimple.ca/s_Login.jsp)), by 17:00 ET on May 16, 2024. Applicants will be required to create a SmartSimple account, and the 2024 *Rising Stars Trainee Awards* application form(s) can be accessed through the "Funding Programs" section on their account's homepage.

All applications will need to be formatted using 11-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. Applications received in any other format, exceeding the page limits, incomplete, or late, will be rejected. **It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure their submission adheres to these requirements, and those specified under the "Application Procedures" below, and that it is received by 17:00 ET on May 16, 2024. There will be no appeal to late submissions.**

### Review Process

Brain Canada will manage the review process. Brain Canada will conduct an administrative check on all applications submitted by the deadline to apply. Eligible applications will be reviewed by at least two external reviewers. Brain Canada will keep all materials submitted for this funding opportunity confidential, and only share them with reviewers who have signed confidentiality and non-disclosure agreements. Conflicts of interest will be taken into consideration when assigning the reviewers.

Based on the reviewer scores, Brain Canada will fund the strongest applications received for each specific 2024 Trainee Award. Brain Canada will not entertain appeals against the assessment and recommendation of the Review Panel.

Please note that the number of awards granted for each Trainee Award Opportunity will ultimately depend on the number of applications received to each stream and the results of the review process.

### Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Evidence clearly shows that increasing equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in research environments enhances excellence, innovation, and creativity. Brain Canada is committed to excellence through equity and encourages applicants of diverse backgrounds to apply to this funding opportunity, which will promote the expression of diverse perspectives, approaches, and experiences, including those of underrepresented groups.



## Contact Information

For more information, or if you have any questions regarding the application process, please contact Brain Canada at [programs@braincanada.ca](mailto:programs@braincanada.ca).

## 2024 Trainee Award Opportunities

### TRAVEL AWARDS

#### *Dr. Hubert van Tol Travel Fellowship*

The Dr. Hubert van Tol Travel Fellowship was created in memory of neuroscientist Dr. Hubert van Tol. It is open to all full-time graduate students (M.Sc., Ph.D.) and postdoctoral fellows conducting research in the field of neuroscience at a Canadian institution. The travel fellowship is funded by the generous support of the Seger-van Tol family and Brain Canada. The student or fellow will be selected on a competitive basis by an expert committee established by Brain Canada. The committee will award the fellowship based upon the criteria outlined below. [Click here](#) to view past recipients of the Dr. Hubert van Tol Travel Fellowship.

Funding for this award has been made possible by the Canada Brain Research Fund (CBRF), an innovative arrangement between the Government of Canada (through Health Canada) and Brain Canada Foundation, and the Seger-van Tol family.

**Purpose:** To allow full-time graduate students (M.Sc., Ph.D.) and postdoctoral fellows to attend a major international conference/symposium or training course.

**Amount of award:** Up to \$5,000 CAD per award, non-renewable.

**Number of awards:** Up to twelve (12) awards.

Fellowships will be awarded to the top-ranked applicants in each trainee status category. If suitable applicants are not found in one category, the award(s) may be granted to applicants in another category.

**Specific Award Eligibility:** The Applicant must be a full-time graduate student (M.Sc., Ph.D.) or postdoctoral fellow enrolled at a Canadian institution at the time of conference attendance. *Please note that medical residents, even if they are completing a concurrent degree as a graduate student or postdoctoral fellow, are not eligible to apply for this award.* All else equal, priority will be given to applicants who were not awarded a Dr. Hubert van Tol Travel Fellowship in the previous year.

**Recipients will be asked to submit receipts for expenses incurred as part of their attendance to an international conference/ symposium or training course prior to receiving the award funds.** Only expenses for which a receipt is provided will be reimbursed. Please note that, while food and beverage are eligible expenses, Brain Canada will only reimburse costs for non-alcoholic beverages.

#### **Award criteria—international conference/symposium**

1. The Applicant must be conducting research in the field of neuroscience.
2. The meeting must be a major international symposium or conference in the neuroscience field.
3. The Applicant must have submitted an abstract to the meeting by the award start date.



4. The meeting must take place between May 01, 2024 – April 30, 2025.

#### **Award criteria—training course**

1. The Applicant must be conducting research in the field of neuroscience.
2. The training course must be directly relevant to their research.
3. The course must allow the Applicant to acquire specialized expertise, training or education that would otherwise not be offered as part of their academic curriculum and credit allocation or be offered within their research lab as a part of their standard training.
4. The course must take place between May 01, 2024 – April 30, 2025.

#### **Application Procedures for Travel Awards**

The Applicant must complete the following components under the “Travel Award” tab in their 2024 *Rising Stars Trainee Awards* application in SmartSimple:

1. **A one-page summary of the international conference/symposium or training course, including:**
  - a description of the conference/symposium or training course (including its name, date and location);
  - the value of attending the conference/symposium or training course (how will it benefit the Applicant’s research and/or career?);
  - the importance of the research that will be presented, if attending a conference/symposium.
2. **For conference attendance, submitted abstract (including project title)**
  - a. Please note that if the abstract submission for the conference you would like to attend is not open by the Full Application deadline, please include the abstract you intend to present at the conference in your submission to the Rising Stars program.
3. **Curriculum Vitae (CV)**
  - A two-page CV listing academic history (degrees obtained, professional history), awards and honours, and publications.
4. **Budget**
  - A budget detailing a breakdown and total of the actual or anticipated expenses (conference/ training course fees, etc.) in CAD.
5. **A one-page letter of support from your supervisor, including:**
  - Acknowledgment of Applicant’s submission.
  - Confirmation that the Applicant will be registered as a full-time graduate student or postdoctoral fellow at the time of conference/ symposium or training course attendance.
  - Relevance of conference/symposium or training course to the Applicant’s research.

*In the case of co-supervision, please note that only one one-page letter of support, which can be co-signed, will be accepted.*

Please note that applications received in any other format than what is described on this page and under the “How to Apply” section, that exceed the page limits, and that are incomplete or late will be rejected.



## STIPEND AWARDS

### *Canadian Consortium for the Investigation of Cannabinoids (CCIC) Neuroscience Fellowship in Cannabis and Cannabinoid Research*

The *Canadian Consortium for the Investigation of Cannabinoids (CCIC) Neuroscience Fellowship in Cannabis and Cannabinoid Research*, with support from the M. Wayne and J. Coleman Family Fund, is open to full-time graduate students (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellows, and medical residents attending a Canadian institution and conducting research in the field of cannabis and/or cannabinoids.

The CCIC is a federally registered Canadian non-profit organization of basic and clinical researchers, health care professionals and educators that promotes research and evidence-based education concerning the endocannabinoid system, the therapeutic applications of cannabinoids, the potential harms associated with cannabis use and the health and societal impacts of non-medical cannabis use. Their mission is to advance and promote evidence-based research and education in the field of cannabis/cannabinoid research. To learn more about the Canadian Consortium for the Investigation of Cannabinoids, including information about their annual conference and how to become a member, visit <https://ccic.net/>.

Brain Canada and CCIC are joining forces once again to promote capacity-building in this important field of research. Funding for this award has been made possible by the Canada Brain Research Fund (CBRF), an innovative arrangement between the Government of Canada (through Health Canada) and Brain Canada Foundation, and by the M. Wayne and J. Coleman Family Fund.

**Purpose:** To provide financial support to full-time graduate students (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellows, and medical residents conducting neuroscience research at a Canadian institution in the cannabis/cannabinoid field. *All else equal, priority will be given to trainees who do not currently hold other stipend awards from major funding sources (e.g., CIHR, FRQS, etc.).*

**Amount of award:** \$10,000 CAD per award for one year, non-renewable.

**Number of awards:** Up to two (2) awards.

#### **Specific Award Eligibility**

1. The Applicant must be a full-time graduate student (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellow or medical resident enrolled at a Canadian institution during the entire duration of the award and conducting research in the cannabis/cannabinoid field.
2. The Applicant and the supervisor must adhere to the studentship and fellowship policies at their institution. It is the responsibility of the Applicant and the supervisor to ensure that the total stipend received meets the institutional funding standard.
3. Applicants who have received or are currently holding a *CCIC Neuroscience Fellowship in Cannabis and Cannabinoid Research* are not eligible to apply.



### *Awards for Rising Stars in ALS Research*

Brain Canada is poised to present the availability of three awards for full-time graduate students (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellows, and medical residents attending a Canadian institution conducting research in amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS):

- [Pierre Auger Morissette Capacity-Building Award in ALS Research](#), supported by Linda Auger Morissette and Friends
- [Rising Star Award in ALS Research](#), in memory of Madeleine Blanc, supported by Naomi Azrieli, Francois Blanc and Family
- [Oliver Goy Rising Star Award in ALS Research](#), supported by Allan Kliger

Funding for this award has been made possible by the Canada Brain Research Fund (CBRF), an innovative arrangement between the Government of Canada (through Health Canada) and Brain Canada Foundation, and Linda Auger Morissette and Friends, Allan Kliger/Victory's Kitchen Inc., and Naomi Azrieli, Francois Blanc and Family.

**Purpose:** To provide financial support to full-time graduate students (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellows, and medical residents conducting research at a Canadian institution in the field of ALS. *All else equal, priority will be given to trainees who do not currently hold other stipend awards from major funding sources (e.g., CIHR, FRQS, etc.).*

**Amount of award:** \$10,000 CAD per award for one year, non-renewable.

**Number of awards:** Up to six (6) awards.

#### **Specific Award Eligibility**

1. The Applicant must be a full-time graduate student (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellow or medical resident enrolled at a Canadian institution during the entire duration of the award and conducting research in ALS.
2. The Applicant and the supervisor must adhere to the studentship and fellowship policies at their institution. It is the responsibility of the Applicant and the supervisor to ensure that the total stipend received meets the institutional funding standard.
3. Applicants who have received or are currently holding a *Pierre Auger Morissette Capacity-Building Award in ALS Research* are not eligible to receive this award but are eligible to receive the *Rising Star Award in ALS Research* or the *Oliver Goy Rising Star in ALS Research*.





### *Henry and Berenice Kaufmann Foundation Trainee Award in Brain Cancer Research*

Brain Canada and the Henry and Berenice Kaufmann Foundation are poised to present the *Henry and Berenice Kaufmann Foundation Trainee Award in Brain Cancer Research*. Open to full-time graduate students (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellows, and medical residents attending a Canadian institution, this award will support trainees conducting research in the field of brain cancer, with a focus on glioblastoma.

The Henry and Berenice Kaufmann Foundation is a federally chartered family foundation founded in 1967 by Henry Kaufmann and formally Incorporated in 1973. The Foundation has been successfully enriching lives with over \$7.5 million in donations in Canada and internationally since that time to charitable organizations in the area of arts and cultures, education, environment, health and human resources. To learn more about the Henry and Berenice Kaufmann Foundation, visit <https://hbkfoundation.ca/>.

Funding for this award has been made possible by the Canada Brain Research Fund (CBRF), an innovative arrangement between the Government of Canada (through Health Canada) and Brain Canada Foundation, and the Henry and Berenice Kaufmann Foundation.

**Purpose:** To provide financial support to full-time graduate students (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellows, and medical residents conducting research in brain cancer, with a focus on glioblastomas. *All else equal, priority will be given to trainees who do not currently hold other stipend awards from major funding sources (e.g., CIHR, FRQS, etc.).*

**Amount of award:** \$10,000 CAD per award for one year, non-renewable.

**Number of awards:** Up to three (3) awards.

#### **Specific Award Eligibility**

1. The Applicant must be a full-time graduate student (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellow or medical resident enrolled at a Canadian institution during the entire duration of the award and conducting research in brain cancer, with a focus on glioblastoma.
2. The Applicant and the supervisor must adhere to the studentship and fellowship policies at their institution. It is the responsibility of the Applicant and the supervisor to ensure that the total stipend received meets the institutional funding standard.
3. Applicants who have received or are currently holding a *Henry and Berenice Kaufmann Foundation Trainee Award in Brain Cancer Research* are not eligible to apply.



### *Dr. Matthew Galati Brain Changer Award*

Brain Canada and the Brain Changes Initiative, with support from S. Galati & Associates Inc., are poised to present once again the *Dr. Matthew Galati Brain Changer Award*. Open to full-time graduate students (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellows, and medical residents attending a Canadian institution, this award will support trainees conducting clinical implementation research in the field of acquired (i.e., traumatic and non-traumatic) brain injury.

The Brain Changes Initiative is a not-for-profit organization that funds ground-breaking research to improve the standard of care for traumatic brain injury (TBI) recovery and provides awareness, advocacy and support for TBI survivors through education, events and programs. To learn more about Brain Changes Initiative, visit <https://www.brainchanges.org/>.

Funding for this award has been made possible by the Canada Brain Research Fund (CBRF), an innovative arrangement between the Government of Canada (through Health Canada) and Brain Canada Foundation, and by the Brain Changes Initiative.

**Purpose:** To provide financial support to full-time graduate students (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellows, and medical residents conducting clinical implementation research at a Canadian institution in the field of acquired brain injury. *All else equal, priority will be given to trainees who do not currently hold other stipend awards from major funding sources (e.g., CIHR, FRQS, etc.).*

Please note that the recipients of the Dr. Matthew Galati Brain Changer Award may be asked to present at and participate in the Brain Changes Initiative annual [Brain Health Summit](#).

**Amount of award:** \$10,000 CAD per award for one year, non-renewable.

**Number of awards:** Up to three (3) awards.

#### **Specific Award Eligibility**

1. In order to be considered eligible, applicants must demonstrate that the research they are conducting is focused on:
  - a. Acquired brain injury (traumatic or non-traumatic), defined as an injury to the brain that is not hereditary, congenital, degenerative, or induced by birth trauma.
    - Examples of traumatic acquired brain injury include falls, assaults, sports injuries, etc.
    - Examples of non-traumatic acquired brain injury include tumors, stroke, loss of oxygen to brain, etc.
  - b. Clinical implementation research, which refers to research that facilitates the systemic uptake of evidence-based practice and research into the routine practice of clinical and community settings to ultimately improve the quality and effectiveness of health services.
2. The Applicant must be a full-time graduate student (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellow or medical resident enrolled at a Canadian institution during the entire duration of the award and conducting research in acquired brain injury.



3. The Applicant and the supervisor must adhere to the studentship and fellowship policies at their institution. It is the responsibility of the Applicant and the supervisor to ensure that the total stipend received meets the institutional funding standard.
4. Applicants who have received or are currently holding a *Dr. Matthew Galati Brain Changer Award* are not eligible to apply.



### *Brain Canada Next Gen Award in Parkinson's Disease Research*

Brain Canada, with support from the Mireille and Steinberg Foundation and the Growling Beaver Brevet, is poised to present the *Brain Canada Next Gen Award in Parkinson's Disease Research*. Open to full-time graduate students (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellows, and medical residents attending a Canadian institution, this award will support trainees conducting research in the field of Parkinson's disease.

Funding for this award has been made possible by the Canada Brain Research Fund (CBRF), an innovative arrangement between the Government of Canada (through Health Canada) and Brain Canada Foundation.

**Purpose:** To provide financial support to full-time graduate students (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellows, and medical residents conducting research at a Canadian institution in the field of Parkinson's disease. *All else equal, priority will be given to trainees who do not currently hold other stipend awards from major funding sources (e.g., CIHR, FRQS, etc.).*

**Amount of award:** \$10,000 CAD per award for one year, non-renewable.

**Number of awards:** Up to two (2) awards.

#### **Specific Award Eligibility**

1. The Applicant must be a full-time graduate student (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellow or medical resident enrolled at a Canadian institution during the entire duration of the award and conducting research in Parkinson's disease.
2. The Applicant and the supervisor must adhere to the studentship and fellowship policies at their institution. It is the responsibility of the Applicant and the supervisor to ensure that the total stipend received meets the institutional funding standard.
3. Applicants who have received or are currently holding a *Brain Canada Next Gen Award in Parkinson's Disease Research* are not eligible to apply.



*Rising Star Award in Mental Health Research, in memory of Vivian Distler*

Brain Canada, with support from Naomi Azrieli O.C., is poised to present the *Rising Star Award in Mental Health Research*, in memory of Vivian Distler. Open to full-time graduate students (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellows, and medical residents attending a Canadian institution, this award will support trainees conducting research in the field of mental health.

Funding for this award has been made possible by the Canada Brain Research Fund (CBRF), an innovative arrangement between the Government of Canada (through Health Canada) and Brain Canada Foundation, and by Naomi Azrieli O.C.

**Purpose:** To provide financial support to full-time graduate students (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellows, and medical residents conducting research at a Canadian institution in the field of mental health. *All else equal, priority will be given to trainees who do not currently hold other stipend awards from major funding sources (e.g., CIHR, FRQS, etc.).*

**Amount of award:** \$10,000 CAD per award for one year, non-renewable.

**Number of awards:** Up to two (2) awards.

**Specific Award Eligibility**

1. The Applicant must be a full-time graduate student (M.Sc., Ph.D.), postdoctoral fellow or medical resident enrolled at a Canadian institution during the entire duration of the award and conducting research in the field of mental health.
2. The Applicant and the supervisor must adhere to the studentship and fellowship policies at their institution. It is the responsibility of the Applicant and the supervisor to ensure that the total stipend received meets the institutional funding standard.



## Application Procedures for Stipend Awards

The Applicant must complete the following components under the “Stipend Award” tab in their 2024 *Rising Stars Trainee Awards* application in SmartSimple:

- 1. Research Project Title.**
- 2. Lay summary of Research Project (maximum 300 words).**
- 3. A two-page description of the project (excluding figures and references), including:**
  - A summary of the research project, rationale, hypothesis, methodology and expected outcomes.
  - A statement describing the importance of the research and its impact.

*A maximum of two additional pages can be used to include figures and references.*
- 4. If applicable, description of the SGBA-driven research hypotheses of the research project (maximum 300 words).**
- 5. Details of any stipend or salary awards the Applicant applied for and currently holds.**
  - Please note that salary support coming directly from the trainee’s Supervisor (e.g., through other grants held by the Supervisor as a Principal Investigator, team member, etc.) should not be included.
- 6. Curriculum Vitae (CV).**
  - A two-page CV listing academic history (degrees obtained, professional history), awards and honours, and publications.
    - For publications in press, attach a copy of the letter of acceptance (email is acceptable).
    - For publications submitted, indicate the journal name and attach a copy of an email from the journal indicating receipt of the manuscript.
- 7. Personal Statement (maximum 300 words).**
  - Please describe your achievements and experiences (lived, academic and/or community) as they relate to your academic and professional career. Relevant factors include, but are not limited to, a description of extracurricular activities (e.g., community engagement, leadership experience, volunteer work, etc.), completed or ongoing trainings, etc. This section should focus on information that goes above and beyond what is included in your CV.
- 8. A one-page letter of support from your supervisor, including:**
  - Acknowledgement of the Applicant’s submission.
  - Confirmation that the Applicant will be registered as a full-time graduate student or postdoctoral fellow for the entire award duration (i.e., until September 30, 2025).
  - Relevance of Applicant’s research to the field of research in question and why it should be considered for this award.
  - Description of the Applicant’s research and training environment.
  - The strengths and accomplishments of the Applicant.

*In the case of co-supervision, please note that only one one-page letter of support, which can be co-signed, will be accepted.*

Please note that applications received in any other format than what is described on this page and under the “How to Apply” section, that exceed the page limits, and that are incomplete or late will be rejected.