

# UBC Okanagan Postdoctoral Fellowship: Application Guide 2024-2025

## 1: Description of Award

### UBC Okanagan Postdoctoral Fellowship

The UBC Okanagan Postdoctoral Fellowship (UBCOPF) provides the opportunity to bring top talent to the research community at UBC's Okanagan campus. These fellowships are awarded to the most highly qualified domestic or international postdoctoral researchers who will contribute to research excellence at UBC Okanagan.

Research excellence, as defined in UBC's Strategic Plan, accommodates a "broad vision of accomplishment" based on disciplinary expertise as well as cross-disciplinary collaborations, demanding "the creation of new knowledge and its accelerated translation into action." Facilitating competitive achievements in research fosters technological developments, but as our Strategic Plan acknowledges, supporting research excellence also engenders projects with a wide range of potential impacts "that lead to social innovations, that inform our understanding of history, or that enrich our world through creative works."<sup>1</sup>

In addition, equity and diversity are essential to academic excellence. An open and diverse community fosters the inclusion of voices that have been underrepresented or discouraged. We encourage applications from members of groups that have been marginalized on any grounds enumerated under the B.C. Human Rights Code, including sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, racialization, disability, political belief, religion, marital or family status, age, and/or status as a First Nation, Métis, Inuit, or Indigenous person.

The selection process is managed by the College of Graduate Studies.

### Fellowship Details

Two fellowships are awarded annually: one for research in STEM disciplines and one for research in the Arts, Humanities, and/or Social Sciences.

- Annual Value: \$50,000
- Duration: 2 years (non-renewable; second-year funding is contingent on confirmation of satisfactory performance via an annual report)
- Application Deadline: Monday, October 16, 2023 by 12:00 noon

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<sup>1</sup> <https://research.ok.ubc.ca/about-us/strategic-plans/>

## 2: Eligibility Criteria

### Applicant eligibility

The UBC Okanagan Postdoctoral Fellowship is open to Canadian citizens, permanent residents of Canada, and international applicants.

The intent of the UBC Okanagan Postdoctoral Fellowship is to recruit postdoctoral scholars from outside UBC; as a result, **UBC PhD graduates and postdoctoral fellows must provide a compelling rationale for choosing to remain at UBC.**

Acceptable reasons may include:

- **family reasons** (e.g., family obligations)
- **health reasons** (e.g., proximity to health care facilities)
- **applicants conducting research with Indigenous communities in British Columbia**
- **reasons related to community or cultural responsibilities.**

Applicants wishing to discuss the validity of a rationale prior to submitting the application can send an inquiry to [postdoc.ok@ubc.ca](mailto:postdoc.ok@ubc.ca) with the subject line "CoGS Postdoctoral Fellowship Inquiry."

### Eligibility window for degree completion

Applicants to the Fellowship program must have fulfilled all degree requirements for their PhD prior to taking up the Fellowship.

Applicants who have not fulfilled all requirements for their degree at the time of application must submit proof of completion prior to taking up the Fellowship.

Applicants must have received their PhD no more than five years before the start of the Fellowship.

For applicants who have completed more than one PhD, PhD-equivalent, or health professional degree, the eligibility window applies to the *most recent* of these degrees.

"Fulfilled all degree requirements" refers to the date that the applicant completed all the steps required for obtaining their doctorate. Although these requirements may vary by institution and degree type, they normally include post-defence submission of the final, corrected version of the dissertation. Note that convocation is not considered a degree requirement.

### Allowable extensions to eligibility window

The window of eligibility could be extended by a cumulative maximum of three years if the applicant had their career interrupted by extenuating circumstances, such as 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, lack of research opportunities, etc. Eligibility will only be extended by the duration of the eligible delay(s) or interruption(s).

"Career interruption" refers to a period of time when the applicant was not actively engaged in conducting research (full-time or part-time) and when their research output was completely interrupted.

**Interruptions used to extend the eligibility window for degree completion must have occurred *after* the fulfilment of your degree requirements and *before* the application submission deadline.**

Justification must be provided in the Special Circumstances attachment.

### **Other eligibility restrictions**

Applicants who currently hold or have held agency-specific (CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC) awards at the postdoctoral level are eligible to apply to the UBCOPF program **only** if the term of that funding officially ends on or before the start date of the UBCOPF. Early termination of an agency-specific postdoctoral award for the purpose of applying to the UBCOPF is not permitted.

Applicants cannot hold a Killam Postdoctoral Research Fellowship and a UBCOPF concurrently. If a UBCOPF recipient wishes to take up a Killam Postdoctoral Research Fellowship, they must first notify CoGS in writing that they wish to discontinue UBCOPF funding.

Applicants can apply for both the UBCOPF program and other agency-specific postdoctoral fellowship programs at the same time.

Applicants must **not** hold a tenure-track or tenured faculty position, nor can they be on leave from such a position.

Applicants can submit only **one** application per 12 months to the UBCOPF.

#### **Without exception, the UBCOPF:**

- is tenable **only** at the University of British Columbia Okanagan campus;
- must be taken up no earlier than April 1st of the competition year, and no later than March 31st of the following year;
- is held for a period of up to two years;
- cannot be held concurrently with another Tri-Agency training award, nor can it be held in conjunction with the Killam Postdoctoral Research Fellowship, and
- can be held only once in a lifetime.

### **3: Selection Criteria**

A total of two fellowships will be awarded: one for research in STEM disciplines, and one for research in the Arts, Humanities, and/or Social Sciences.

In recognition of the importance of faculty career development, preference will be given to applicants whose proposed supervisor is at a developmental stage of their career.

#### **Excellence in scholarly work and independent research: 60%**

- quality of contributions to research to date;
- scholarships and awards held;

- duration of graduate studies, considering the nature of the program and relevant personal circumstances;
- determination and ability to complete projects within an appropriate period of time;
- critical thinking, judgment, and initiative;
- resilience and flexibility in adjusting research plans, particularly in response to COVID-19 impacts.

**Quality of proposed research project: 40%**

- originality in developing a research agenda;
- merit, potential significance, clarity, and feasibility of the proposed project;
- relevance of applicant’s work experience and academic training to field of proposed research;
- suitability and quality of research environment (such as proposed supervisor, facilities, and support of academic unit).

**4: Application Process and Timeline**

*1. UBC Okanagan Postdoctoral Fellowship Pre-Application Proposal form: **due 12:00 noon, Wed. Sept. 6, 2023***

*The Pre-Application Proposal should include applicant information, supervisor’s information, project title, a brief summary of the program of research, and the applicant's up-to-date curriculum vitae.*

***Applicants to the UBCOPF may also be eligible for the Killam Postdoctoral Research Fellowship. To be considered for both, applicants must complete the [Killam Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Pre-Application form](#), and select ‘yes’ to: “I would like to be considered for the UBC Okanagan Postdoctoral Fellowship”. Applicants who wish to be considered for both competitions must also submit the [UBCOPF Pre-Application form](#). It is not necessary to submit two separate full applications to the Killam and UBCOPF; a Killam application will suffice for both fellowship programs. For more information about the Killam Postdoctoral Research Fellowship, please visit the [Killam Postdoctoral Research Fellowship webpage](#).***

*2. Pre-Application Review: scheduled for **Thursday, September 7, 2023***

*The College of Graduate Studies (CoGS) reviews each pre-application and shares applicant information with Deans, Associate Deans of Research, and support personnel of eligible applicants.*

*3. Prepare Application: **Friday, September 8 to Friday, October 13, 2023***

*While preparing the application, applicants work in collaboration with their proposed supervisor and in consultation with the Associate Dean of Research in the supervisor's Faculty/Department. Please note that each Faculty/Department may set its own deadline for an internal review of applications (for internal deadlines, please consult with your proposed supervisor). Applicants invite their referees to provide a letter of reference addressed to the UBCOPF Selection Committee and sent via email to [postdoc.ok@ubc.ca](mailto:postdoc.ok@ubc.ca) on or before the final application deadline.*

**4. Final Application Deadline: due 12:00 noon on Monday, October 16, 2023**

*Applicants must submit a complete application via the UBCOPF Submission Form (if applying only to the UBCOPF) or email a full Killam application to [postdoc.ok@ubc.ca](mailto:postdoc.ok@ubc.ca) (if applying for both the UBCOPF and Killam Postdoctoral Research Fellowship) before 12:00 noon on Monday, October 16, 2023. To submit, applicants must combine all documents into one pdf file that they will attach to the online application form or email to the College of Graduate Studies. Documents must be presented in the following order:*

- i. completed application form*
- ii. research proposal*
- iii. ancillary material (optional)*
- iv. personal statement*
- v. statement of special circumstances*
- vi. curriculum vitae*
- vii. letter of support from the proposed supervisor*
- viii. official transcripts. (If a PhD transcript is unavailable, please provide a PhD degree confirmation of conferral or a confirmation of enrolment and progress, with the anticipated date of completion).*

**5. Referees' Deadline: 12:00 noon on Monday, October 16, 2023**

*On or before 12:00 noon on Monday, October 16, 2023, three referees must submit via email letters of reference addressed to the UBC Okanagan Postdoctoral Fellowship selection committee at [postdoc.ok@ubc.ca](mailto:postdoc.ok@ubc.ca).*

**6. Committee Selection: Tuesday, October 17 to Friday, October 27, 2023**

*CoGS convenes the Selection Committee, chaired by the Dean, College of Graduate Studies, to review applications and select the two successful candidates.*

**7. Notification of Successful Applicants: Tuesday, October 31, 2023**

*Applicants (both successful and unsuccessful), their proposed supervisors, and their host Department/Faculty will be notified via email about the outcome of the competition. Successful candidates will be given three weeks to either accept or decline the Fellowship offer. If a selected candidate declines the offer, CoGS may extend an offer to the next most competitive applicant.*

## **5: Other Sources of Funding**

### **Teaching and other Academic Duties**

Fellows are permitted to undertake teaching or other academic duties up to a maximum of two standard (3-credit) courses. Any teaching arrangements must be made with the department concerned and remunerated by the department at a rate consistent with the standard remuneration for sessional instructors. Recipients of the UBCOPF must not have teaching commitments that extend past the end date of the UBCOPF.

## **Interim Benefits Costs (for International awardees)**

CoGS will provide a maximum of \$500 to cover the private benefits costs for international UBCOPF recipients within their first three months of residency in Canada. Awardees wishing to accept these funds must first provide proof that they have enrolled in benefits through a private benefits provider.

## **6: Documents**

### **Required Documents**

- Application Form
- Research proposal (maximum of two pages)
- Ancillary materials (optional, maximum of one page)
- Personal statement (maximum of one page)
- Statement of special circumstances (maximum of one page)
- Curriculum vitae
- Letter of support from your proposed supervisor
- Three letters of reference (in addition to your supervisor's letter of support)
- Up to date official transcripts and translations for all undergraduate and graduate studies

### **Formatting**

- Pages must be 8 ½" x 11" (216mm x 279mm).
- Insert a minimum margin of 2cm (¾ inch) around the page (top, bottom and both sides).
- Text can be either single- or double-spaced.
- Use a minimum font size of 12-point, black type, occupying a maximum of six lines per inch. Do not use narrow type density or condensed type, and do not vertically reduce line spacing less than standard single-spaced text. Reduced font sizes can be used only in tables, charts, figures, and graphs, as long as the text in these sections is legible when the page is viewed at 100% magnification.
- You may insert hyperlinks in your text to lead adjudicators to online resources with further information on an activity, project, or other resources directly relevant to your research.
- Save and submit all documents as PDFs.

### **Research proposal (maximum of two pages)**

The proposal should be written in clear, non-technical language that allows a non-specialist to comprehend the overall content and importance of the work. Members of the UBCOPF Selection Committee are from a broad range of disciplines and may not have expertise in your area of study. Although the Fellowship may be used to extend or expand upon doctoral work, it must be made clear that you are not intending to use the award to wrap up a previously written thesis or publish it in book form. It is expected that a postdoctoral fellow will be taking the next step beyond the PhD thesis, so you must differentiate clearly between the thesis research and the postdoctoral project. Feel free to include hyperlinks in the proposal to additional information where directly relevant.

As applicants must make UBC Okanagan their base, it is important – particularly for applicants whose primary research materials are elsewhere – to indicate proposed destinations as well as the frequency

and duration of trips. Where applicable, describe how you will deal with the remoteness of the primary materials needed for your research. The adjudication committee is very interested in “fit” with the selected UBC Okanagan department or unit and the university’s research programs. You must provide information on how your research relates to that of specific campus programs and advisors. If a colloquium is envisioned, a possible title should be proposed. If you will visit classes, please suggest which ones. Since interdisciplinarity is a valued dimension of research at UBCO, specific details on proposed inter-departmental connections and interdisciplinary approaches to research are welcome.

### **Ancillary Materials (optional, maximum of one page)**

You may provide up to one extra page of ancillary materials such as figures, graphs, images, works cited, and references. The extra page may not be used as a continuation of the research proposal document.

### **Personal Statement (maximum of one page)**

Address the following:

- Describe your research experience and relevant work experience.
- Describe your career aspirations.
- Include details concerning what teaching, if any, you will be doing and how it is related to your research.

### **Special Circumstances (maximum of one page)**

Identify any circumstances that might have delayed or interrupted your academic and/or career advancement, dissertation research, other research, dissemination of results, training, etc.

### **COVID-19 research/career impacts**

In this statement, outline any impacts COVID-19 has had on your research output and/or career progression. Note any adjustments you have made to maintain or support research and/or career progression.

### **The Special Circumstances document is required only if**

- your PhD completion is outside the eligibility window, or
- you already have a postdoctoral appointment at UBC. See details below.

**Justification for extension of eligibility window** Applicants must have completed all requirements of their PhD no more than five years prior to the anticipated fellowship start date. The period of eligibility may be extended for applicants who have had their career interrupted or delayed for the purpose of 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, or lack of research opportunities. If you are outside the eligibility window, identify any family or health responsibilities that might have delayed or interrupted your career progress after the completion of your PhD requirements. Note that your eligibility window will only be extended by the duration of the delay(s) or interruption(s), to a maximum of one year. Your description must include the start and end dates, the impact areas, and the reason(s) for or a brief explanation of the absence.

**Justification for remaining at UBC:** If you are currently a UBC Postdoctoral Fellow or completed your PhD on any campus at UBC, provide a rationale for choosing to remain at this university.

**Curriculum Vitae:**

Please provide a current copy of your Curriculum Vitae.

**Letter of Support from the Proposed UBC Supervisor:**

The proposed supervisor should give evidence of being intellectually engaged with the applicant's project, and should address the following:

- the applicant's research potential, and include information that supports the selection criteria;
- the quality of the proposed research, such as the originality of the approach, methodology, and/or significance as well as the potential impact of the applicant's research;
- the degree of "match" between the applicant and the supervisor and the potential benefit to each;
- the research environment (for example, lab equipment and facilities) and/or access to resources (such as archival materials and academic or community networks);
- supports that will be available to successful applicants within the supervisor's home Faculty (such as resources, office space, travel funding, and or teaching opportunities where relevant);
- supports that are available within the supervisor's home Faculty as well as at UBCO for the applicant's career development (including opportunities for further training and mentorship in the area of research);
- benefits the applicant will bring to UBC Okanagan.

**Letters of Reference:**

Three additional letters of reference are required from individuals qualified to provide an informed assessment of the applicant's qualifications and abilities. (Additional letters will not be accepted by CoGS, and an application without three reference letters will be considered incomplete.) Referees must be able to evaluate the applicant's research potential. For guidance, they may comment on the following:

- the applicant's academic achievements and research contributions, including their current and potential value and significance;
- the applicant's other personal qualities, supported by examples that illustrate the applicant's well-rounded, sound character;
- the quality of the proposed research, including an explanation as to how it expands or departs from the applicant's previous research;
- the benefit of undertaking the proposed research at the University of British Columbia.

**Requirements for the letters:**

- only letters signed by the author are acceptable;
- must be on institutional letterhead (where possible);
- must be original and scanned letters sent by [email](#) directly to CoGS;
- letters are confidential, and the contents of the letters are not to be shared with the applicant.

## **Transcripts for All University-Level Studies are Required**

- up to date official transcripts for all undergraduate- and graduate-level studies must be provided, even if a degree was not obtained. Transcripts must also be provided for studies that did not lead to a degree (for example, in a study abroad program);
- must be Official Transcripts that contain watermark of institution and/or registrar's stamp and/or registrar's signature. Unofficial transcripts (such as labelled "unofficial" on each page or a screenshot) are not acceptable;
- must be up to date: issued in the Winter 2022 term (if currently registered) or after the last term completed (if not currently registered);
- transcripts from all institutions attended must be provided, including the one showing a PhD currently in progress;
- transcripts should include the grading key/legend for the institution (typically located on the back of each transcript page).

If a transcript is not available for a PhD currently in progress, the Registrar or the academic department of the applicant's home institution must issue an official statement letter confirming:

- a transcript verifying PhD enrollment is unavailable;
- progress on the PhD is satisfactory along with the expected completion date of the PhD.

If the transcript does not indicate the degree name and the degree conferral date, then a degree certificate is also required.

### **International transcripts:**

If you graduated from institutions where the transcripts are issued in a language other than English, then in addition to the above, you must:

- arrange to have a set of all official transcripts issued in their original language;
- obtain a certified literal English translation of your transcripts from a certified translator or submit both the original transcripts and the literal English translation to the UBC department or unit to which you are applying;
- transcripts must be translated in their entirety, including any information that appears on the reverse side of any document. UBC does not accept unofficial and/or non-literal translations.

### **Where to send transcripts:**

Transcripts must be sent directly to CoGS via email ([postdoc.ok@ubc.ca](mailto:postdoc.ok@ubc.ca)) or by mail:

#### **College of Graduate Studies**

#### **Okanagan Campus**

**OM2, 1161 Alumni Ave**

**Kelowna, BC Canada V1V 1V7**