

UBC OKANAGAN POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS

Competition for the 2025-2026 UBCOPF

Application Guide

1: Description of Award

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 scholars 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."¹

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

Up to 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: \$60,000
- Duration: 2 years (non-renewable; second-year funding is contingent on confirmation of satisfactory performance via an annual report)
- Pre-Application Proposal Deadline: Monday, December 2, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. (PT)
- Full Application Deadline (for selected applicants): Tuesday, February 11, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. (PT)

¹ <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.

Eligibility restrictions for UBC PhD graduates and current or former UBC postdoctoral scholars

The intent of the UBC Okanagan Postdoctoral Fellowship is to recruit postdoctoral scholars from outside UBC; as a result, **UBC PhD graduates and current or former UBC postdoctoral scholars must provide a compelling rationale for choosing to remain at UBC.** For current **UBC postdoctoral scholars, the longer they have been at UBC, the stronger the rationale that is required.** This rationale should be included in the Special Circumstances attachment.

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.**

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.

The requirement to have 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.

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.

Allowable extensions to eligibility window

The window of eligibility could be extended by a cumulative maximum of three years for applicants who 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 be extended only by the duration of the eligible career interruption(s).

The term "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.

Career interruptions that extend the eligibility window for degree completion must have occurred *after* the fulfilment of the degree requirements and *before* the application submission deadline.

Justification for eligible career interruptions must be provided in the Special Circumstances attachment.

Other eligibility restrictions

Applicants who currently hold or have held a major postdoctoral research training award (e.g. a Tri-Agency or Killam Postdoctoral Fellowship, Michael Smith Research Trainee Award, etc.) 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 a major postdoctoral award or fellowship for the purpose of applying to the UBCOPF is not permitted.

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 May 1st of the competition year, and no later than April 30th of the following year;
- is held for a period of up to two years;
- as noted above, cannot be held concurrently with a Tri-Agency postdoctoral research training award, nor with the Killam Postdoctoral Research Fellowship, and
- can be held only once in a lifetime.

3: Selection Criteria

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

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.

Originality 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 deadline: **Monday, December 2, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.** (PT)*

The [Pre-Application Proposal form](#) should include applicant information, supervisor's information, project title, a brief summary of the program of research, the Special Circumstances attachment (including a rationale for choosing to remain at UBC, if required), and the applicant's up-to-date curriculum vitae.

2. *Pre-Application Review: **Tuesday, December 3, 2024 – Tuesday, December 10, 2024***

The College of Graduate Studies (CoGS) reviews each pre-application and shares information about applicants' eligibility with the Associate Dean of Research in the supervisor's Faculty.

3. *Faculty Pre-Application Review and Pledge for Benefits: **Tuesday, December 10, 2024 – Monday, January 13, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.** (PT)*

Associate Deans of Research review Pre-Application Proposals and select the candidates they recommend to move forward. Selected candidates are invited to prepare a full UBCOPF application which will be due Tuesday, Feb. 11 at 5:00 p.m. (PT)

Faculty Deans are required to submit the [Pledge for Benefits form](#) to CoGS for the candidates who are recommended to move forward. This Pledge for Benefits is due by 5:00 p.m. (PT) on Monday, January 13, 2025.

4. *Selected Candidates Prepare their Full Applications: **Tuesday, January 14, 2025 – Tuesday, February 11, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.** (PT)*

- *Selected candidates should prepare their application in consultation with their proposed supervisor and the Associate Dean of Research in the supervisor's Faculty. Full details on required documents are included below.*
- *Please note that each Faculty may set its own deadline for an internal review of applications. Applicants should consult with their proposed supervisor for Faculty-specific internal deadlines.*
- *Applicants must invite three referees (in addition to the letter from the proposed supervisor) to provide a letter of reference addressed to the UBCOPF Postdoctoral Awards and Fellowships Committee and sent via email directly to the Postdoctoral Affairs*

Coordinator at: postdoc.ok@ubc.ca on or before the final application deadline.

- Applicants must also request that copies of all official transcripts be sent by the issuing institution to postdoc.ok@ubc.ca on or before the final application deadline.

5. **Final Application Deadline: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. (PT)**

Applicants must submit a complete application consisting of the following documents by or before the deadline, and send it by email to postdoc.ok@ubc.ca. Documents must be combined into a single PDF, and presented in the following order:

- a. research proposal
- b. ancillary material (optional)
- c. personal statement
- d. statement of special circumstances (where applicable)
- e. curriculum vitae
- f. letter of support from the proposed supervisor

6. **Referees' Deadline: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. (PT)**

On or before 5:00 p.m. (PT) on Tuesday, February 4, 2025, three referees must submit via email letters of reference addressed to the UBC Okanagan Postdoctoral Awards and Fellowships Committee at postdoc.ok@ubc.ca.

7. **Committee Selection: Wednesday, February 12, 2025 – Tuesday, March 3, 2025**

CoGS convenes the Postdoctoral Awards and Fellowships Committee, chaired by the Dean, College of Graduate Studies, to review applications and select the successful candidate(s).

8. **Notification of Successful Applicants: on or after Thursday, March 6, 2025**

Applicants (both successful and unsuccessful), their proposed supervisors, and their host 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

Recipients of the UBCOPF are permitted to undertake teaching or other academic duties up to a maximum of two standard (3-credit) courses per academic year. Any teaching arrangements must be made with the department concerned and remunerated 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 their UBCOPF funding.

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 for Full Application

Formatting

- Pages must be 8 ½" x 11" (216 mm x 279 mm).
- Insert a minimum margin of 2 cm (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 one PDF file in the order specified below.

Required Documents

Documents to be submitted in the application (additional details below):

- Research proposal (maximum of two pages)
- Ancillary materials (optional, maximum of one page)
- Personal statement (maximum of one page)
- Statement of special circumstances (if applicable; maximum of one page)
- Curriculum vitae
- Letter of support from your proposed supervisor

Documents to be sent separately:

- Three letters of reference must be *addressed to the UBCOPF Postdoctoral Awards and Fellowships Committee* and submitted via email directly to postdoc.ok@ubc.ca. Note that these three letters of reference are in addition to the supervisor's letter of support that is submitted as part of the complete application.
- Up to date official transcripts and translations where necessary for all undergraduate and graduate studies must be submitted via email by the issuing institution to postdoc.ok@ubc.ca (note: transcripts written in French do not require translation)

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 research. Members of the Postdoctoral Awards and Fellowships 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 dissertation and publish it in book form. It is expected that a postdoctoral scholar will be taking the next step beyond the PhD dissertations, so you must differentiate clearly between the dissertation research and the postdoctoral project. You may 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)

If you are currently or were previously a UBC postdoctoral scholar or completed your PhD on any campus at UBC, provide a rationale for choosing to remain at this university. Identify any circumstances that might have interrupted your academic and/or career advancement, dissertation research, other research, dissemination of results, training, etc.

Where relevant, you may 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.

Please note: the Special Circumstances document is required only if

- you are a former or current UBC or UBC Okanagan PhD student, or are a former or current UBC or UBC Okanagan postdoctoral scholar; or
- your PhD completion date is outside the eligibility window.

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 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 career interruption(s), to a

maximum of three years. Your description must include the start and end dates, the impact areas, and the reason(s) for or a brief explanation of the absence.

Curriculum Vitae:

Please provide a current copy of your Curriculum Vitae.

Letter of Support from the Proposed UBC Supervisor:

The supervisor's letter of support must be included in your application document. 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 Letters of Reference:

- only letters signed by the author are acceptable;
- must be on institutional letterhead (where possible);
- must be original and scanned letters *addressed to the UBCOPF Postdoctoral Awards and Fellowships Committee* and sent by [email](mailto:postdoc.ok@ubc.ca) directly to the Postdoctoral Affairs Coordinator in CoGS at: postdoc.ok@ubc.ca

- 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 the degree requirements were not fulfilled. Transcripts must be provided in all cases for postsecondary studies that did not lead to a degree (including, for example, participation in a study abroad program);
- must be Official Transcripts that contain the watermark of the 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 2024/2025 Winter Term 1 (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 enrolment 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 or French, 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 by the issuing institution to CoGS via email to postdoc.ok@ubc.ca or by mail to:

**Attn: Postdoctoral Affairs Coordinator
College of Graduate Studies
UBC Okanagan
OM2, 1161 Alumni Ave.
Kelowna, BC Canada V1V 1V7**