

Dalla Lana School of Public Health Indigenous Postdoctoral Fellowship Program

Background and Motivation

Against a backdrop of longstanding, systemic, anti-Indigenous racism at Canadian universities and health professions, including the University of Toronto, the Dalla Lana School of Public Health (DLSPH) is establishing the DLSPH Indigenous Postdoctoral Fellowship Program. The program responds to the historical and contemporary underrepresentation of Indigenous faculty at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health, and at other schools of public health, and to the underrepresentation of Indigenous leadership in other public and private sector entities. With the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action (2015), the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the finding of graves at former Indian Residential Schools, it is important to change the narrative by increasing the opportunities available to First Nations, Inuit and Métis scholars. The program is thus intended to provide a dedicated source of opportunity for Indigenous doctoral students to complete a high-quality postdoctoral fellowship, where they are connected and mentored by the urban Indigenous community, and which leads to tenure-track, academic appointments at University of Toronto or other leading universities, or to other leadership positions in the public or private sector, if they so choose.

Value and Duration

Funding will be available to engage each post-doctoral fellow for two years. The value of each award will be competitive with the most prestigious and highest-value postdoctoral awards in Canada. At the time of development of this program, the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship matches this description, and provides \$70,000 gross salary per year for two years. Each selected postdoctoral fellow will also receive an unrestricted research start-up fund of \$10,000.

Eligibility

This award is open to both domestic and international post-graduates.

Nominees must:

- Identify as First Nations, Inuit or Métis
- Demonstrate academic excellence and high potential for success in their chosen field.
- Have obtained a doctoral degree, normally within five years from the start date of funding (though this may be waived for exceptional cases) or will have obtained their doctoral degree at the time the fellowship commences. Nominees who obtained their doctoral degree more than five years from the funding start-date should provide a brief statement of explanation.
- Not have held a DLSPH Indigenous Postdoctoral Fellowship Award previously.

Recipients must:

- Have a primary supervisor who is a core faculty member of DLSPH (Tenured, Tenure Track, Academic CLTA, and Term appointees who draw all or part of their salary from DLSPH)
- Once hired, be a postdoctoral employee at the University of Toronto
- Register and remain registered with the postdoctoral office at SGS
- Not hold concurrently another major fellowship

- Not hold a tenure-track faculty position, or be on leave from such a position

DLSPH's Responsibilities

DLSPH will ensure that there is a contact person (program manager) with whom prospective applicants and current postdoctoral fellows can communicate about administrative and general informational matters. The DLSPH will pair each postdoctoral fellow to a faculty supervisor that has been mutually agreed upon by the postdoctoral fellow and the faculty supervisor. The DLSPH will ensure that the faculty supervisor has agreed to key aspects of mentorship, including facilitating the postdoctoral fellow's research opportunities (with explicit agreement about primary authorship), ensuring networking opportunities (with explicit understanding of the people and organizations with whom the supervisor will connect the postdoctoral fellow), and providing a respectful and culturally safe environment. In keeping with the understanding the principal purpose of postdoctoral fellowships is to bolster one's research portfolio, the DLSPH will not make any demands of the postdoctoral fellows' time and will reinforce a culture that the fellowship is designed to enable postdoctoral fellows to concentrate on and develop their scholarship. DLSPH will provide opportunities for fellows to engage in teaching, if they so choose. DLSPH will also provide independent mechanisms to address general or specific issues that may arise.

Outside of a formal academic mentor, the DLSPH will work to provide additional faculty mentors for each postdoctoral fellow, but this will be optional and left to the discretion of each postdoctoral fellow. The University of Toronto is currently establishing an Indigenous postdoctoral fellows' network, and postdoctoral fellows will be introduced to this network.

Application Process and Deadlines

Interested applicants will identify a faculty member whom they are interested in having as a supervisor, and work with that supervisor to develop a research plan. Interested supervisors will provide a letter of support that details the complementarity between the research interests/background of the supervisor and applicant, and the anticipated mutual benefits. Letters should provide specifics about how the proposed research complements the supervisor's ongoing projects and/or new research directions. Please articulate (a) how their experience and expertise will facilitate the postdoctoral fellow's proposed research and future academic trajectory, (b) the people and organizations whom the supervisor will provide as opportunities for the postdoctoral fellow to expand their academic networks, particularly in preparation to take on a tenure-track, academic appointment (with specific examples) and, (c) how the supervisor will ensure a secure and respectful environment.

Please send an e-mail to research.dlsph@utoronto.ca indicating your intent to apply and your proposed supervisor by **Monday, February 14th, 5:00pm.**

The following documents should be submitted as a single PDF document to research.dlsph@utoronto.ca by **Monday, February 28th, 5:00pm:**

1. A nomination letter from proposed supervisor detailing required sections above
2. Postdoctoral applicant proposed research plan for the duration of the fellowship (max 2 pages)
3. Postdoctoral applicant CV (any length)
4. A short personal biography of the applicant (150-word max) which may be used on website or other communications should they be selected as a DLSPH Indigenous Postdoctoral Fellow

5. A brief statement indicating the synergy between the applicant's research proposal and the research goals of the supervisor (1 paragraph), the DLSPH [academic plan](#) (1 paragraph), and [the mission of the University](#) (1 paragraph).
6. A letter that indicates how they identify as First Nations, Inuit or Métis and the relationship they have with an Indigenous community or organization.

Selection Criteria

Applications received by the DLSPH research office will be evaluated by a committee composed of faculty and students based on the following selection criteria.

- Excellence of the research proposal and the of the nominee's CV
- Excellence of the environment and support that the supervisor is able to provide, as outlined in their letter.

Relationship to the University of Toronto Provost's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program for Black and Indigenous Scholars

Successful applicants will be automatically considered for the University-wide postdoctoral fellowship program. Candidates who are successful in both competitions will be required to decline the DLSPH postdoctoral fellowship.