SGS Award Announcement

To:	Faculty Research Offices & Graduate Chairs
From:	Sarah Pickering, Postdoctoral Administrative Officer
CC:	Joshua Barker, Dean, School of Graduate Studies and Vice-Provost, Graduate Research and Education; Vina Goghari, Vice-Dean, Research and Program Innovation; John Peever, Vice-Dean, Students; Laura Stathopoulos, Director, Graduate Awards and Financial Aid; Council of Graduate Deans
Date:	February 5, 2024
Re:	**2024 Provost's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program (PPFP): Supporting Researchers from Underrepresented Groups**

Award Overview

Nomination deadline to DLSPH:	**March 4, 2024**
Faculty nomination deadline to SGS:	**April 1, 2024** (list of Faculty nominations due to SGS)
Value and Duration:	$70,000 per year to Faculties for up to two years
Required Legal Status:	Domestic or International
Results:	May 2024

Purpose

The University of Toronto Provost's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program provides funding to Graduate Faculties to increase opportunities for hiring postdoctoral fellows from underrepresented groups, specifically Indigenous (and Black scholars. These fellowships will enable postdoctoral researchers to grow their scholarly profiles, undertake academic work at the University of Toronto, and strengthen the educational environment at the University with diverse perspectives.

This funding is designed to help the University compete with peer institutions for top-tier candidates, and to support the University in meeting its institutional goal of fostering increased diversity and representation at all levels of teaching, learning and research. Nominees must be nominated by their prospective Faculties/divisions following the timeline and processes outlined below. While the nomination/application process will normally begin with faculty advisors/mentors, funding for the successful nominees will be provided to their respective Faculty Research Office for administration.

Read about the recipients of the Provost's Postdoctoral Fellows on the PPFP webpage.

Value and Duration

Funding will be available to engage **seven** new postdoctoral scholars annually. Each award will provide $70,000 per year <u>to Faculties</u> to support up to two years of postdoctoral salary and benefits. This level of funding exceeds the median postdoctoral salary at the University of Toronto and is in keeping with Canada's most prestigious postdoctoral awards.

The Fellowship may be used to fund both the postdoctoral scholar's gross salary and employer costs (10.25% Standard Benefit Rate, and $50/month postdoc levy), or only the gross salary, in which case, the faculty/unit/department would be responsible for covering the additional employer costs. Units/departments have the option, and are encouraged, to augment the salary with support from a variety of sources, including operating budget, faculty advisor funds such as research grants, other awards, etc.

Successful postdoctoral scholars will also receive an additional start-up stipend fund of $5,000 per year, funded through the Faculty Research Office or faculty advisor.

Eligibility to Apply

The award is open to **both Domestic and International** post-graduates.

Nominees must:
- Demonstrate academic excellence and high potential for success in their chosen fields;
- Identify as Indigenous to Turtle Island and/or Black;
- Have obtained a doctoral degree, at the time the fellowship commences and normally within the last five years from the start of the fellowship; and
- Not have held a Provost's Postdoctoral Fellowship previously.

Recipients must:
- Begin the fellowship by January 2025;
- Will be engaged as a postdoctoral employee at the University of Toronto;
- Be hired by a UofT supervisor who is appointed to a graduate unit;
- Register and remain registered with the Postdoctoral Office at SGS;
- **Not** hold concurrently another major fellowship;
- **Not** hold a faculty position or be on leave from such a position;
- Establish an IDP (Independent Development Plan) and submit to SGS within the first three months of the fellowship. The IDP should be reviewed annually, and the revised copy sent to the Postdoctoral Office at SGS; and
- Submit proof of completion of degree no later than three months after the fellowship commences if they had not fulfilled all requirements for their degree at the time of nomination.

At the University of Toronto, we strive to be an equitable and inclusive community, rich with diversity, protecting the human rights of all persons, and based upon understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of every person. We seek to ensure to the greatest extent possible that all students and employees enjoy the opportunity to participate as they see fit in the full range of activities that the University offers, and to achieve their full potential as members of the University community.

Selection Criteria

Nominations received by the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) will be evaluated based on the following selection criteria. Nominees, supervisors, graduate units/departments, and faculties are encouraged to consider these criteria when developing their applications and when selecting nominees to be forwarded.

Please also refer to the scoring rubric used by SGS as posted on the SGS PPFP webpage

Selection Criteria (cont'd)

Research or Scholarship Proposal	• Are the ideas put forward in the research plan innovative and/or original? • Are the approaches and/or methodologies appropriate? • Is the research plan relevant to the nominee's research career objectives? • Does the research plan have the potential of significantly advancing our understanding of the area?
Applicant Track Record	• Academic and research training received by the nominee (take an inclusive excellence lens) • Awards or acknowledgements of academic achievement • Scholarly activity as relevant to discipline (e.g., publications, chapters, presentations, community-engaged work, public scholarship, creative practice, and related scholarly activity) • Research accomplished to date - has the nominee started to demonstrated independence and originality? Contributions to team research? • Quality of the nominee's training, mentorship, and supervisory activities
Scholarly Potential	• Scholarly potential in the field can be demonstrated through the nominee's engagement as a mentor, their ability to manage research, to contribute novel ideas to their research program, to make decisions that are crucial to the success of the research program, to lead their research collaboratively, have excellent working relationships with those around them, etc. • Will the nominee make meaningful contributions while a postdoctoral scholar at the U of T? Will the postdoctoral scholar be launched into a meaningful career trajectory? • Does the research or scholarship plan provide evidence of the applicant's leadership in the design and conduct of the proposed research?
Feasibility	• Is the proposed research feasible, given the resources and support available to the investigator? • Has the supervisor demonstrated support for the scientific development of the candidate and their independent research program? • What space, operating funds, infrastructure and/or other resources will be available to the nominee and are they adequate? • Does the department or organization demonstrate leadership in the nominee's chosen field? • Will the nominee receive adequate scientific and career guidance?

In selecting Provost's Postdoctoral Fellows, preference will be given to nominees who have not yet held a postdoctoral fellowship. In addition, the School of Graduate Studies will be seeking to balance diversity of the candidates and distribution of Postdoctoral Fellows across academic divisions to ensure that program goals and objectives are met.

Application Process

Applicants must be nominated by their Faculty (e.g., Arts and Science, Social Work) to SGS. Faculty Research Offices are asked to establish and communicate their internal application deadline and selection process before forwarding nominations to the School of Graduate Studies.

Potential nominees interested in the Provost's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program should contact the nominating supervisor. Supervisors wishing to support a candidate's application must contact their graduate unit/department Chair and affiliated Faculty Research Office to inquire about the Faculty's internal deadline and nomination process. Please refer to the Faculty Research Office contact information table below.

Each Faculty Research Office is invited to nominate their **top three (3)** candidates in each self-identification category to the School of Graduate Studies at sgs.postdoc@utoronto.ca by the SGS deadline.

Please submit a list of all candidates considered (using the SGS Submission Spreadsheet), and a complete nomination package for each ranked nominee.

Nomination Packages:

Please use the file naming convention of "**Last name, First Name_PPFP2024**" for the nomination packages.

The nomination package for each nominee should be scanned as a <u>single PDF file</u>, containing all application materials in the order as listed below:

1. **A nomination letter from the graduate unit/department Chair** (max. two pages). The letter should:
   i. address how the nominee meets the selection criteria, clearly state which underrepresented group (Indigenous and/or Black) the nominee identifies as, and confirm that the nominee intends to accept the offer if funding is made available;
   ii. illustrate the synergy between the research proposal and the research goals of the supervisor/unit/department, as well as the mission of the University; and
   iii. outline support of the nominee by describing how the applicant and Faculty/unit/department will mutually benefit from this engagement.

2. **A supervisor statement** from the faculty advisor/mentor (max. two pages). The statement should:
   i. describe the complementarity between the research interests/background of the supervisor and nominee, how the proposed research complements the supervisor's ongoing projects and/or new research directions, and the anticipated mutual benefits;
   ii. reveal information specific to the field of study (e.g., benchmarks of excellence, publication norms/standards/practices, impact factor of research contributions) that would otherwise not be known outside the discipline;
   iii. provide details regarding the applicant's proposed research environment, clearly stating the supervisor's and department's commitment. Examples of commitment include (but are not limited to) mentorship, opportunities for collaboration, dissemination, and/or knowledge translation, resources (e.g., funding, facilities, personnel) that will be available to support the nominee as they carry out their proposed research; and
   iv. illustrate the supervisor's commitment to the applicant's academic and professional trajectory, clearly indicating the resources and/or mentoring activities that are available through the training environment to support career development.

3. **Research or scholarship proposal** from the nominee (max. two pages, plus up to two additional pages for references/citations);

4. **Training statement from the nominee** (max. 1 page). The statement should describe:
   i. their professional, academic, and extracurricular experiences/achievements and how it will contribute to their training success (1/2 page); and
   ii. how the training they expect to acquire will contribute to their productivity and to the research goals they hope to achieve. Indicate why they decided upon the proposed training location and what they expect to learn from the training experience (1/2 page).

5. **Nominee's C.V.** (no page restriction); and

6. **A short personal biography** written by the nominee (max. 1/3 page), which may be used on the SGS Postdoctoral Fellows website or other communications, should they be successfully selected as a Provost's Postdoctoral Fellow.

Results

Results of the competition will be made available and communicated to Faculty Research Offices in May 2024.

Contact & Resources

For information regarding the nomination process, deadlines and point of contact at each Faculty Office, please refer to the [Faculty Research Office contact list](#) on the SGS website or contact:

Sarah Pickering
Postdoctoral Administrative Officer
Postdoctoral Office, School of Graduate Studies
sgs.postdoc@utoronto.ca

[Provost's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program](#)