ACHRI GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

Award Guide

Purpose of Award

ACHRI Graduate Scholarships (MSc/PhD) are competitive internal awards for the purpose of providing stipend support to trainees pursuing graduate research.

Eligibility Criteria

Candidates are eligible to apply for the ACHRI Graduate Scholarship if:

- they have applied to, or are currently enrolled in a graduate studies program (Master’s or PhD) at the University of Calgary; and
- they have secured a training position with a primary supervisor who is a full member of ACHRI; and
- they are conducting an eligible research program that falls under the mandate of ACHRI.

Only one graduate application will be accepted from a single supervisor in a given competition. Funding is restricted to a maximum of two trainees per supervisor per competition round: one graduate level trainee and one postdoctoral trainee.

PhD students wishing to pursue research training through the Canadian Child Health Clinician Scientist Program (CCHCSP) are to apply for a local funding match through this stream. Residents wishing to pursue CCHCSP training must apply through the ACHRI Clinical Research Fellowship stream.

Financial Support

In order to access the award, successful applicants must be enrolled in a Graduate Studies program at the University of Calgary at the time of commencement of the award.

The value of the ACHRI Graduate Scholarship is $11,000 per year for MSc students and $13,000 per year for PhD students. Both Master’s and PhD-level ACHRI Graduate Scholarships must be supplemented by the awardee’s supervisor at $10,000 per year for a total annual compensation of $21,000 for Master’s students and $23,000 per year for PhD students. By submitting an application for an ACHRI Graduate Scholarship, supervisors agree to this financial partnership with ACHRI.

The duration of each award is a minimum of 12 months and a maximum of 24 months. Renewal for the second year is contingent upon satisfactory progress of the trainee, and a completion of a trainee
progress report (approved by the supervisor), as well as participation in the ACHRI trainee presentation series and other training activities of ACHRI, as requested.

Applicants for and ACHRI Graduate Scholarship whose supervisors hold a primary appointment at the Department of Pediatrics at the Cumming School of Medicine will be automatically considered for matching funds through the Department of Pediatrics Graduate Scholarship stream (if available), to supplement their ACHRI Graduate Scholarship. Please see the Terms of Reference for the Department of Pediatrics Graduate Scholarship.

Tuition and other fees for the Faculty of Graduate Studies are the responsibility of the student.

Application Deadline

All applications, including renewals, are due on May 1 by 5:00PM for a September through August term, unless otherwise noted. When deadlines fall on a statutory holiday or weekend, applications are due on the next working day.

It is the responsibility of the applicant and supervisor to ensure all application documents are complete and submitted. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted. Note, if the application is non-compliant (e.g., does not follow application instructions as stated; supporting documents exceed page limit, etc.), reviewers have the right to reject the application.

Application Instructions: New Applicants

In order to apply for an ACHRI Graduate Scholarship, candidates must submit the following:

- Completed application form, excluding the Progress Report section.
- Two-page version of the supervisor's curriculum vitae, including: biographical information, grant support, number of trainees supervised, and a list of selected publications from the last five years.
- Two letters of reference submitted directly from the referees via email. Letters should provide constructive comments on trainee’s academic achievements, research and professional experience, technical capability and potential, communication and teamwork skills and intellectual curiosity.
- One electronic copy of the applicant's academic transcript. Unofficial transcripts are acceptable.

Application packages and reference letters should be sent electronically to the ACHRI Research Training Platform office at achri.training@ucalgary.ca.

Application Instructions: Renewing Applicants

In order to renew an ACHRI Graduate Scholarship for a second year of support, applicants must submit:

- Completed application form, including the Progress Report section.
- Updated two-page version of the supervisor’s curriculum vitae, including: biographical information, grant support, number of trainees supervised, and a list of selected publications from the last five years.
- One letter of reference submitted directly from the applicant’s supervisor via email describing the progress of the trainee.
- Updated electronic copy of the applicant’s academic transcript (unofficial copies are acceptable in pdf or jpg format).

Application packages and reference letters should be sent electronically to the ACHRI Research Training Platform office at achri.training@ucalgary.ca.

**Evaluation Criteria**

Eligible applications will be reviewed by the ACHRI College of Reviewers, in conjunction with the ACHRI Research Training Platform Executive Committee, and the Department of Pediatrics. Applications will be adjudicated based on the following criteria:

- project’s fit with the mandate of ACHRI and its Research Training Platform
- quality of the candidate: academic excellence, research experience, awards
- significance and quality of the proposed project
- supervisor’s research and training environment: publications, grant support, experience in trainee supervision

Please note that applications are evaluated by a multi-disciplinary group of reviewers who may not have the in-depth knowledge in all the projects submitted. Applicants must ensure that their project proposals can be understood by a non-specialist reviewer.

**Terms of the Award**

Awarded trainees and their supervisors agree to certain obligations that include but are not limited to:

- acknowledgment of ACHRI in publications, presentations, communications and marketing materials associated with the funded research project;
- timely submission of trainee and mentor progress reports, final reports, and other documentation, as required;
- presentation on the progress of the research project at ACHRI’s annual trainee speaker series.
- participation by the awardee in the ACHRI Annual Research Symposium, ACHRI Trainee Presentation Series (QuickTalks), workshops and seminars;
- provision of biographical sketches to be used for reporting and publicity purposes;
- participation by supervisors on the ACHRI Committees (including Training Review Committees) when asked.

ACHRI Graduate Scholarships can only be used for salary support. Scholarships are intended to support trainees during full-time academic studies or research related to their degree. Any other employment and awards must be reported to ACHRI promptly.
Training must take place at the University of Calgary, except for short-term research-related visits to other institutions for up to three months per year.

Scholarships will terminate either at the end of the 24-month period or the last day of the month during which the Master’s or PhD thesis is submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies. The award holder must notify the ACHRI Research Training Platform of their defense date when it is confirmed. For trainees in the Leaders of Medicine program, the ACHRI Graduate Scholarship will only be provided during the research training component of the degree, and will terminate as soon as the MD component commences.

ACHRI Graduate Scholarships are not intended to be portable (e.g., change of supervisor, or transferring to a different program of study). Trainees are required to notify the ACHRI Research Training Platform (achri.training@ucalgary.ca) of any changes to their academic status, supervisor, program, or any other changes in circumstances that may affect their eligibility to receive funding.

ACHRI Graduate Scholarship holders must notify the ACHRI Research Training Platform office if they are transferring from a Master’s program to a PhD program (i.e., not completing the Master’s degree prior to commencing the PhD degree). If an awarded trainee has used only one year of his/her ACHRI Scholarship for his/her Master’s degree, he or she can apply as a new applicant for additional ACHRI support for their PhD degree, if eligible. If successful, the trainee will receive a maximum of 12 months of ACHRI graduate funding for their PhD degree.

Renewal for the second year is contingent on successful progress and participation in the trainee presentation series and other training activities of ACHRI, as requested. In order to maintain their award eligibility, holders of ACHRI scholarships (i.e., studentship or fellowship support), must participate in seven trainee activities of the ACHRI STEP over the course of their funding support through ACHRI (e.g., two years). These activities include: ACHRI Trainee Presentation series (QuickTalks), seminars, and workshops. Additionally, ACHRI Graduate Scholarship recipients must apply for competitive external and internal awards in order to be eligible for renewal of their ACHRI Graduate Scholarship.

Trainees who have been successful in obtaining external awards must take up the external award at the earliest possible date, and decline the ACHRI Graduate Scholarship. In case of a major external award, such as Tri-Council or AIHS, the trainee may choose to receive a one-time graduate student research allowance of maximum $3,000 (or a prorated amount, if the remainder of ACHRI funding is less than 12 months). Should the trainee choose to accept the ACHRI research allowance, he or she agrees to use up his or her eligibility to receive or apply for ACHRI stipend support in future. If the trainees chooses to decline both the research allowance and the remainder of their ACHRI Graduate Scholarship in favor of the external award, he/she may re-apply (as a new applicant) for the remainder of the ACHRI Graduate Scholarship in the future.

Trainees who hold major external awards at the time of application for ACHRI studentship support are not eligible for an ACHRI research allowance.

Holders of an ACHRI research allowance are not eligible for ACHRI Trainee Travel Awards.

IMPORTANT: Recipients of combined ACHRI and Department of Pediatrics funding must follow the terms and requirements of each award. If at any time during the course of the award a recipient of combined ACHRI and Department of Pediatrics Graduate Scholarships becomes ineligible for the ACHRI
portion of the award, they must notify the Department of Pediatrics funding administrator so that their eligibility and receipt of the Department of Pediatrics funding can be reviewed.

**Parental leave:** ACHRI Graduate Scholarships are a minimum of 12 months and a maximum of 24 months. During this time, awarded individuals may take a maximum of 12 months of leave (unpaid) for significant life course changes, including sickness, family illness or parental leave conditional upon approval of the supervisor and all associated funding agencies, including the ACHRI Research Training Platform. Any absences from training must be reported to the ACHRI Research Training Platform office immediately by the trainee or supervisor, if the trainee is unable.

Individuals may apply for a one-time, four-month paid parental leave during the course of their 24-month term, contingent upon approval from the ACHRI Research Training Platform and Supervisor, if no other sources of parental leave supplements are available. Of note, the duration of paid leave will not extend the end date of the award (i.e., individuals will only be provided 24 months of stipend, of which, four may be allocated towards a maternity leave).

**With any questions, please contact the ACHRI Research Training Platform office at:**

Email: achri.training@ucalgary.ca
Telephone: 403.220.8158