



Canadian Heart Function Alliance

TRAINEE AWARDS: TERMS OF REFERENCE

OVERVIEW

Award Value	Master's/PhD awards provide \$30,000 for one year Postdoctoral/MD research fellowship awards provide \$40,000 for one year
Award Duration	One year from September 1, 2026 – August 31, 2027
Application Deadline	March 26, 2026 at 6pm Pacific Time
Application submission	Completed application must be sent to leslie.hausermann@icm-mhi.org by the deadline
Eligibility	<p>Applicants must be a student at the graduate, post-doctoral level in a Canadian University, or an MD enrolled in a research fellowship.</p> <p>Applicants must be registered as a CHF Alliance trainee at the time of submission (see details below).</p> <p>Applicants must be supervised or co-supervised by a member of the CHF Alliance.</p> <p>Candidates who hold a scholarship from other funding sources, such as for example CIHR, academic or provincial agency, are eligible to apply for top-up funding; however, the total amount of money received as scholarship including the CHF Alliance Training Award cannot exceed \$60,000 CAD for Master's/PhD and \$80,000 CAD for Postdoctoral/MD research fellowship.</p> <p>Funding must be matched 50/50 by the host University/Institution and/or external funding agencies (see details below).</p> <p>The project must be related to one of the CHF Alliance teams/themes/projects</p>
Areas of Focus	<p>There are no specific priority areas of research, but the proposed research must include a focus on heart failure and aligns with the mission and research priorities of the CHF Alliance.</p> <p>Evaluation and adjudication of the application will be based on excellence of the applicant, the supervisor, the learning</p>



	environment, the quality of the research project, and alignment with CHF Alliance mission and priorities. Trainees who identify as Indigenous or Black African Descendants will be given priority (see details below).
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BACKGROUND

The Canadian Heart Function Alliance (CHF Alliance) is a Pan-Canadian, CIHR funded, patient-driven network, which aims to improve the prediction, prevention, diagnosis and management of heart failure (HF). It was developed, from its inception, in partnership with people with lived experience and is led by a team of internationally recognized clinician-scientists and an HF patient. CHF Alliance research priorities are based on identified patient priorities and include: receipt of rapid and accurate diagnosis, improving access to and equity of care, self-management and empowerment, improving access to reliable information, lifestyle issues, mental health, sex and exercise, virtual care and innovative interventions.

Consult the CHF Alliance website (www.chfalliance.ca) for more information about the Network and its research programs.

ELIGIBILITY AND AWARD VALUE

To be eligible for a CHF Alliance Trainee Award, the applicant must:

- Be a student at the graduate (Master or PhD), post-doctoral (PhD or MD) level in a Canadian University, or an MD enrolled in a research fellowship. Students that are not enrolled in a training program at the time of submission must provide a letter of confirmation from the graduate school that they will be enrolled in a training program for the duration of the award (September 2026 to August 2027).
- Be registered, at the time of submission, as a Trainee in the CHF Alliance [[registration form available on the Training and Capacity section of the CHF Alliance website](#)] and have a commitment from a supervisor or co-supervisor who is a member of the CHF Alliance.
- Conduct research in the field of HF and demonstrate that it aligns with the mission and the research priorities of the CHF Alliance. The project must be related to one of the CHF Alliance teams/themes/projects.
- Demonstrate how their research will integrate principles of inclusion, diversity, accessibility, and health equity.
- Highlight any collaboration/partnership within the network.
- Provide signed confirmation that the amount awarded by the CHF Alliance (\$30,000 or \$40,000) will be matched by the host University/Institution and/or external funding agencies. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to attest to the availability of the matching funds.



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Awards are offered at two levels:

- Master's/PhD awards provide \$30,000 for **one year** for trainee salary support;
- Postdoctoral/MD research fellowship awards provide \$40,000 for **one year** for trainee salary support.
- The number of awards to be funded by the CHF Alliance will be **two** for Master's or PhD students and **one** for postdoctoral students or MD enrolled in a research fellowship each year.

NB: CHF Alliance members will be notified by email if new funding opportunities are added, and terms of reference and application form will be updated accordingly.

The awards are for one year of salary support.

Trainees must be supervised or co-supervised by a CHF Alliance member.

Trainees who identify as Indigenous or Black African Descendants will be given priority for funding. However, their priority score should be within a fundable range (according to the CIHR rating scale) and rank among the top 10 candidates in order to qualify for funding.

Candidates who have received a fellowship from another funding agency, such as CIHR or a provincial agency, are eligible to apply; however, the total amount of fellowship funding, including the CHF Alliance Training Award, cannot exceed \$60,000 CAD for Masters/PhD or \$80,000 CAD for Postdoctoral/MD research fellowship. Fellows who accept another award at the time of application that brings the total amount of funding received to over \$80,000 CAD must declare this award and indicate the end date. Fellows who accept another award at the same time as the CHF Alliance award must notify the CHF Alliance Program Manager and return any remaining funds to the CHF Alliance.

For MD applicants, completion of clinical training requirements and enrollment in a dedicated research training program is required. This training program must be primarily research focused and the majority of the applicant's time should be spent on research.

Funding will begin September 1, 2026 and terminate August 31, 2027.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Application forms are available from the CHF Alliance website www.chfalliance.ca or upon request from leslie.hausermann@icm-mhi.org. All sections must be completed and must adhere to the word limits.

Inclusion of SGBAR, Patients, Community and EDI

Sex and gender-based analysis and reporting (SGBAR)

Applicants are required to integrate sex and gender-based analysis and reporting (SGBAR) in their project or research design. Any application that does not incorporate SGBAR must provide a rationale why it would not be relevant to the project.

Patient and community engagement

CHF Alliance is a patient-driven network and committed to engaging patients in their care and in decision-making to improve the quality of life and heart failure self-management. Applicants are required to illustrate how they intend to meaningfully engage patients in their project. Any application that does not engage patients must provide a rationale why it would not be relevant. Applicants who would like more information about the process for involving patient and caregiver partners within their project can contact the [Patient Engagement and Empowerment Team](#) before submitting their application, ensuring that they allow sufficient time for this engagement.

Community-oriented initiatives must ensure community engagement in the planning, delivery, evaluation and knowledge mobilization of health programs and technologies. Initiatives with Indigenous organizations and communities must take the time to engage early and develop meaningful relationships, ensuring a sense of accountability and true cooperation, and “an ability to step aside and allow Indigenous people to lead.”¹ Applicants who would like more information about the process for involving Indigenous peoples within their project can contact Mitewekan (Indigenous Research Council) before submitting their application, ensuring that they allow sufficient time for this engagement.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

Applicants must illustrate how their project will align with and potentially advance CHF Alliance’s commitment to inclusion, diversity, accessibility, and health equity, whether in the composition of the research team, EDI training of research team members, or the considerations of EDI in research/project design.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Each of the applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Excellence of the applicant and the supervisor
- Strength, quality and relevance of the academic training plan
- Significance, quality, scientific merit, and impact of the research project; alignment with the mission and research priorities of CHF Alliance.
- Evidence of collaboration among diverse disciplines, perspectives, and CHF Alliance researchers, patients and partners in achieving the training plan and/or the project.
- Appropriate and explicit incorporation of SGBAR; patient and community engagement; and inclusion, diversity, accessibility, and health equity as appropriate.
- Plans/activities for translation, mobilization and/or commercialization of the research findings.

Applications will be reviewed and adjudicated by a panel comprised of CHF Alliance research investigators, trainees, and heart failure patient/caregivers.

¹ Hyett S, Marjerrison, S, Gabel, C. Improving health research among Indigenous Peoples in Canada. CMAJ 2018 May 22;190:E616-21. doi: 10.1503/cmaj.171538.



APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Submit your completed application form and associated documents by **March 26, 2026, at 6:00 pm Pacific Time** as a single PDF document via email to: leslie.hausermann@icm-mhi.org.

Please address any questions or requests for more information to Leslie Hausermann, Program Manager of the CHF Alliance, at leslie.hausermann@icm-mhi.org.

Receipt of complete/on-time submissions will be acknowledged. **Please note that this is the applicant's responsibility to make sure his/her application is complete. Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted.**

The estimated decision date will be mid June, 2026.



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