

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The McMaster Institute for Research on Aging and the Labarge Centre for Mobility in Aging

MIRA Postdoctoral Fellowship Program

McMaster University identifies aging as a research priority, focusing its research strength on addressing the most pressing questions facing the aging population. In 2017, the University made a transformative investment in this critical area by creating the McMaster Institute for Research on Aging (MIRA). Within MIRA, the Labarge Centre for Mobility in Aging (LCMA), funded by a generous gift from Suzanne Labarge, seeks to understand and improve mobility in aging. MIRA's mission is to optimize the health and longevity of the aging population through leading-edge research, education and stakeholder collaborations, while upholding the values of integrity, excellence, interdisciplinary collaboration and transparency.

Purpose of this funding call

MIRA invites highly qualified postdoctoral researchers to submit a research proposal focusing on interdisciplinary, impact-driven approaches in the study of aging. The research projects supported by these fellowships should aim to develop the capacity of future leaders in aging research and generate evidence that contributes to the well-being of older adults. Priority will be given to projects that clearly articulate engagement and potential benefit to stakeholders and end users, including but not limited to: older adults, caregivers, health care and service providers, industry, educators and policy makers.

Interdisciplinarity

The applicant and principal supervisor are expected to involve **two additional researchers** from two different McMaster Faculties (outside of the principal supervisor's Faculty) as mentors in the development of an interdisciplinary research plan. The proposal should clearly indicate how the supervisor and two mentors will contribute to the development and execution of the interdisciplinary project, and how this interdisciplinary approach will bring value to the study and to the training experience.

Value and duration of awards

MIRA Postdoctoral Fellowships are **one-year awards valued at \$53,000 per year** - \$50,000 salary plus a \$3,000 allowance for research expenses and professional development per year - with the possibility for renewal in year two. **The maximum amount of funding per fellowship is \$106,000 over two years.** It is required that the supervisor(s) provide the funding required to cover the fellow's benefits in accordance with [McMaster's benefit rates](#).

Co-funding

In addition, MIRA partners with several of McMaster's research centres and institutes to further expand our collective impact and build capacity. Proposals that focus on aging *and* the mandate of any of the co-funding partners as outlined on pages two and three of this call for proposals, may be considered for a co-funded postdoctoral fellowship.

Expectations and deliverables

Applicants should clearly outline the planned research and deliverables that will be accomplished in year one, and how this work will be leveraged and further developed in year two. Successful applicants will be required to report on year one milestones and deliverables, and will be considered for year two renewal based on progress. The applicant is required to describe how they will use MIRA's [Voice Canada](#) – a digital platform

connecting researchers to older adults – to facilitate stakeholder engagement, knowledge exchange, study recruitment, and connection to the community.

Fellowship recipients are expected to participate in MIRA activities including attending MIRA trainee network meetings, the annual MIRA and Labarge Knowledge Exchange where they will be required to present a research poster, and may be invited to other collaboration and knowledge exchange opportunities. Recipients are also required to submit an annual progress report during the tenure of the award, followed by up to two years of closed project reports highlighting the continued impact of the Fellowship.

For applicants who receive a co-funded Fellowship, the co-funder may also have specific expectations and deliverables of which you will be made aware of at the time of award notification.

Submission and selection process

Deadline to submit Notice of Intent: June 24, 2024, 11:59 p.m. ET

Notice of intent to apply for a MIRA Postdoctoral Fellowship must be [submitted using this link](#) by the deadline. Applicants should develop their full application in advance of NOI deadline and should not wait until they are notified of invitation to apply to begin writing the application. All eligible applicants will be invited to submit a full application by the application deadline.

Application deadline: July 15, 2024, 4 p.m. ET

Full proposal submissions must be emailed to mirafund@mcmaster.ca and include “MIRA Postdoctoral Fellowship Program” in the subject line. See **Application Requirements** section below.

MIRA will select the award recipients based on the quality, feasibility and impact of the research proposal, the value of the interdisciplinary approach, the excellence of the applicant and supervisory team, and the alignment with MIRA’s goals and mandate. Please refer to the [MIRA Postdoctoral Fellowship Evaluation Rubric](#) for details.

Recipients are expected to be announced in September. If a suitable candidate is not identified based on the feedback of the review committee, the award will not be offered.

Postdoctoral Fellowship co-funding partners

All applicants will be considered for a MIRA Postdoctoral Fellowship in Aging Research. In addition, MIRA has partnered with several of McMaster’s research centres and institutes to further expand our collective impact and build capacity among McMaster trainees. Applications that focus on aging **and** the mandate of any of the co-funding partners below may be considered for co-funded Postdoctoral Fellowships.

Applicants are encouraged to review the mandates and areas of focus for each of the co-funding partners below and indicate their alignment with co-funders and interest in having their application considered for specific co-funded awards within their application.

Labarge Centre for Mobility in Aging (LCMA)

Funded by a generous gift from Suzanne Labarge, the [LCMA](#) supports interdisciplinary collaboration in aging research on the broad topic of mobility in aging, which may include: understanding and defining mobility in aging; maintaining and restoring mobility in aging; and environmental facilitators and barriers that influence mobility in aging. Applicants may be considered for funding through the LCMA if their research proposal focuses on aging and mobility, where mobility is defined to include physical and community aspects of mobility, execution of daily activities and participation in society.

McMaster Digital Transformation Research Centre (MDTRC)

The [MDTRC](#) is designed as a knowledge hub to engage in three primary mandates focused on digital transformation: collaborative multidisciplinary research, outreach to academic and non-academic partners, training and education, as well as the development of custom training and educational content. MDTRC is committed to understanding the digital revolution that is transforming every aspect of our personal, social, and professional lives. Leveraging behavioural and neurophysiological techniques, the timely and important cutting-edge research initiatives at MDTRC will lead to a fundamental shift in understanding of the ever-evolving digital revolution and its challenges and opportunities, with far reaching implications for managerial practice across sectors and society at large.

Eligibility

Canadian citizens, permanent residents and international candidates are eligible for the award. This opportunity is intended for the recruitment of new Fellows to the University rather than the retention of existing Fellows. The fellowship is tenable at McMaster University, where the fellow is expected to pursue full-time postdoctoral study and research for the term of the fellowship.

Applicants to the 2024-25 MIRA Postdoctoral Fellowship Program must fulfill or have fulfilled all degree requirements for a PhD, PhD-equivalent or health professional degree:

- Between May 1, 2021 and September 30, 2024 (inclusively), and
- Before the start date of their award.

Applicants who have not fulfilled all requirements for their degree at the time of application must submit proof to MIRA that requirements have been met no later than October 15, 2024, and before the start date of their award. The award must be taken up no earlier than September 1, 2024 and no later than May 1, 2025. 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 the eligibility window

The window of eligibility can be extended by a **cumulative maximum of two years** if the applicant had or has their career interrupted for one or more of the following reasons:

- 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

"Career interruption" refers to a period of time when the applicant was not working (full-time or part-time) and when their research output was completely interrupted. Additionally, for health professionals who have engaged in post-degree non-research-related clinical training (e.g., residency), the eligibility window can be extended by the duration of this training. No other exceptions will be allowed.

Allowable extensions to planned completion of the fellowship

Fellowships are tenable over one year with the possibility of renewal in year two. If a fellow intends to take a leave of absence or wishes to request a no-cost extension for any of the reasons listed above, they must notify MIRA in writing by emailing mirafund@mcmaster.ca.

Application Requirements

All items below (excluding #7 - confidential letters of support) must be submitted in a single PDF file via email to mirafund@mcmaster.ca in the order listed below.

- 1. MIRA Postdoctoral Fellowship Program [Application Cover Sheet](#)
- 2. Cover letter written by the applicant that clearly states:
 - a) How the project will meaningfully incorporate and engage cross-disciplinary perspectives and the value and purpose of the interdisciplinary approach
 - b) How the project will impact the lives of older adults and advance the objectives of MIRA
 - c) The rationale for selecting the supervisor and mentors
 - d) How this fellowship will advance the fellow's research and career goals
- 3. Research proposal, written for an interdisciplinary, non specialist audience. Four pages maximum, not including references, in 11 pt. Calibri or Arial font, with 1-inch margins. Proposal must include the following headings:
 - a) Background and alignment with MIRA's goals
 - b) Purpose
 - c) Methods – **approximately one page**, including:
 - i. a timeline of project objectives and deliverables
 - ii. a plan demonstrating how the fellow will manage the interdisciplinary elements of the project and the integration of the collaborating disciplinary contributions
 - iii. planned analyses (including a power analysis if applicable)
 - d) Anticipated outcomes and novel contributions – describe how the project will contribute novel findings to the subject area
 - e) Knowledge translation and/or implementation plans
 - f) Stakeholder/end-user engagement – describe how the perspectives of stakeholders and end users (e.g., older adults, caregivers, clinicians, health care practitioners, industry partners, policy makers, the media, educators and learners, and academics in other disciplines) will be integrated. This may include leveraging MIRA's Voice Canada platform.
 - g) Equity, diversity, inclusivity (EDI) - explain how EDI will be considered in the development of this research project and the applicant's professional development and career path. See EDI Resources:
 - [McMaster University: The case for EDI and the inclusive excellence imperative](#)
 - [McMaster definitions: Equity, diversity and inclusion \(EDI\)](#)
 - [CIHR Guidelines](#)
 - [SSHRC Guidelines](#)
 - [NSERC Guidelines](#)
 - h) References (not to be counted in four-page limit)
- 4. Draft budget in table format for research expenses and professional development for planned use of MIRA research allowance (\$3,000 per year) plus all other funding sources as applicable. If other funding sources have been secured or will be provided by the supervisor, please list amount and funding source ([MIRA PDF Research Allowance budget template](#)).

- 5. One letter from the proposed supervisor confirming support for the research project and financial support required to cover the fellow's benefits in accordance with [McMaster's benefit rates](#). The letter should also note the alignment of the proposed fellowship with the supervisor's existing program of research and describe the involvement of the two proposed mentors including 1) how their expertise and involvement will meaningfully advance the project, and 2) the mechanism through which their involvement will occur.
- 6. Curriculum vitae of the applicant
****To be sent separately****
- 7. Two confidential letters of recommendation. One of these letters must be from the PhD supervisor or most recent postdoctoral Fellowship supervisor. **Both letters should be sent directly to mirafund@mcmaster.ca by the letter writer with the applicant's name in the subject line. Do not include the confidential letters in application package.**

For further information, please email mirafund@mcmaster.ca