

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

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

MIRA Graduate Scholarship 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)**. 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 students to submit a research proposal focusing on interdisciplinary, impact-driven approaches in the study of aging. The research projects supported by these scholarships 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 of 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 one additional researcher from a different McMaster Faculty (outside of the principal supervisor's Faculty) as a **mentor** in the development of an interdisciplinary research proposal. The proposal should clearly indicate how the supervisor and mentor will contribute to the development and execution of the project, and how this interdisciplinary approach will bring value to the student and to the training experience.

Value and duration of awards

MIRA Scholarships are valued at \$15,000 (Master's) and \$18,000 (PhD) for one year.

These awards are intended to **enhance** the support and training experience otherwise provided by the department, Faculty, supervisor or other sources – not replace it. In making the recommendation of these scholarships, MIRA requires confirmation that the supervisor and/or program will not use this award to replace funding the recipient would normally receive (e.g., research stipend) and commit to matching the minimum level of support required for the recipient to complete their graduate degree.

Co-funding

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, may be considered for a co-funded scholarship. An updated list of co-funding partners can be found under the MIRA Graduate Scholarship Program section of MIRA's funding opportunities webpage (<https://mira.mcmaster.ca/collaborate/funding-opportunities/>).

Eligibility

Canadian citizens, permanent residents and international applicants are eligible for the award. Awards must be held at McMaster University by a full-time graduate student entering their **first year of a Master's degree** or their **first or second year of a PhD degree**, in the academic funding year of the award. Applicants must begin their eligible year (i.e., first year of Master's, first or second year of PhD) no earlier than May 1, 2025, and no later than April 30, 2026.

It is MIRA's mandate to support interdisciplinary research; as such proposals for all MIRA scholarships **must** involve a mentor from a McMaster Faculty outside of the primary supervisor's Faculty. The applicant's supervisor must be a MIRA member or accept membership before funding is released. It is MIRA's strong preference that the proposal mentor also join MIRA.

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 the following year.

The applicant is required to describe how they will use MIRA's [Voice Canada](#) – a digital platform connecting researchers to older adults – to connect with the community and facilitate knowledge exchange.

Scholarship recipients are expected to participate in MIRA activities including attending MIRA trainee network meetings, the annual MIRA & 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 Scholarship.

For applicants who receive a co-funded Scholarship, 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

Notice of Intent deadline: November 25, 2024, 4 p.m. ET

A Notice of Intent (NOI) to apply for a MIRA Scholarship must be submitted [using this link](#) by the deadline. **Applicants should develop their full application in advance of the NOI deadline and should not wait until they have received an 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: December 10, 2024, 4 p.m. ET

Full proposal submissions must be emailed to mirafund@mcmaster.ca and include "MIRA Scholarship" 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 Scholarship Evaluation Rubric](#) for details.

Successful applicants are expected to be announced in February 2025. A cross-disciplinary committee of researchers will review and rank the submissions. If a suitable candidate is not identified based on the feedback of the review committee, the award(s) will not be offered.

How to apply and required documents

Application Requirements

All items below (*excluding #7 - confidential letters of support*) must be submitted in a single PDF file using the naming convention "LASTNAME.FIRSTNAME.Schol.Appl.2025", via email to mirafund@mcmaster.ca in the order listed below.

- 1) MIRA Scholarship Application Form
- 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 scholarship will advance the recipient's research and career goals
- 3) A **structured research proposal**, written for an interdisciplinary, non-specialist audience. Four pages maximum, not including references, in 11-point Arial, Calibri or Poppins font, with 2.5 cm margins. The research proposal must include the following headings:
 - a. **Lay summary** – approximately one paragraph.
 - b. **Background** – discuss the gap in literature and how this will be addressed; support assertions with references; how the project aligns with MIRA's goals.
 - c. **Relevance to aging** – include potential benefits for older adults; alignment of project with MIRA's mandate.
 - d. **Methods** – approximately one page, including:
 - i. a timeline of project objectives and deliverables
 - ii. a plan demonstrating how the scholarship recipient 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)
 - e. **Anticipated outcomes and novel contributions** – discuss implications of this project and how it may contribute novel findings to the subject area and future directions.

- f. **Knowledge translation and/or implementation plans**
- g. **Stakeholders and end-users** – How will stakeholder/end-user perspectives be considered? Stakeholders and end users may include, but are not limited to: older adults, clinicians, health care practitioners, industry partners, policy makers, the media, educators and learners, and academics in other disciplines. Applications must also include a plan to use MIRA’s Voice Canada platform to connect with older adults and facilitate knowledge exchange.
- h. **Mentor contributions** – value of interdisciplinary mentor, mechanism for meeting and collaborating, and the project’s potential to stimulate interdisciplinary collaboration.
- i. **Applicant’s career path** – anticipated benefits towards your development in the short and long term.
- j. **Equity, diversity, inclusivity (EDI)** – how will EDI be considered in the development of this project and your professional development? Consider how the project, applicant, supervisory team, and larger research field may be contributing to – or falling short of – equity, diversity and inclusion ideals.
EDI Resources:
 - [McMaster University: The case for EDI and the inclusive excellence imperative](#)
 - [McMaster definitions: Equity, diversity and inclusion \(EDI\)](#)
 - [CIHR Guidelines: Integrating sex and gender into research](#)
 - [SSHRC Guidelines: Addressing equity, diversity and inclusion in applications](#)
 - [NSERC guide on integrating equity, diversity and inclusion considerations in research](#)
- k. **References** – not to be counted in four-page limit

- 4) One **letter from the proposed supervisor** confirming that the supervisor and/or program will commit to matching the minimum level of support required for the recipient to complete their graduate degree. The letter should also note the alignment of the proposed scholarship with the supervisor’s existing program of research and describe the involvement of the proposed mentor including 1) how their expertise and involvement will meaningfully advance the project, and 2) the mechanism through which their involvement will occur.

- 5) One **letter from the proposed mentor** describing the value of interdisciplinary mentorship role and involvement.
- 6) **Curriculum vitae** of the applicant.

****Do not include the following item in your submission – this must be sent directly to MIRA by the referee****

- 7) One **confidential letter of support** from someone who can speak to the applicant's research abilities, e.g., previous academic supervisor (preferred), thesis or senior project supervisor from an undergraduate program, collaborating faculty member(s) on current research project(s) or graduate course instructors (depending on the nature of the course). This letter must be emailed directly to mirafund@mcmaster.ca with the applicant's name in the subject line. **Do not include the confidential letter in application package.**

Applicants and prospective supervisors can direct questions about eligibility, funding, or application requirements to mirafund@mcmaster.ca.