

## 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 other research centres, institutes and programs to further expand our collective impact and build capacity in aging research and areas of strategic interest. Proposals that focus on aging *and* the mandate of any of our **co-funding partners** (listed below) 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 (NOI): May 1, 2026, 11:59 p.m. ET**

Applicants must [submit their NOI](#) by May 1, 2026. All NOIs submitted by the deadline will be reviewed for eligibility and alignment by MIRA. Where applicable, MIRA may suggest interdisciplinary mentors and provide additional feedback ensure applications are eligible and well aligned with the call. The applicant must identify their primary supervisor at the NOI phase, but may indicate "TBD" for one or both mentors if they have not yet identified the interdisciplinary mentors.

Applicants will be notified of the result of the review of their NOI by May 8, 2026, and all eligible applicants will be invited to submit a full application.

After the NOI deadline, applicants may reach out to [mirafund@mcmaster.ca](mailto:mirafund@mcmaster.ca) to indicate interest in applying, and will be reviewed on a rolling basis; inquiries received after the NOI deadline may

not receive a thorough or timely review, and as such all applicants are encouraged to submit their NOI by the May 1 deadline.

**Application deadline: June 5, 2026, 11:59 p.m. ET**

Full proposal submissions must be emailed to [mirafund@mcmaster.ca](mailto:mirafund@mcmaster.ca) and include "MIRA Postdoctoral Fellowship Program" in the subject line. See **Application Requirements** 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.

## Co-funding partners

All applicants will be considered for MIRA Postdoctoral Fellowship funding. In addition, MIRA may partner with other research centres, institutes and programs 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-funding.

Applicants are encouraged to review the mandates and areas of focus for each of the co-funding partners below and identify their alignment with potential co-funders where applicable.

### 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, 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)

[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.

### **Micheal G. DeGroot Institute for Pain Research and Care (IPRC)**

The [IPRC](#) seeks to fund research and initiatives that will ultimately improve the quality of life for those living with chronic pain including post-surgical pain, developing new strategies for its prevention and innovative care for patients. The Institute was made possible as a result of the DeGroot family gift.

### **MIRA Aging Brain Research Program**

MIRA's Aging Brain Research Program launched in 2024, to build on McMaster's existing strengths while developing new initiatives to better understand how the aging brain interacts with function – a critical step toward improving health outcomes for older adults.

### **MIRA | Dixon Hall Centre**

The [MIRA | Dixon Hall Centre](#) is a unique partnership between the McMaster Institute for Research on Aging (MIRA) and [Dixon Hall](#), a multi-service agency focused on addressing poverty, social injustices and isolation across the lifespan, in Toronto's downtown East. Its mission is to bring together Dixon Hall's strong community connections and MIRA's interdisciplinary research expertise to create lasting, evidence-based solutions that optimize the physical and social well-being of equity-deserving older adults.

### **Firestone Institute for Respiratory Health (FIRH)**

[FIRH](#) seeks to provide optimal patient care through clinical practice, translational research and the training of health care professionals. Research is wide-ranging, from basic studies of animal models of lung disease (asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, fibrosis) to clinical trials and epidemiological studies. Scientists at the FIRH are performing studies of bone marrow progenitor cells, airway peptide challenges, electrophysiological studies of airway smooth muscle cells, chronic allergen challenges, preclinical models of lung injury and repair, and more.

## **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 2026–27 MIRA Postdoctoral Fellowship Program must fulfill or have fulfilled all degree requirements for a PhD, PhD-equivalent or health professional degree:

- Between May 1, 2023 and September 30, 2026 (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, 2026, and before the start date of their award. The award must be taken up no earlier than September 1, 2026 and no later than May 1, 2027.

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](mailto:mirafund@mcmaster.ca).

## Application Requirements

Invited applicants should **submit items #1-6 as a single PDF, in the order listed below**, to [mirafund@mcmaster.ca](mailto:mirafund@mcmaster.ca) by the application deadline.

Item #7 (confidential letters of support) must be sent separately to [mirafund@mcmaster.ca](mailto:mirafund@mcmaster.ca) directly from the letter writer.

- 1. MIRA Postdoctoral Fellowship Program Application Cover Sheet  
[DOWNLOAD APPLICATION COVERSHEET HERE](#)
- 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) Stakeholder/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.
  - f) Knowledge translation and/or implementation plans

- 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 from [CIHR](#), [SSHRC](#), [NSERC](#)
- 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 (See [MIRA PDF Research Allowance budget template](#); final budget may be attached in PDF format).
  - 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](mailto: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](mailto:mirafund@mcmaster.ca)