McMaster University | Institute for Research on Aging

109A-175 Longwood Rd. S.
Hamilton, ON
L8P 0A1

Tel: 905-525-9140 ext. 21723
Email: mirainfo@mcmaster.ca
mira.mcmaster.ca

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

McMaster Institute for Research on Aging

Graduate Student Professional Development Award (GSPDA)

The McMaster Institute for Research on Aging (MIRA) offers development awards up to $500 each for PhD or Master's students supervised by MIRA researchers. These awards may support students in:

- presenting their work at an academic conference (virtual or in-person)
- attending a training program, short course or workshop (virtual or in-person)
- participating in research activities in another location that advances their scholarship in research on aging

Professional development awards are tenable for up to six months after the application deadline. MIRA will also accept applications for professional development activities that occurred up to three months prior to the deadline. The professional development opportunity must relate to research on aging. Successful applicants must submit expense receipts following their approved activities to be reimbursed for the value of the award. Students are asked to advise MIRA, by email to mirafund@mcmaster.ca, of cancellations or changes related to MIRA-supported professional development activities.

Expectations and deliverables

- MIRA's contribution must be acknowledged in any presentations or publications resulting from the award
- Award recipients **are required to** participate in at least one MIRA led activity such as presenting a poster at the annual MIRA and Labarge Knowledge Exchange, presenting their research at MIRA's Pitch Your Project event or participating in dialogues, workshops or presentations as opportunities arise
- Award recipients will be expected to be active participants in the MIRA Trainee Network
- These funds are not intended to replace sources of funding already available through grants or University/Faculty/Department sources

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Eligibility requirements

The following requirements must be met before applying for this award:

- The student must be a member of the MIRA Trainee Network. Sign-up here.
- The student did not receive a MIRA GSPDA award in the previous funding cycle (this award is offered twice annually in March and September).
- The student must demonstrate a 1:1 match for the requested funds by the supervisor and/or other sources in the application.
- The activity must be connected to the student's aging related research.
- The student must be a PhD or Master's student at McMaster University. These awards are not available to undergraduates or postdoctoral fellows.

The following requirements must be met to receive funds should the application be successful:

- The student must be supervised by a MIRA member (supervisors can request membership by emailing mirainfo@mcmaster.ca)

Eligible Activities

- Presenting at academic conferences (virtual or in person)
- Training programs, short courses or workshops
- Research activities conducted at another location that advances their scholarship in research on aging

Activities may occur up to three months prior to or up to six months following the application deadline.

Submission and selection process

Fall Deadline: September 30, 2026, 4:00 p.m.

Spring Deadline: March 30, 2027, 4:00 p.m.

Winners are expected to be announced within one month of the deadline

Applications must be submitted online here: MIRA GSPDA Online Application

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Required Documents

The following documents must be uploaded with the online application **in one PDF file** in the order listed below:

1. Signed supervisor acknowledgement form, including budget – download form here
2. Backup documents e.g., conference abstract (accepted or submitted), OR course/activity description, OR presentations resulting from professional development activities occurring in the three-month period prior to the award deadline
3. Applicant's curriculum vitae
4. Applicant's unofficial transcript(s)

Review and Selection Process

Applications are reviewed using a staged process:

1. **Eligibility screening** based on requirements listed above
2. **Application review** MIRA Graduate Student Professional Development Awards are evaluated using a staged review process. If the applicant meets all eligibility requirements, their submission will be scored based on the considerations listed below. When multiple applications are equally ranked awards will be allocated by lottery.
    - Assessment of relevance to the applicant's aging research
    - Quality and value of the proposed professional development activity
    - Previously held MIRA funding – applicants who have not recently received funding from MIRA through other awards will be given priority
    - Confirmed professional development activity – applicants whose activity is confirmed as demonstrated by accepted conference abstracts or course registration will be given priority
    - Quality and completeness of application package

Funds will be reimbursed following the completion of professional development activities and upon submission of receipts for up to $500 CAD in approved professional development activities expenses.

For further information, please email mirafund@mcmaster.ca