McMaster University | Institute for Research on Aging

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

Tel: 905-525-9140 ext. 21723
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CALL FOR PROPOSALS

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

Labarge Graduate Scholarship in Mobility in Aging 2027/28

Purpose of this funding call

The McMaster Institute for Research on Aging (MIRA) seeks 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. Within MIRA, the Labarge Centre for Mobility in Aging (LCMA), funded by a generous gift from Suzanne Labarge, 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.

Prospective applicants are invited to submit a research proposal focusing on **interdisciplinary, impact-driven approaches in the study of mobility in aging**, where mobility is defined to include physical and community aspects of mobility, execution of daily activities and participation in society. 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 thoughtfully *engage* and *benefit* stakeholders and end users, including but not limited to older adults, caregivers, health care and service providers, industry partners, 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 project, student and training experience.

Value and duration of awards

Scholarships are valued at **$15,000 (Master's)** and **$18,000 (PhD)** for one year. These awards are intended to enhance – not replace - the support and training experience of exceptional trainees. In making the recommendation of these scholarships, MIRA will require confirmation that the

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supervisor and/or program will not use this award to replace funding the recipient would normally receive (e.g., research stipend) from their department, Faculty, supervisor or other sources, and that the minimum level of support required for the recipient to complete their graduate degree will be provided.

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 our co-funding partners may be considered for a co-funded scholarship.

Eligibility

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 eligible academic funding year of the award.

For the current 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, 2027, and no later than April 30, 2028. Canadian citizens, permanent residents and international applicants are eligible for this award.

The applicant's proposed **supervisor must be a MIRA member** or accept membership before funding is released. Additionally, the application must include a **mentor from another discipline;** this must be a researcher appointed in a Faculty that is not the same as the primary supervisor's. It is MIRA's strong preference that the project mentor also be or become a MIRA member. Adjunct MIRA members appointed at institutions outside of McMaster may be eligible to serve as a supervisor or mentor; please email mirafund@mcmaster.ca to confirm supervisory or mentor eligibility of adjunct MIRA members. See the full list of MIRA members.

Expectations and deliverables

Applicants must 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(s).

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 participate in other collaboration and knowledge exchange opportunities.

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Recipients are 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 which you will be made aware of at the time of award notification.

Submission and selection process

Notice of Intent deadline: **November 24, 2026, 4 p.m. ET**

A Notice of Intent **(NOI)** to apply for a scholarship must be submitted by the deadline via **the NOI submission form**.

MIRA will review NOI submissions and notify applicants of the outcome by **December 3, 2026**. All eligible applicants will be invited to submit a full application.

Applicants should continue develop their full application while awaiting NOI review and should not wait until they have received an invitation to apply to begin writing their application.

Application deadline: **December 15, 2026, 4 p.m. ET**

Full proposal submissions must be emailed to mirafund@mcmaster.ca and include "Labarge Scholarship" in the subject line. See the **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 2027. 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.

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How to apply and required documents

Application Requirements

All items below (*excluding #8 - confidential letter of support*) must be submitted in a single PDF file using the naming convention "LASTNAME.FIRSTNAME.Schol.Appl.2027"**,** via email to mirafund@mcmaster.ca in the order listed below.

☐ 1) **MIRA Scholarship Cover Sheet**

☐ 2) A **structured research proposal**, **written in plain language** for an interdisciplinary, non-specialist audience. Two pages maximum, not including reference, written in 11-point Arial, Calibri or Poppins font, with 2.5 cm margins.
The research proposal must include the following headings:

   a. **Background –** position your proposed research within the context of the current knowledge in the field and how your project will address the knowledge gap; support assertions with references. State the significance of the proposed research why you question is important and why it needs to be answered now.
   b. **Objectives & hypotheses**
   c. **Methods –** define and justify methods with appropriate detail and clarity for an interdisciplinary audience, including participant recruitment strategy (if applicable), a description and justification of sample size(s), and planned analyses.
   d. **Anticipated outcomes and novel contributions –** discuss implications and merit of this project and how it may contribute novel findings to the subject area and future directions.

3) **References –** not to be counted in two-page limit
4) **Appendix –** May be up to two pages. You may add one figure to describe your study timeline, objectives and deliverables, and one additional figure as required.

☐ 5) One **letter from the proposed supervisor** confirming that the supervisor and/or program will commit to providing 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

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their expertise and involvement will meaningfully advance the project, and 2) the mechanism through which their involvement will occur.

☐ 6) One **letter from the proposed mentor** describing the value of interdisciplinary mentorship role and involvement.

☐ 7) **Curriculum vitae** of the applicant.

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

☐ 8) 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). The confidential referee must email this letter directly to mirafund@mcmaster.ca with the applicant's name in the subject line. **Do not include the confidential letter in the application package you will be submitting to MIRA.**

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