



# Parkinson Canada

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## REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Issued By

*Parkinson Canada*

### GRADUATE AWARD PROGRAM

(July 2017– June 2019 Cycle)

<b>Release Date:</b>	<b>November 10, 2016</b>
<b>Application Deadline (online receipt):</b>	<b>February 1, 2017 (5:00 pm EST)</b>
<b>Application Notice of Decision:</b>	<b>June 2017</b>
<b>Funding Start Date:</b>	<b>August, 2017</b>
<b>Duration of Award:</b>	<b>2 years</b>

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Background**  
**Funds Available**  
**Eligibility**  
**Review Criteria**  
**Terms And Conditions**  
**Reporting Requirements And Terms Of Funding**  
**Application Procedures**  
**Contact Information**

## BACKGROUND

Parkinson Canada is pleased to offer its graduate award program (the “Program”) as a strategic initiative to encourage promising young scientists to enter the field of Parkinson's research and to invest in research training that offers promise for future work in the area of Parkinson's disease. Parkinson Canada wishes to encourage continued growth and revitalization in the fields of Parkinson's research in Canada by supporting talented young scientists and providing students with an opportunity to enter into the area of Parkinson's research during the early stages of their training. Parkinson Canada intends to provide awards in the amount of up to \$15,000 per year over a two-year term, to outstanding applicants who meet the eligibility criteria of the Program and who have been approved by its Scientific Advisory Board (the “Advisory Board”). As incentive and recognition for the award, it is expected that supervisors will contribute \$5,000 to make up the difference of a total funding amount of \$20,000. Funds awarded under the Program are to be used to cover salaries for research training in Parkinson's-related areas.

Through this initiative, Parkinson Canada invites studentship applications (“Applications”) from applicants committed to conducting research in areas relevant to the cure, cause, prevention, improved treatment and/or understanding of Parkinson’s disease, related disorders including: Multiple System Atrophy (MSA), Progressive Supranuclear Palsy (PSP) and other Parkinson’s conditions. Parkinson Canada encourages Applications from the fields of biomedicine, health services and systems research, population studies, and clinical research. This initiative is consistent with, and reflects, Parkinson Canada’s commitment to support innovation and renewal in the national Parkinson’s research field and to foster international leadership potential in this area.

The Program is available to only those students engaged in full-time research training in a graduate school. At the time of application, all candidates must be enrolled in graduate study program at the Master's or PhD level.

## **FUNDS AVAILABLE**

The Program offers awards for the support of projects with budgets of up to \$15,000 per year over a two year term to exceptional applicants who have been approved for funding by the Advisory Board. Funds cannot be used to cover tuition costs. As incentive and recognition for the award, it is expected that supervisors will contribute \$5,000 per year to make up the difference for a total funding amount of \$20,000.

## **PARKINSON CANADA/FONDS DE RECHERCHE DU QUÉBEC – SANTÉ (FRQS) PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (<http://www.frqs.gouv.qc.ca/en/>)**

For candidates submitting applications to be considered for the Parkinson Canada/FRQS Partnership Program, funding amounts are \$20,000 per annum for Master level and \$25,000 per annum for Doctoral level candidates. Additionally, Doctoral candidates who are funded under this agreement are eligible for funding in their third year as per regular FRQS competitions. The amount of funding available for the third year is restricted to FRQS regular funding amounts (\$20,000 per year for 2016-2017 competitions). The \$5,000 per annum contribution requirement for supervisors of graduate award candidates is not applicable to partnership awards.

*Candidates for the Parkinson Canada /FRSQ funding opportunity must submit applications to both FRSQ and to Parkinson Canada and must indicate that this has been done. Research supported under this Program must be carried out at a University or affiliated institutions including hospitals and research institutes, within the Province of Quebec.*

## **PARKINSON CANADA/NEW BRUNSWICK HEALTH RESEARCH FOUNDATION (NBHRF) PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM TRAINEE AWARDS**

This program is a collaborative effort between New Brunswick Health Research Foundation (NBHRF) and Parkinson Canada). It aims to support health research in New Brunswick to ensure the development of research in the field of Parkinson’s disease. The Parties seek to promote training and support for promising students. The Parties therefore agree to co-fund annually up to two awards to support master, doctoral, postdoctoral students and/or fellows, who have been selected for funding in the Parkinson Canada competition. The program offers two years of support. Stipends in this program for graduate students and fellowship candidates are the same as that which are offered for the Graduate Student

Award and the Basic Research and Clinical Research Fellowships. The \$5,000 per annum contribution requirement for supervisors of graduate award candidates applies to the NBHRF partnership awards.

***Candidates for the Parkinson Canada/NBHRF funding opportunities must submit applications to Parkinson Canada only and indicate on their application that they wish to be considered for this partnership award.*** Research supported under this Program must be carried out at a University or affiliated institutions including hospitals and research institutes, within the Province of New Brunswick.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Parkinson Canada wishes to support training excellence and development of the wide scope of Parkinson's research in Canada. Applications will be accepted from applicants who meet the eligibility criteria established by Parkinson Canada (as summarized in this Request for Applications) and who propose to continue their training or conduct research with the following organizations (an "Approved Institution"):

- Canadian post-secondary institutions and their affiliated institutions, including hospitals and research institutes; or
- Other organizations, as determined by the Research Policy Committee of the National Board of Parkinson Canada in consultation with the Advisory Board, provided that the applicant's research or research-related activities fall within the mandate of Parkinson Canada.

Only those students engaged in full-time research training in a graduate school are eligible for support. At the time of application, all candidates must be enrolled in a graduate study program at the Master's or PhD level.

In the evaluation of the Application, Parkinson Canada's Advisory Board will typically consider Academic record, Aptitudes and experience, Research Project and Training environment. Applicants will be given an opportunity to describe any career interruptions.

Under the terms of the Program, Applications will be accepted from Canadian citizens who propose to train at an Approved Institution located in Canada, and from international applicants proposing to train at an Approved Institution located in Canada who fulfill the criteria for a student visa.

## **LOCATION OF TRAINING & SUPERVISION**

Awards granted under the Program shall be held in trust by the Approved Institution at which the proposed supervisor of the successful applicant (an "Approved Supervisor") holds a faculty appointment.

An Approved Supervisor should be an investigator actively directing research either in the field of Parkinson's disease or working in a highly relevant discipline and must be able to provide the successful applicant with a strong training environment. Other training locations may be considered by the Advisory Board, provided that the facility is an Approved Institution and the research or research-related activities conducted at such location falls within the mandate of Parkinson Canada.

## **REVIEW PROCESS**

The evaluation of Applications submitted to Parkinson Canada will be completed by the Advisory Board through a peer review process. The Advisory Board is composed of prominent neurologists, neurosurgeons, neuropathologists and neuroscientists from across Canada. The peer review process is a cornerstone of Parkinson Canada's research program and provides for the highest quality of objective adjudication.

The Advisory Board is responsible for the evaluation of all Applications submitted to Parkinson Canada in response to this Request for Applications, to rate each of the Applications so that they may be ranked in order of priority and to recommend to Parkinson Canada the size of the award needed to support the research should the Application be approved.

External reviewers will be solicited for additional expertise as needed.

The Advisory Board anticipates that it will provide each applicant whose Application to participate in the Program has been declined with written notice of such decision and where possible, a brief written critique of the substance of their Application.

## **REVIEW CRITERIA**

The principal consideration used to evaluate Applications is research excellence potential. A variety of additional criteria will also be considered by the Advisory Board in the evaluation process. Parkinson Canada has designed the application form around these criteria and gives the applicant and supervisor space to provide the appropriate information relating to each of the criteria listed. Each of the criteria listed below will be considered in assigning the overall ranking of the Application, weighting them as appropriate for each Application:

- **CANDIDATE:**
  - Academic Record
  - Research Experience
  - Letters of Reference/Support
  
- **SUPERVISOR/ENVIRONMENT:**
  - Supervisor's Research Track Record
  - Training Environment
  
- **PROJECT:**
  - Relevance to Parkinson's Disease
  - Overall impression of project

In addition to the above criteria, all applications will also be reviewed with respect to the following:

- The adequacy of the proposed protection of humans, animals, or of the environment, to the extent that they may be adversely affected by the project proposed in the application. The Advisory Board will also examine the provisions for the protection of human subjects (if any) and the safety of the research environment.

Applications are reviewed on an individual basis and as such, candidates will be evaluated on the stage of their research experience.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

This Request for Applications made by Parkinson Canada is subject to the terms and conditions (the “Terms and Conditions”) contained in Parkinson Canada’s Research Program Application Guidelines (the “Guidelines”), which the applicant shall be deemed to have accepted upon submission to Parkinson Canada of an Application to participate in the Program. Failure to comply with the Terms and Conditions may result, in addition to any other remedies Parkinson Canada may have at law, in termination of the Program and exclusion of the applicant from future grant and fellowship award competitions.

A successful applicant who has received an award under the Program may not transfer the award to another institution unless exceptionally approved by the chairs of the Research Policy Committee and Scientific Advisory Board (please see Guidelines).

## **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND TERMS OF FUNDING**

All successful applicants shall comply with the reporting obligations outlined in the Guidelines.

Parkinson Canada requires studentship recipients to submit Annual and Final Progress Reports. The advance of the portion of the award to be made in the second year of the term of the Program is conditional upon submission of an Annual Progress Report to Parkinson Canada in substance and form satisfactory to the Advisory Board at the end the first year of the term of the Program.

The Progress report shall be submitted to the attention of the Director, Research Program at Parkinson Canada’s Toronto Office no later than **one year after the start of the award**. Progress report guidelines and instructions will be provided by Parkinson Canada in advance of the report deadline.

A Final Report detailing the results of the successful applicant’s progress, in substance and form satisfactory to the Advisory Board, shall be submitted to the attention of the Director, Research Program at Parkinson Canada’s Toronto Office no later than three months after the termination of the two-year term of the Program.

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

\*Applications are submitted digitally through the Parkinson Canada online Research Application System located on the Parkinson Canada website at [www.parkinsonresearch.ca](http://www.parkinsonresearch.ca) where applicants can register and complete an application form. Confirmations of receipt will be provided automatically upon successful submission of the application.

Applications must be completed and submitted via the Parkinson Canada online research system no later than **February 1, 2017 (5:00 pm EST)**.

Applications for Graduate Student Awards include the following (minimum font size of 12 point, black ink. Six lines per inch. One inch margin with no condensed type or spacing. References can be printed in smaller font, however they must be legible):

- Parkinson Canada Face Sheet for signatures (Generated by printing the personal information sheet from the online application system);
- Project Summary, stating in 200 words or less, the scientific or clinical question being asked, how you will address it, the expected outcome and the likely impact for Parkinson's disease.
- Project Narrative (**1 page**) including (*To save space, you do not need to include basic information, such as the description of Parkinson's disease*):
  - The hypothesis to be tested, the specific aims of the research and the approach that will be used to test them.
  - Describe the candidate's role in the project.
  - Justify the relevance to Parkinson's disease.
- Academic Transcripts:
  - An up-to-date original or certified copy of transcript(s) of the applicant's academic record must be included. Copies may be certified by the proposed supervisor, department head, or notary public. Foreign transcripts **MUST** be accompanied by a certified English or French interpretation and a clear explanation of the grading system.
  - International candidates are encouraged to obtain official conversions of their grades to GPA by their institute.
  - Parkinson Canada considers transcripts issued by the Registrar's Office to the student to be official transcripts. Opening the envelope to scan the transcript will not render it unofficial for Parkinson Canada's purposes. Transcripts printed from the candidate's personal university account are not considered to be official.
  - The official transcripts must be provided by scanning both sides of each page and uploading them in order from least recent to most recent as a single .pdf document.
- Three (3) letters of reference/support:
  - The supervisor's statement of support can be used as one letter.
  - Letters of reference should highlight the applicant's strengths as they relate to suitability/experience in research (e.g. originality, technical ability, demonstrated skills, judgment, critical skills etc.).
  - For International candidates, sponsors are encouraged to comment on the grades and/or class ranking of the candidate within the content of their letters.

**Letters of reference/support are submitted directly to Parkinson Canada by the sponsor through the online system. Applicants can request assessments from sponsors via the online application system which will forward a link to the online program.** The candidate should emphasize to sponsors responsible for sending letters to the Parkinson Canada office the need for these to be received by the closing date.

In addition to the foregoing, the applicant should arrange for his or her proposed supervisor to prepare the following information. **Applicants can request this information from their supervisor via the online application system which will forward a link to the online program:**

- Letter of support from supervisor
- Summary submitted by proposed supervisor outlining the proposed training program, including details of time allocation, publications of supervisor and supervisory experience, as well as a statement from the prospective supervisor(s) describing the training environment and the collaborative milieu, including the responsibilities to be assumed, the teaching to be provided and the research project to be undertaken.
- **Please note that the prospective supervisor's CV should be submitted using the 4 page Parkinson Canada biosketch form automatically generated by the online system**

Relevant support materials are limited to literature references. Any information submitted in addition to this will not be forwarded with the application to the Scientific Advisory Board for review.

Where a trainee and supervisor are submitting an application to the same competition, trainees submitting their own proposal (not identical to the proposal submitted by their supervisor) will be given priority ranking.

**Note:** Applications must be submitted with the required signatures by the due date. Prior to submission, applicants should determine what signatures are needed, print the applicant information sheet (face sheet) and obtain **all the required signatures** for their application. Once obtained, scan the signature page and upload the signed signature page to the Parkinson Canada online system as part of your submission by the application deadline date. **Applicants do not need to courier any documents to Parkinson Canada; however, we do ask that you keep the original signed documents which may be requested in the event that your application is successful in the competition.**

Incomplete applications or applications received later than **February 1, 2017 (5:00 pm EST)** will not be considered under any circumstances.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE REFER TO:**

The Parkinson Canada Research Program Application Guidelines Manual available from the Parkinson Canada Web site at [www.parkinson.ca](http://www.parkinson.ca).

**OR CONTACT:**

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