

TD BANK HEALTH SCIENCE INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH FUND

PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications will be evaluated based on the following:

General Criteria:

1. The application is complete with all signatures and includes the following attachments:
 - a. Candidate's past and up-to-date transcripts
 - b. Candidate's CIHR format Biosketch (<https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/48437.html>).
 - c. Supervisor's CIHR format Biosketch (<https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/48437.html>).
 - d. One (1) letter of reference (The letter should be signed and sent to CHS Office of Research chsoor@ualberta.ca **separated from the complete application**).
2. The application must be submitted **no** later than **4:00 pm on February 7, 2025**
3. The project is relevant to: a) health sciences interdisciplinary scholarship and collaboration (**2 awards**), and in the case of applying for one of the **2 awards** allotted to precision health research b) research on the emerging healthcare model that leverages a vast array of data, new technologies, and the study of factors such as genes and their expression (e.g., genomics, metabolomics), personal characteristics (e.g., diet/nutrition) and environmental exposures, to better predict, delay, understand and address diseases and disabilities of individuals, as well as the study of population data to deliver new approaches to health promotion, rehabilitation, and increased equity of health outcomes in populations.
4. The proposal is well written, and provides sufficient rationale and methodological detail.
5. An interdisciplinary research team identifies/describes its involvement with the candidate throughout the research project.

Specific Criteria related to the Candidate:

1. The candidate meets the minimum expectations for applicants
 - Registered full-time in a graduate, post doctoral or fellowship program for the duration of the award.
 - A GPA of 3.5 or higher for the past 12 credits.
 - Interest in exploring opportunities to increase interdisciplinary or team-based scholarship in health research and/or collaborative practice in the healthcare system.
 - Has a Supervisor who holds an academic appointment from the University of Alberta and possesses a record of productive health-oriented research including peer reviewed grants, publications and conference presentations/abstracts.
 - Involvement in a health research project with an interdisciplinary focus and interdisciplinary team (i.e. cross-faculty or two or more health disciplines) relevant to Precision Health or another area of interdisciplinary inquiry.

2. The candidate's role with the research team and the project are well described and appropriate.
3. The candidate describes interests in interdisciplinary health research that considers future opportunities.
4. The candidate's letter of reference is very positive and provides considerable detail about the candidate's relative strengths, research experience, and competence/abilities in this area.

Specific Criteria related to the Supervisor:

1. The candidate's supervisor has a good/strong and consistent track record of publications and has funds to support the research in which the candidate is involved.

Ineligible applicants:

1. Candidates with a GPA lower than 3.5 for the most recent 12 credits will be disqualified.
2. Candidates that hold more than \$20,000 in awards/scholarships by the beginning of the award (April 2025) will be disqualified.

PROCESS:

In October, CHS will prepare the materials to support the launch of the competition in November and post the forms to the CHS website. On the launch date CHS will push communications through its channels. CHS Faculties will receive materials for communication via their distribution channels as well.

Applicants will submit their complete proposal to CHS Office of Research at chsoor@ualberta.ca Immediately after the application deadline, the CHS Research Director will send an email to all applicants noting that their application has been received and is in the process of being reviewed. The email should also state that the successful applicant will be notified in March and the rest of the applicants will receive an email stating that they were not successful. Once the applicants are notified, the applications are reviewed by the CHS Office of Research to generate two lists (one specific to precision health and one covering other areas of interdisciplinary enquiry) of top ranked applications for review by the adjudication panel, based on the general and specific criteria for applicants and supervisors above. Upon completion of the initial screening by the CHS Office of Research, the top candidates in each area, will be shared with the adjudication panel

The adjudication panel members will review all top ranked proposals The review materials will include the full applications of all top ranked proposals, and the scoring sheet.

Each reviewer will be asked to check the applicants for any conflict of interests. If any are noted, the adjudicator will not include the conflicting application in their ranking.

RATING PROTOCOLS

For each applicant (precision health or general), each reviewer will provide a score out of 10 for each major criterion including quality of the project proposal, level of interdisciplinarity, feasibility, applicant

letter of reference, applicant academic record, and relevance to the supervisor for a total of 50. The mean total score for each application will determine the rank order. Key considerations in the review must include: :

- 1) The proposal must address an important health problem, use appropriate research methods, and be interdisciplinary in the composition of the research team. The applicant must also describe why interdisciplinary research is important to the project. The supervisor should have demonstrated commitment to interdisciplinary research.
- 2) The applicant and supervisor must have a strong academic record and appropriate publication and/or research funding record for their training level or career stage in his/her area of research. A junior or early-career researcher will be considered if the proposal is in his/her area of expertise.
- 3) The project must be feasible and involve more than one faculty.

CHOOSING THE AWARDEES

Applications will be rank ordered based on the mean score from the scoring matrix (see Scoring Matrix). The review committee (consisting of all proposal reviewers) will review the rank order produced from the mean scores as a group. Any committee member may choose to pull a specific application for discussion if they would like to propose a revision to the rank order. Proposals in the fundable range (i.e. within the top 4 or 5 for each of Precision Health and General) will be prioritized for discussion. Normally, a rank order will not move more than two positions up or down unless a significant error was made in the review (e.g. miscalculation of the total score or failure to review a section of the application). The committee may also choose to accept the rank order and not pull any proposals for discussion. Review committee notes will be recorded, but reviewer comments will not be provided to the applicants. Top ranked proposals may be funded regardless of the applicant's home faculty. In the case of ties, no funding will be awarded if there is insufficient funds available to support the fundable projects achieving parity in scores.

Excess funds

Should excess funds arise from ties as outlined above, or due to insufficient applications to fund two (2) precision health projects, or (2) projects in other areas of enquiry, the excess funds available will be used to fund an additional applicant from the other subject area.

FOLLOW UP

The winners are contacted by CHS Office of Research and the needed information is gathered to complete Pay Action Forms (PAF) for the awards' administration. The PAF is sent into HR from CHS, who will notify the successful applicants by email to collect the needed information. The winners will

also be informed of the expected content of their report and re-contacted later in the year, by CHS, to ensure the report is sent in.

No feedback is given to the unsuccessful candidates. Should individual faculties want to support unfunded applications from their trainee community, recipients of home faculty funds would be contacted by their faculty to gather the information necessary to complete and submit a PAF from their own resources.

Annex 1. Eligibility of Candidates

Those candidates who meet the following criteria are eligible to apply:

- Registered full-time in a graduate, post doctoral or fellowship program for the duration of the award.
- A GPA of 3.5 or higher for the past 12 credits.
- Interest in exploring opportunities to increase interdisciplinary or team-based scholarship in health research and/or collaborative practice in the healthcare system.
- Has a Supervisor who holds an academic appointment at the University of Alberta and possesses a record of productive health-oriented research including peer reviewed grants, publications and conference presentations/abstracts.
- Involvement in a health research project with an interdisciplinary focus and interdisciplinary team (i.e. cross-faculty or two or more health disciplines) relevant to Precision Health or another area of interdisciplinary inquiry.

Annex 2. Email sent to applicants after deadline

Below is the email content for the email to ALL applicants who submitted their application by 4:00PM on February 7, 2025 (deadline date).

Dear Applicant:

RE: TD Bank Financial Group Grant for Health Sciences Interdisciplinary Research Fund Awards, 2025 Competition

Thank you for submitting your application for the 2025 TD Interdisciplinary Research Award. The deadline was February 7, 2025 (deadline date) at 4:00 PM, and we will not be accepting any new applications, or requesting any further information from you for your application.

All applications received will now undergo a thorough review and screening based on criteria set out and approved for this competition. The review and screening process will involve an independent review panel made up of faculty members from the College of Health Sciences, who will provide their reviews using a set rating scale and form, and considering each applicant diligently and fairly. The panel's final decisions for the selected candidates who will receive awards will be made in March, and their recommendation will be given to the College of Health Sciences.

Notification to the successful candidate(s) will be provided in April 2025, and all other candidates will receive an email informing them of the outcome of the competition.

We wish each candidate the very best!

Sincerely,

Annex 3. Report content

1. Candidate & Interdisciplinary team information & (department, faculty, team members)
2. Project summary
3. Research Progress/ Project outcomes
 - a. Specific research activities / results during the tenure of the award
 - b. Outline any posters, publications, conferences attended (conference proceedings), awards/grants
 - c. Role of / importance of Interdisciplinary team in project (outline importance / value of the various disciplines involved, your role on the team, and value you've received in working as part of an interdisciplinary team)
 - d. Next steps in the project (if any)
4. Summary / reflection (anything you'd like to share regarding your Interdisciplinary research experience)