



ONE CHILD EVERY CHILD EXCELLENCE AWARDS
Postdoctoral Future Leaders Awards
2026

Award Guidelines

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1. One Child Every Child

One Child Every Child (OCEC) is a Canada First Research Excellence Fund (CFREF)-funded, Canada-first research initiative designed to prioritize the health and wellness of all children. The vision of OCEC is for every child to thrive. OCEC aims to transform child health research in Canada with global impact, promote Indigenous-led knowledge creation and self-determination, and drive discovery and innovation. Our interdisciplinary teams tackle various factors influencing child health, ranging from biomedical to social, societal, economic, and structural determinants. We are pushing boundaries to train our future leaders in health research uniquely. OCEC focuses on three themes situated at the intersections of greatest need and opportunity for discovery and impact:

- **Better Beginnings:** which optimizes pregnancy and neonatal outcomes and includes coordinated research programs in placental biology, prospective transdisciplinary clinical research, birthing and midwifery care in Indigenous communities and a large, nationally integrated data science program that links maternal health to child health outcomes.
- **Precision Health and Wellness:** which aims to improve health and wellness outcomes for medically and socially complex children. Anchored by several world-class programs and networks, including decoding why the same genetic change can cause different diseases, to socio-economic drivers of health outcomes for children with chronic diseases such as arthritis, and national and internationally connected networks
- **Vulnerable to Thriving:** aims to improve the trajectories of vulnerable children so that they thrive. This theme focuses upstream and on system factors, including school and community-based research, to develop upstream health and wellness indicators and targeted policy opportunities, locally, provincially, and nationally

OCEC is committed to creating evidence that embraces the diversity of needs, social and medical circumstances, and systemic barriers facing children and families. This involves integrating Indigenous knowledge, prioritizing Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA), utilizing comprehensive data, offering transdisciplinary training, and leveraging technology solutions. We are focused on evaluating and mobilizing knowledge for the greatest Impact – with the support of the cross-cutting Accelerators to achieve key objectives and projected OCEC outcomes.

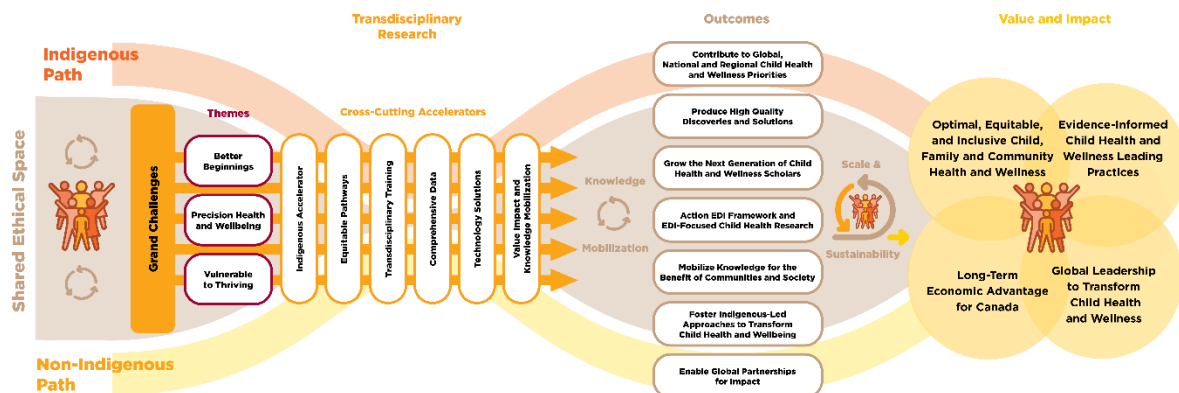


Figure 1: One Child Every Child Themes and Accelerators

2. One Child Every Child Excellence Awards Overview

The One Child Every Child (OCEC) Excellence Awards are competitive stipend awards funded through the OCEC Transdisciplinary Training Accelerator. This Accelerator is designed to foster collaborations through which diverse perspectives, knowledge, skills, and methodologies from various disciplines and fields, including the four research pillars (Biomedical, Clinical, Health Services, and Social, Cultural, Environmental, and Population Health) of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), converge to create a more comprehensive understanding of child health.

The OCEC Excellence Awards are intended to support graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, postgraduate medical fellows/clinical fellows, henceforth referred to as “Scholars”, who are engaged in transdisciplinary research, focused on child health and wellness that aligns with goals and priorities of OCEC. **The primary criteria for funding** consideration are scientific merit and alignment with the vision, mission, and strategic goals of OCEC, outlined in the previous section. The applicant’s research proposal should have a transdisciplinary focus, which is defined as the integration of knowledge across and beyond traditional disciplines. This integration may occur in partnership with non-academic partners and communities to address societal challenges and facilitate collaboration, shared learning experiences, and the evolution of knowledge through diverse perspectives.

2.1 Objectives

The key objectives of the OCEC Excellence Awards are as follows:

- To attract and retain the best and brightest talents both nationally and internationally.
- To develop their leadership potential and catalyze transformational, transdisciplinary research so that innovation can be scaled and spread to benefit children across Canada and beyond.
- To position scholars for success as research leaders of tomorrow.

2.2 Scope

Postdoctoral Future Leader Awards: \$80,000 per year for up to 2 years.

Statutory and other benefits are not provided as part of this award. Eligibility for health or other employment-related benefits is determined by the policies of the Scholar’s home institution, and awardees are encouraged to consult their institution for details.

3. Eligibility Criteria

The OCEC Excellence Awards are open to Canadian citizens, permanent residents of Canada, and foreign citizens/international scholars. Eligible candidates must meet the following criteria:

- To qualify for the OCEC Postdoctoral Future Leaders Award, scholars must meet the definition of a postdoctoral scholar as defined by their host institution. Typically, this entails the candidate having been awarded a PhD or equivalent within a specific number of years immediately preceding the end date of a postdoctoral appointment, or within ten years from the completion of an MD, DDS, DVM, or equivalent degree, excluding any time taken for leaves or other circumstances. Please note that successful applicants must produce evidence of completion of a graduate degree before the fellowship commences. Please confirm your status with host institution.
- Fellows in clinical domains who do not hold MD degrees (e.g., Audiology, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Psychology, Social Work, etc.), are eligible for OCEC Excellence Awards in the Postdoctoral category.
- Candidates are eligible to apply if they are being recruited for or currently hold a postdoctoral research position at University of Calgary or one of OCEC's institutional partners (the University of Alberta, the University of Lethbridge, or Athabasca University). Their supervisor must also be affiliated with one of these institutions.
- Their research project must align with one of the Themes and at least one of the Accelerators of OCEC.
- Their research proposal should have a transdisciplinary focus, as defined in the section above.
- Multiple applicants from the same supervisor/lab may apply for an OCEC Excellence Award, but only one application per scholar category from a single supervisor will be awarded in a given competition, limited to new applicants. Renewing applicants are not counted toward the total number of awards offered to the same supervisor/lab.
- Applicants cannot hold or be on leave from a faculty position.

OCEC and the Transdisciplinary Training Accelerator are committed to ensuring all scholars have equitable access to research funding and career support. Applicants from Indigenous and Equity-Deserving groups are highly encouraged to apply. Applicants from other jurisdictions, including out-of-province and international candidates, are strongly encouraged to apply.

4. Terms and Conditions

The following conditions apply to all recipients of the OCEC Excellence Awards:

- OCEC Postdoctoral Future Leaders Excellence Award is governed by the postdoctoral regulations of the awardee's home institution. Please refer to the postdoc policies of your host institution.
- OCEC Postdoctoral Future Leaders Awards may be offered to applicants remaining within the same research environment where they completed their PhD, PhD-equivalent, or health professional degree, only under exceptional circumstances. In such cases, applicants must provide a compelling justification in the Special Circumstances section of the application form, along with supervision approval.

- Acceptance of the OCEC Excellence Awards award is conditional on being an enrolled fellow at one of the OCEC partner institutions at the start date of the award.
- The awards are initially granted for 12 months, with the possibility of extension for an additional 12 months contingent on satisfactory progress, completion of a supervisor-approved progress report and participation in the OCEC training activities and events. The maximum duration of the OCEC Excellence Award is 24 months for the postdoctoral stream.
- The awards are non-transferable between trainees and cannot be used for purposes other than stipend support. Awards cannot be transferred to institutions that are not OCEC partners. Recipients must notify the Transdisciplinary Training Accelerator of any changes to their academic status, supervisor, institution or other circumstances affecting their training.
- Recipients are responsible for reporting any additional awards to the Transdisciplinary Training Accelerator.
- Award disbursement is provided monthly, subject to pro-rating.
- Each recipient may only receive the award once in a lifetime within each scholar category.
- OCEC Excellence Awards may not be held simultaneously with other awards (internal or external).
- Current holders of other internal and external awards of lesser value may apply for an OCEC Excellence Award. If awarded, the OCEC award start date may be deferred by a maximum of 12 months from the intended original start date. The awardee is responsible for ensuring that early termination of other awards to accept an OCEC Excellence Award does not breach the conditions of their other award/s.
- Recipients must complete their training under the primary supervisor who sponsored their application, however, change of supervisor will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The supervisor must have a record of a productive research program, sufficient resources to support the research, and provide direct supervision and mentorship.

5. Travel Allowance

As an added benefit, all recipients of the OCEC Excellence Award will receive a one-time allowance of \$1,000 for research-related travel. This allowance can be utilized for purposes such as attending scientific meetings, courses relevant to their research or field of study, or travelling to partner laboratories to learn a new technique. This travel allowance is non-transferable to the awardee's supervisor or another scholar and must be used by the end date of the OCEC Excellence Award.

6. Application Deadlines

The OCEC Scholar Funding webpage lists the deadlines for new applications. Late applications will **NOT** be accepted.

7. Application Instructions

7.1 New Applicants

To apply for OCEC Excellence Award, candidates must submit the OCEC Excellence Award Application, available online. The form includes the following components:

- Applicant's demographic information, academic record, previous experience, and awards.
- Current CV in Tri-Agency narrative format (maximum five pages).
- University transcripts (unofficial copies are accepted).
- Research outputs (publications, presentations, other).
- Proposed research project.
- Alignment and Impact (alignment with OCEC, a statement regarding the transdisciplinarity of the proposed project; statement on impact, excellence and innovation).
- Proposed Training Environment and Expected Outcomes of Training.
- Two letters of reference submitted by the referees. One of the letters must be from the proposed supervisor. If the applicant has co-supervisors, one of the letters should be written by one of the supervisors or both (as a joint letter). The second letter may come from another referee. The two references will receive an automated email prompting them to submit reference letters through the OCEC central application platform, Good Grants.
 - The proposed supervisor must complete a form regarding the training environment and provide a letter of reference directly on the platform.
 - The second referee is only required to submit a letter of reference.

It is the responsibility of the applicant and their supervisor to ensure all application documents are complete and submitted on time. Late or incomplete applications **will not be accepted**. If the application is deemed non-compliant (e.g., does not follow application instructions as stated; supporting documents exceed page limit, etc.), reviewers have the right to reject the application.

We strongly recommend submitting your application well in advance of the deadline to avoid technical or administrative issues.

Full application instructions can be found on the application platform.

7.2 Renewing Applicants

To renew OCEC Excellence Awards for a second year of support, applicants must submit:

- Progress Report, available on the Good Grants platform, completed by the Awarded Scholar.
- An email of reference by the applicant's supervisor, describing and confirming the progress of the scholar and approving the renewal application, submitted to training.ocec@ucalgary.ca.

Renewing applicants will receive instructions via email **2** months prior to the end of their first year of funding.

8. Evaluation Criteria

Applications submitted for OCEC Postdoctoral Future Leaders Awards will be adjudicated based on the following criteria:

- **Candidate (40%)**
 - i. Candidate's history of Excellence (30%)
 - Academic (10%)
 - Research (10%)
 - Leadership (10%)
 - ii. Candidate's Diversity or other Related Lived/Living with Experience (10%)
 - Personal statement including diversity and other related lived/living experience.

- **Proposed Transdisciplinary Project Plan (50%)**
 - i. Research Proposal (30%)
 - ii. Alignment with OCEC and Impact (10%)
 - iii. Knowledge Mobilization /Community Engagement (10%)

- **Training Environment (10%)**
 - i. Infrastructure (2.5%)
 - ii. Supervisor's Productivity (2.5%)
 - iii. Training and Mentorship Plan (5%)

For details on each criterion, please see Appendix A (OCEC Excellence Awards Criteria and Evaluation Form).

9. Adjudication Process

Submitted applications will undergo initial screening for eligibility, following which all eligible applications are adjudicated by scientific reviewers from the four OCEC institutions and OCEC staff with EDIA training, using the award evaluation rubric (Appendix A).

Please Note: Applications are evaluated by a multidisciplinary group of reviewers who may not have in-depth knowledge of all research areas; therefore, submitted proposals should be written for a non-specialist audience.

10. Competition Results

All applicants to the OCEC Excellence Awards competitions will be notified of the outcome of their application via email. The names of successful applicants will be listed on the OCEC website and other communication channels. Feedback will be provided to all applicants to support their ongoing research endeavors. Additionally, we invite feedback on the competition process and outcomes to ensure ongoing improvement and inclusivity within our program.

11. Obligations of OCEC Excellence Awards Holders

During the term of their OCEC Excellence Award, awarded scholars and their supervisors agree to certain obligations, including but not limited to:

- Acknowledging OCEC in all publications, presentations, communications, and marketing materials associated with the funded scholar.
- Participating in training activities offered by OCEC, such as courses, workshops, and professional development opportunities aimed at fostering a deeper understanding of research with Indigenous peoples and Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility principles in the context of child health research. As opportunities become available, award holders will be notified and encouraged to complete relevant training.
- Encouraged participation in and presenting at university, faculty or departmental research symposiums, along with other Child Health and Wellness research symposia and retreats, and relevant educational activities organized by OCEC.
- Submitting progress reports, final reports, and other documentation promptly, as required.
- Scholars who apply for and receive another award must promptly inform the OCEC Transdisciplinary Training Accelerator and their home institution's Office or Program of the new award. Eligibility for deferral of funding of the OCEC Excellence Award will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

12. Contact Information

With any questions, please contact the Transdisciplinary Training Accelerator team at: training.ocec@ucalgary.ca.

Appendix A: One Child Every Child Excellence Awards Evaluation Form

1. Postdoctoral Future Leaders Awards

CRITERION	WEIGHT	SCORE
Candidate:	40%	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Candidates' history of excellence:</u> evaluation of expertise and track record of the applicant. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Academic excellence:</u> Academic awards, honors and distinctions. 10% ● <u>Research excellence:</u> Research experience, publications, conference publications, research awards. 10% ● <u>Leadership:</u> Leadership roles, community involvement, extracurricular activities and leadership qualities. 10% <p>Consideration of the capacity to meaningfully contribute to child health research based on relevant professional experience and transferable skills (e.g., leadership, communication, project management, problem-solving, teamwork, adaptability, resilience).</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Personal Statement, Diversity, or Lived Experience</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Personal Statement: Clarity, motivation, career goals, development plans and alignment with OCEC program objectives. ● Diversity or Lived Experience: Background, unique experiences and contributions to diversity. <p>The candidate will be assessed on their commitment as demonstrated by research outputs or the potential impact of research training on their career trajectory, along with letters of reference.</p>	10%	
Proposed Transdisciplinary Project Plan:	50%	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Research Proposal:</u> Significance, Quality, and Feasibility of the proposed project. This also includes clarity, coherence, and quality of the plan, objectives, hypothesis, experimental approach, significance, methodology, timeline, milestones, anticipated outcomes, alignment with program objective and public engagement. 	30%	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Alignment with OCEC and Impact:</u> 	10%	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with OCEC Mandates. Assessment of the proposed project’s alignment with the mandates of OCEC and the Transdisciplinary Training Accelerator. • Transdisciplinary Approach. Assessment of the integration of diverse perspectives, methodologies, and disciplines to address complex child health issues. • Promotion of EDIA, Diversity of Perspectives, and/or Indigenous Engagement. Consideration of efforts to promote equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility, including engagement with Indigenous communities, where appropriate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Knowledge Mobilization/Community Engagement.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of strategies for disseminating and translating research into practice, policy or community impact. • Innovation and Impact. Evaluation of the potential to advance knowledge, improve child health outcomes, and contribute to positive societal change. 	10%	
Training Environment:	10%	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Infrastructure.</u> Facilities, equipment, databases, and resources available, as well as the benefits of this environment to the applicant’s development. 	2.5%	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Supervisor’s Productivity.</u> Evaluation of the supervisor’s research productivity, including publications, grant support, experience in scholar supervision, and excellence in mentorship. 	2.5%	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Training and Mentorship Plan.</u> Assessment of the quality and relevance of the proposed training to the applicant’s outcomes, skills, career goals, development needs, including the supervisor’s/co-supervisor’s role, collaboration opportunities, and networking support. 	5%	