

Research Early Career Awards – Guidelines for Application

Program Definition

The Hamilton Health Sciences Research Early Career Awards (ECA) are research personnel awards that are awarded annually. These Early Career Awards are to be used to help the applicant pursue research in their specialty area either by purchasing a portion of time for the applicant's salary OR a portion of time for salaries of research personnel who are supervised by the applicant.

Eligibility Criteria

1. Candidates must be staff members of Hamilton Health Sciences or members of HHS research institutes/centres, and hold a faculty appointment (physician must hold full-time appointments but members of other clinical health professions with part-time appointments will also be considered).
Example: Are you employed by HHS or are you credentialed with HHS as a primary facility or a member of one of the affiliated research institutes?
2. The Early Career Award is a salary award intended for applicants with a Ph.D. plus credentials in a regulated accredited health discipline, or with an MD and/or Ph.D. plus completion of a formal research training program or courses. **(Undergraduate or graduate students, residents, clinical scholars, and research or post-doctoral fellows are not eligible).**
3. Candidates must be within the first 5 years of their first faculty appointment (physician must hold full-time appointments but members of other clinical health professions with part-time appointments will also be considered) and have completed a formal research training program or courses within the past 5 years.
4. Candidates cannot concurrently hold external peer-reviewed or internal career awards. If an external award is secured while holding an HHS Early Career Award, the Research Administration Office needs to be notified – Daniela Bianco (biancdan@hhsc.ca)
5. Any changes to funding or employment status of the candidate and/or supervisor must be immediately reported to Research Administration Office.
6. Candidates must be mentored by a researcher who is a full-time, active staff member of HHS/McMaster University and has a demonstrated track record in research and in mentoring trainees.
7. The research focus must be relevant to key research strategic priorities of Hamilton Health Sciences:
 - o Cardiac, Vascular and Stroke
 - o Diabetes
 - o Cancer
 - o Pediatrics
 - o Population Science
 - o Digestive Diseases
 - o Infectious Diseases
 - o Rehabilitation and Orthopedics
 - o Aging
 - o Innovation Technology/Virtual Care

General Information

- HHS offers a limited number of research career awards annually, four of which are endowed and named the *William E Noonan*, *Jack Hirsh*, *Vaughan/McGuire*, and *David Sackett* awards
- We encourage research that improves virtual clinical care pathways at HHS during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.
- We encourage research that is multidisciplinary and collaborative (involving more than one department or program or healthcare discipline and institution).
- **Priority will be given to ECA proposals that involve team members from diverse backgrounds and/or address healthcare disparities experienced by Indigenous and/or systematically underserved communities.**
- Funding will be allocated to support up to eight awards each year.
- The value of each award will be up to \$50,000 annually. Benefits are not included.

- The duration of the award will be up to three years. Approval of renewal is contingent upon satisfactorily completing Year 2 and Year 3 Renewal Progress Reports.

Procedure for Application for HHS Research Early Career Award

The Research Administration Office will announce competitions for the HHS Research Early Career Awards on an annual basis. All department heads and active members of staff will be advised of competitions.

Submission Requirements

Electronic submission in PDF format of all documents listed below (1-11) must be received by the Research Administration Office no later than midnight **on November 15th*** (should November 15th fall on a weekend, the deadline is extended to the next business day).

- Electronic submissions are to be sent to careerawards@hpsc.ca
- Correspondence should be addressed to Early Career Award Review Board Chair: Dr. Jeffrey Weitz, Professor of Medicine & Biochemistry and Biomedical Sciences, McMaster University.

Applicants are responsible for submitting **ONE PDF E-MAIL ATTACHMENT**, consisting of the following documents (1-8), **WITH THE HEADINGS AND IN THE ORDER LISTED BELOW**. All documents listed below **MUST BE** typed in single space in Arial 12 font with 1-inch margins. Applicants should note the subject line of email submission as: "ECA – Applicant Surname"

1	Completed ECA Application Form
2	Detailed Budget – that includes a description of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How the funds will be used ○ Current salary structure of the candidate ○ Evidence of sufficient protected time to carry out the research project
3	Role of Scientific Mentor
4	Complete the ECA Lay Summary Template (2 pages) evaluated by Patient Advisors for Research
5	Description of Research Program (1/2 page)
6	Research Plan (6 pages) excludes references/appendices/collaboration letters etc. The research plan should include: 1) Purpose and Background; 2) Objectives; 3) Design and Methods; 4) Analysis Plan (including sex and gender-based analyses; and 5) Proposed Timeline
7	References – limited to 2 pages Note: the format for references has changed to the Vancouver style. To help you frame your references please see here
8	An up-to-date full Canadian Common CV (CCV) for the candidate (condensed versions will not be accepted) Select CIHR Draft Form

MENTOR and SUPERVISORS are responsible for independently submitting Letters of Nomination/Support to careerawards@hpsc.ca by or before the closing date of the competition:

9	An up-to-date BioSketch Canadian Common CV (CCV) for the Mentor (demonstrating last 5-year history of publications, funding, and supervisory experience)
10	A letter of nomination from the candidate's mentor (sent via email, in PDF format, DIRECTLY BY THE MENTOR)
11	Two letters of assessment of the candidate's suitability for a research career from individuals with whom the candidate has trained and who have had a good opportunity to assess the candidate's potential for research. Assessments should be provided by the candidate's Ph.D. supervisor and/or postdoctoral supervisor(s) if applicable (assessment letters should be sent via email, in PDF format, DIRECTLY BY EACH SUPERVISOR)

Procedure for Review and Selection of HHS Research Early Career Awards

Applications will be reviewed by a committee struck by the VP, Research at HHS, and the President & CEO of the HHS Foundation. The committee will be chaired by the Director of one of the associated Research Institutes/Centres and the membership will include:

- Chair – Executive Director, TaARI
- Director of an additional Research Institute
- President & CEO, HHS Foundation **or** designate
- Associate Dean of Research (FHS) **or** designate
- Two members of the scientific community at HHS (1 medical and 1 clinical healthcare professional)
- **Patient/Family Advisory Representative who will assess the Lay Summary**

The membership of the review committee may be increased at the discretion of the Chair.

Review Criteria

a) Achievements and Activities of the Candidate

- Publication Record
- Other Research Activity

b) Characteristics and Abilities of the Candidate (from sponsors' assessments)

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| ○ Background Preparation | ○ Originality |
| ○ Industry/Perseverance | ○ Interpersonal Skills |
| ○ Motivation/initiative | ○ Supervisory Skills |
| ○ Skill at research | ○ Independence |
| ○ Judgment/Critical sense | ○ Scientific Integrity |
| ○ Intellectual Ability | |

c) Achievements and Activities of the Supervisor

- Scientific Productivity
- Supervisory Record

d) Research Training Environment

- Training Program for the Candidate
- Research Resources

e) New Lay Summary

- Readability for the general public
- Clearly ties to the ECA purpose and priorities
- Advances the researcher's career pathway and/or program of research
- Proposed research work advances/creates new knowledge that informs patient care

f) Project is in line with the strategic directions of HHS

Deliverables

1. A Year 1 **annual renewal progress report** that describes the overall outline of the project and its objectives, details the research accomplishments, and provides clear evidence of progress. The applicant must include a summary of current grant funding and a list of all presentations and publications. For each publication, **a screenshot of the acknowledgment section should be included to demonstrate that the candidate has acknowledged support from Hamilton Health Sciences** (maximum of 2 pages).

2. Investigators must acknowledge ECA funding supported by Hamilton Health Sciences in all of their research-related publications (for example *Dr. XXX is the recipient of a Research Early Career Award from Hamilton Health Sciences Foundation*). Append copies of all journal publications in PDF format as appendices to your Renewal Progress Report in addition to including a screenshot of acknowledgments for each publication within the Renewal Progress Report template file. Failure to acknowledge such support may lead to withdrawal of the award.
3. Joint accountability report from the applicant and finance department from the institution through which the ECA is being administered. This report needs to detail how the ECA funds were used/spent and supported by institutional payroll/finance system reports.
4. Any changes to funding or employment status of the candidate and/or mentor must be immediately reported to the Research Administration Office; Daniela Bianco biancdan@hhsc.ca.

Second-year funding is contingent upon satisfactorily completing a 'Year 1 Renewal Progress Report' detailing the deliverables outlined above.

Third-year funding is not automatic and is contingent upon completing a 'Year 2 Renewal Progress Report' that builds on the deliverables outlined above from Year 1 plus detailing accomplishments and productivity to date.

Final Completion Report is submitted 6 months after the 3rd-year term has ended and describes deliverables noted above as well as specific indicators below (a-h below):

- a. reproduce initial goals from original application
- b. provide outcome summary of accomplishments and findings in lay terms.
- c. clearly define goals that were achieved
- d. describe how this funding developed your research program – demonstrate significant and clear evidence of progress
- e. identify the role of your mentor
- f. list external peer-review funding held as principal investigator
- g. include a joint financial accountability report of how the funds were used/spent
- h. peer-reviewed publications must acknowledge Hamilton Health Sciences as a source of funding (For example *Dr. XXX is a recipient of an HHS Research Early Career Award from Hamilton Health Sciences Foundation*). Append copies of all journal publications in PDF format as appendices to your Final Completion Report in addition to including a screenshot(s) of acknowledgments for each publication within the Final Completion Report template file.

Year 1 and 2 Annual Renewal Progress Reports must be submitted by or before midnight November 15th and Final Completion Reports by June 30th to careerawards@hhsc.ca. For a copy of the Annual Renewal Progress/Completion Report template, please contact:

Daniela Bianco
 Manager, Research Development & Relations
 Email: biancdan@hhsc.ca

In making an award, the following conditions will be observed:

- a) The starting date and length of the appointment will be clearly stated in writing.
- b) Copies are provided to:
 - i) Applicant
 - ii) Applicant's Mentor

All award appointments will be reported to the Hamilton Health Sciences' Executive Council on Research

- The deliberations of the HHS Research Early Career Award Committee will be confidential and the Committee Chair will communicate results.
- Start date of Career awards will normally be January 1st and stipends will be paid out quarterly within the calendar year.

Reviewed and Approved by

Chair – ECA Peer-Review Committee

Please note that application forms can be found on the HHS Research Early Career Awards website:

<http://www.hhsresearchadmin.ca/researcher-support/internal-funding/early-career-awards/>

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