

## womenmind 2023 Postdoctoral Fellowship Competition

### Background

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) is the largest mental health and addiction teaching hospital in Canada, as well as one of the world's leading research centres in its field. Our services are delivered to help transform the lives of people affected by mental illness and addictions. Our goal is to tailor treatment to each individual, providing patient-centered, comprehensive, coordinated care. CAMH conducts groundbreaking research, provides expert training to health care professionals and scientists, develops innovative health promotion and prevention strategies, and advocates on public policy issues at all levels of government.

[womenmind](#) is a community of philanthropists committed to addressing the gender gap in mental health. The goals of *womenmind* are to promote excellence in research on women's mental health and support women in the sciences, with the understanding that gender is fluid, non-binary and diverse – *womenmind* is a program for all women. *womenmind* aims to develop innovative solutions to improving prevention, policy, and treatment of mental illness among women and girls. Through this work, *womenmind* aims to improve the mental health of women and girls locally, nationally and globally. *womenmind* aims to be inclusive, supporting people from diverse and intersecting backgrounds and experiences. We acknowledge the impact that implicit bias and systemic discrimination can have in the design of programs and welcome feedback regarding barriers to access, program requirements, or other issues of importance.

*"Women" refers to a broad gender categorization that does not necessarily correlate with one's sex assigned at birth. We use the term therefore to include all those who self-identify as women, including cisgender women, transgender women, two-spirit, gender variant and non-binary people.*

Numerous under-researched sex and gender-based disparities exist in mental illness, including differences across these groups in the prevalence of mental illness, underlying mechanisms and systemic risk factors, experiences of stigma, help seeking and service use behaviours, as well as treatment experiences and outcomes. Evidence shows that women are disproportionately affected by mental illnesses such as anxiety disorders and depression. Risk factors for mental illness and disparities in access to mental health services can be greater for people with intersecting identities, such as sexual orientation, gender identity, race, Indigeneity, disability, and socio-economic disadvantage, requiring a focus in research on women's mental health.

### Award Guidelines

*womenmind* will provide support for up to **four postdoctoral fellows (PDFs)** pursuing research to better understand, prevent and treat mental illnesses, **with a focus on women's mental health**. This opportunity includes research involving [sex and gender based analyses+ \(SGBA+\)](#) and [intersectionality](#) (i.e., examining overlapping systems of discrimination or disadvantage) to improve the mental health of women and girls. Postdoctoral fellows are expected to make independent contributions to knowledge during their appointment. This may be in the form of a contribution to an existing project, or through the development of an original project. Projects will be assessed and awarded under the research themes below, listed alphabetically. These research themes have equal weight of importance and no theme is favoured over another.

1. Basic and pre-clinical neuroscience
2. Brain and/or behavior interventions (including technology-based interventions)
3. Clinical measure and/or biomarker identification

4. Community-based research
5. Health policy or health services research
6. Implementation science
7. Social and epidemiological research
8. Translation of clinical neuroscience (i.e. the study of mechanisms of disease and new ways of diagnosis and treatment) into clinical treatment

**Four 1-year awards of \$60,000 CAD stipend + \$5,000 CAD research allowance will be available**, with the possibility of a 1-year extension upon review of progress. Applications will be evaluated by a team of independent researchers, based on CIHR standards of excellence. The final selection of awards will be made by the *womenmind* selection committee.

### Eligibility Criteria

- This award is intended to support candidates who are seeking **full-time** postdoctoral studies under the primary supervision of a CAMH scientist.
- Applicants must obtain sponsorship of a supervisor who holds a scientific appointment at CAMH as Clinician Scientist, Senior Scientist, or Independent Scientist only. Applicants are encouraged to reach out to potential CAMH supervisors. Information regarding CAMH scientists can be found at the CAMH [staff directory](#).
- Only one applicant per primary supervisor will be permitted to apply for the *womenmind* Postdoctoral Fellowship.
- All applicants must be supervised or co-supervised by a researcher with expertise in women's mental health and/or in [Sex and Gender-Based Analysis+ \(SGBA+\)](#). If their primary supervisor at CAMH does not have expertise in women's mental health, then the applicant must seek a co-supervisor with such expertise. Collaborations and cross-training with different institutions are welcome to build capacity in women's mental health research.
- Applicants must have a PhD and/or regulated health professional degree at the time they start the award. For examples of health professions, please consult CIHR's list of [Eligible Health Professions](#). Any interruptions, delays or post-degree clinical training in post-PhD/regulated health professional degree cumulative experience may be taken into account in determining eligibility if detailed information on the interruption, including specific dates, is provided. Post-doctoral fellows that completed their doctoral program more than 5 years ago must first consult with [internal.funding@camh.ca](mailto:internal.funding@camh.ca) regarding eligibility before applying. Proof of degree fulfillment will be required for those applicants that are successful.
- Interested applicants who are currently employed by CAMH must contact [internal.funding@camh.ca](mailto:internal.funding@camh.ca) in advance of the deadline to confirm eligibility.
- Applicant's supervisor(s) must agree to provide the applicant with a minimum of 75% protected time for research.
- Applicants with external funding support that overlaps the period of the PDF award are not eligible to apply (i.e. external funding that continues past December 31, 2023).
- *womenmind* especially welcomes applications from First Nations, Métis and Inuit, racialized and 2SLGBTQ+ communities, women, people with disabilities (including people who have experienced mental health and substance use challenges), and those not listed who may contribute to the further diversification of ideas.
- If there are multiple well-assessed applications of equal merit, projects proposed by trainees that self-identify as belonging to one or more underrepresented group(s) and/or that

primarily involve or serve communities from these groups will have a competitive advantage.

**Conditions of Award:**

- Applicants are encouraged (but not required) to apply to at least one external agency for stipend support in addition to the *womenmind* PDF. If the applicant is successful in obtaining a fellowship offer from an external agency, the applicant will accept the external offer and free up the PDF for other possible applicants. In situations where the value of the external award is less than the *womenmind* PDF, a top-up may be provided by *womenmind*. The amount of the top-up will depend on funding availability. **Under no circumstances will fellowship funds be used to cover gaps in funding between the time when existing funding ends and the external funding begins.**
- All fellowships are to commence during the period of July 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023.
- Successful applicants are expected to be located at CAMH during the one-year period of the appointment.

**Instructions**

**1. Notice of Intent**

Applicants must submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) online using the following form:

<https://form.jotform.com/223064303159247> by **January 31, 2023**. The NOI must identify the supervisor(s), include a brief description of the proposed project (250 words), identify *womenmind* research themes and strategic priority areas, answer self-identification\* and project representation questions, and provide 3-5 project area and methodology keywords. Information from the NOI will assist the Grants & Awards team with matching applications to academic experts in the review process.

\*Information collected will be confidential, cannot be accessed by reviewers, and will not be linked to personnel data. Data regarding the applicant pool will be reported only to the *womenmind* selection committee and a small number of ROSS staff members for the purposes of program administration, process improvement, and reporting requirements.

**2. Research Assurances and Approvals Form (RAAF)**

A RAAF must be submitted via the [eRA Portal](#) by **February 28, 2023**. For guidance on RAAF submission, please see the [Research Portal](#).

**3. Full Application**

Applicants must submit their application online (link to be provided following NOI submission and confirmation of eligibility) using the guidelines below. The full application must be submitted by **March 7, 2023**.

**a) Project Information:**

- **Project Title – Limit of 640 characters, including spaces.**
- **Lay Title – Limit of 200 characters, including spaces.** Provide a title for the project that is in a language clear to the general public.
- **Lay Abstract - Limit of 2,000 characters, including spaces.** Describe the project in a way that is accessible to a lay audience.

- b) Training Plan Training Plan - Limit of 7,000 characters, including spaces.** Provide an overview of how your previous research training relates to the present proposal and elaborate on your career goals. Describe how the training you expect to acquire will build upon your previous training and contribute to your productivity, the research goals you hope to achieve and how this award will enable you to establish yourself as an independent investigator. Highlight the novelty and originality of the training plan relative to prior training and experience and provide further justification if the award is intended to support on-going work at CAMH. Indicate why you decided on the proposed training location and what you expect to learn from your training experience.
- c) Research Project Summary - Limit of 4,000 characters, including spaces, references included.** The research project summary should be written in general scientific language, and should include the specific hypothesis of the research and describe your role in the proposed project. Make sure that it provides a concise account of the subject matter; an overview of each part of the research plan, specific project aims and the methodology. The summary should reflect the significance of your project and should clearly state an explanation of the relevance of your project to the goals of *womenmind*. Please use the following headings:
- **Background** – summarize the stage of knowledge relevant to the proposal.
  - **Hypotheses/research questions** – state these clearly and concisely.
  - **Methods** – give essential details of methods; describe the data to be collected and the method of data analysis proposed. Clearly define the population.
  - **Impact** – state how the project will advance knowledge if completed as planned.
  - **Relevance to the goals of the *womenmind* initiative** – demonstrate your proposed projects alignment with the research themes and strategic priorities of *womenmind*.
  - **Role on proposed project** – address how the proposed research will support your training goals.
  - **Timetable** – include a timetable for the work in your description
- d) Research Training Environment - Limit of 1,750 characters, including spaces.** Describe the space, facilities and personnel support that will be available to you. This section should be written with the input of the proposed supervisor and should demonstrate the commitment of the proposed supervisor(s) to support the development of the applicant's research project (funding, facilities, equipment, etc.) and professional development. It should also demonstrate a commitment to developing your research, technical and professional skills and networks over the training period by providing career planning, skills development and networking opportunities to prepare for an impactful career.
- e) Most significant contributions (if applicable) - Limit 3,000 characters, including spaces.** Please highlight any relevant publications, awards and recognitions or knowledge translation that are not covered by the CCV.
- f) Interruptions and Delays (if applicable) - Limit of 1,500 characters, including spaces.** This section should describe any interruptions, delays or post-degree clinical training experience that has taken place post-PhD and/or MD or residency. Make sure to include

specific dates.

**4. Curriculum Vitae (CV) – uploaded as PDF attachments.**

**a) Applicant CV**

Provide a **CIHR Academic CV**. Please consult CIHR’s [instructions](#) for completing the Academic CV template via the [Canadian Common CV \(CCV\)](#) interface.

**b) Supervisor CV**

- Supervisor CVs should also be in the Canadian Common CV format using the CIHR [Academic](#) or [Biosketch](#) templates.
- Other CV templates will also be accepted, with a limit of 6 pages.

**5. Letters of Reference - max 1 page each, using 12-point font.** Two referees must provide an assessment of the applicant. These assessments should come from people under whom you have trained and/or who have had a good opportunity to assess your potential for research. Applicants should refer their selected sponsors to CIHR’s [Information for Sponsors](#) web page for useful tips.

- Two letters of reference must be submitted by 5 p.m. on the application due date.
- Reference letters from the candidate’s Supervisor or Co-Supervisor will **not** be accepted.
- Letters must be submitted using the link to be provided.

**It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that letters of reference are sent by the submission deadline.**

**6. Submitting the Application**

The application must be submitted online (link to be provided following NOI submission) by **March 7, 2023**. If you have any questions regarding the application guidelines or submission process, please contact Elizabeth Mueller via [internal.funding@camh.ca](mailto:internal.funding@camh.ca).

**Note:** Supplemental material and material exceeding the specified length will not be considered in the review process. The reviewing committee consists of academic experts but not necessarily specialists in the applicant’s specific subject area.

DEADLINES AT A GLANCE
<b>Notice of Intent: January 31, 2023</b>
<b>RAAF: February 28, 2023</b>
<b>Full Application: March 7, 2023</b>
<b>Notice of Award: May 2023</b>