

# Interdisciplinary Fellowship Program 2020

## Program Guidelines



**Canadian  
Frailty  
Network**

### Introduction

The Canadian Frailty Network (CFN) is a network funded by the Government of Canada's Networks of Centres of Excellence Program (NCE) to improve care for older Canadians living with frailty and their family/friend caregivers. See [www.cfn-nce.ca](http://www.cfn-nce.ca) for more information on CFN.

A crucial part of our mandate is to develop the next generation of scientists, clinicians, and health service professionals capable of developing, evaluating, disseminating, and implementing the new healthcare tools, technologies, and interventions that will improve the care of older Canadians living with frailty.

### Goals of the Interdisciplinary Fellowship Program

Given the complex nature of care for older adults living with frailty, an interdisciplinary approach is necessary to address the needs of these patients and their caregivers. The purpose of the CFN Interdisciplinary Fellowship Program (IFP) is to provide a unique learning experience and to adopt an experiential learning approach to allow Fellows to:

1. Develop expertise on frailty and late life issues
2. Understand interdisciplinary perspectives and collaborative practice
3. Develop skills to be successful in professional settings.

CFN's IFP supplements the Network's contribution to the wealth, wellness, and well-being of all Canadians by providing financial support for trainees' existing academic work. Individuals who complete the IFP will have the knowledge necessary to engage with frailty and late life issues, be able to work successfully in interdisciplinary teams, and have the professional skills to be functional and effective in an organization.

### Fellowships Available – 2020 Cohort

Awardees will be funded at the levels indicated below. CFN will contribute a maximum of 50% of the Fellowship funding and each Applicant must identify within his/her application an eligible partner that has agreed to provide at least matching funds in cash, which must be used for Fellow stipends. As an example, an Applicant applying for a Master's level Fellowship will receive \$12,500 from CFN and at least \$12,500 from his/her partner(s).

Fellowship Funding Levels	Total Funding to Fellow	50% cash from Partner(s)	50% from Canadian Frailty Network
Masters	\$25,000	\$12,500	\$12,500
PhD	\$35,000	\$17,500	\$17,500
Postdoctoral/Working Professional	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000

The number of fellowships will be determined by the quality of the applicants and the number of applicants received per Fellowship level.

## Partnerships Collaborations

CFN is pleased to announce once again a collaboration with the New Brunswick Health Research Foundation (NBHRF; [www.nbhrf.com/en](http://www.nbhrf.com/en)). [CFN and NBHRF have created a separate fund](#) to encourage qualified New Brunswick applicants and their supervisors to participate in the CFN Fellowship Program. Details will be distributed to eligible New Brunswick organizations by NBHRF.

CFN may add other partners in the future, so all interested applicants should check the CFN website regularly for corporate partner updates, and contact [training@cfn-nce.ca](mailto:training@cfn-nce.ca) if interested in those partners listed.

### Important Dates (see Application Instructions for additional information)

- **Monday, November 4, 2019; 12 noon ET** – Deadline for online registration of Intent to Apply
- **Monday, December 16, 2019; 12 noon ET** – Application and accompanying documents due
- **Late March/Early April 2020** – Award announcement
- **September 1, 2020** – Fellowship starts

You must register your Intent to Apply online by the deadline [before you can submit an online application](#).

## About the Interdisciplinary Fellowship Program

**Fellows can expect to spend up to 10 to 12 hours a week** on the current versions of the IFP modules and CFN webinar series, and Supervisors can expect to spend 2 to 3 hours a week in support of their Fellows. (Also see accompanying documents: *Overview of Deliverables, Roles & Responsibilities* and *Overview (Abbreviated) of Supervisory Role*). Training is delivered using a self-directed, experiential approach through learning themes that focus on specific areas for skill development:

- Frailty assessment
- Citizenship engagement
- Interdisciplinary collaboration
- Cultural competency
- Self-directed professional development.

Upon completing the Interdisciplinary Fellowship Program, Fellows should be able to:

- Anticipate the social, economic, and ethical implications of frailty and late life issues.
- Recognize frailty to improve care for older Canadians with the use of evidence-based interventions.
- Identify and apply best practices for patient/citizen engagement to incorporate patient/citizen needs and concerns into research and practice.
- Practice the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values identified by the [National Interprofessional Competency Framework](#) to support multidisciplinary research and practice.
- Obtain new knowledge/skills on self-identified gaps to support integration into academic and non-academic workforces.

With an emphasis on the attainment of the program objectives, program expectations can be flexible and responsive to Fellows' existing knowledge, skills, and experiences.

**\*\* Please note: The CFN Interdisciplinary Fellowship Program is undergoing a regular, periodic review, and slight modifications may occur over the next few months. \*\***

**Frailty Assessment-** Fellows will be introduced to a variety of frailty assessment tools appropriate to the recognition of frailty across different settings. By engaging in different mechanisms of frailty assessment, Fellows are expected to gain an enhanced understanding of the importance of frailty on research and practice.

Activities:

**Overview Session-** An overview of frailty assessment will be provided through an online learning module.

**Participation in the Frailty Assessment Discussion Board-** Fellows will be required to critically analyze an assessment tool applicable to their setting of interest.

**Citizen Engagement-** Fellows will be introduced to key principles, best practices, and potential barriers for citizenship engagement. By establishing relationships with older adults living with frailty, and their family/friend caregivers, Fellows will be given the opportunity to incorporate the needs and concerns of citizens into their research and practice, which is also a key competency identified by the National Interprofessional Competency Framework.

Activities:

**Overview Session-** An overview of barriers and best practices for citizenship engagement will be provided through an online module.

**Citizen and/or Family/Friend Mentor(s)-** Fellows will engage regularly with an older adult, and/or their family/friend caregiver mentor. Fellows will submit a critical reflection on how engagement with a citizen mentor has influenced their approach to their work.

**Cultural Competency-** Fellows will be introduced to key principles of cultural competency and cultural safety within a Canadian context.

Activities:

**Overview Session-** An overview of key concepts in cultural competency and cultural safety will be provided through an online module.

**Reflection-** Fellows will provide a short reflection to help them identify their own cultural biases, and how this will impact their future work.

**Interdisciplinary Collaboration-** Fellows will be provided the opportunity to practice the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values identified by the National Interprofessional Competency Framework for effective interdisciplinary collaboration. Along with building competencies in role clarification, team functioning, collaborative leadership, interprofessional communication, and interprofessional conflict resolution, trainees will be exposed to different disciplinary approaches to frailty and late life issues and encouraged to share knowledge with one another regarding their experience with frailty research. This learning theme will support collaboration between Fellows, the development of an expanded perspective on frailty and late life issues, and the ability to engage in interdisciplinary research and practice. Within this learning theme, Fellows will also be asked to evaluate a frailty or late life issue and disseminate their research findings. By going through this process of evaluation and dissemination, trainees will become adept at anticipating the social, economic, and ethical implications of frailty and late-life issues.

Activities:

**Online Collaborative Project-** Fellows will work in an interdisciplinary group to address a gap in frailty research or late life issues. A mentor will be provided to support the completion of the project.

**Interdisciplinary Mentorship-** Fellows will engage regularly with individuals from different disciplines to expand their perspectives on frailty and late life research and practice, which may include forging a relationship with an individual interdisciplinary mentor. Fellows will reflect on how engagement with these interdisciplinary mentors has impacted their research and hidden assumptions about their work.

**Monthly Fellowship Meetings-** Fellows will meet monthly to share their progress, successes and challenges to their research projects and other IFP activities to build a sense of community within the program.

**Self-Directed Professional Development-** Fellows will be asked to identify and engage in topics vital for integration into academic and non-academic positions. Fellows will receive professional development training based on self-identified gaps. Furthermore, Fellows will gain experience translating their knowledge of frailty and other late life issues to professional settings. This module will increase the employability of our Fellows and increase their ability to work in multi-sectoral environments.

Activities:

**Self-Directed Professional Development Sessions-** Fellows will identify gaps in their professional development through an online survey. Results from the survey will inform the content of professional development training sessions.

**External Placement-** Fellows will participate in a one-month (minimum length) placement at an organization to apply their research to real world settings.

**Other Activities-** In addition to completing the various components of the Interdisciplinary Fellowship Program, Fellows are required to attend and fully participate in the CFN Annual Conference; the date has not yet been set, but will happen in 2021. Travel costs for the conference will be subsidized. At these meetings, Fellows will be expected to share their work, which includes an abstract and poster, and possibly a brief presentation. Fellows are also expected to register a LinkedIn profile/account and “connect” with CFN’s HQP community on LinkedIn ([www.linkedin.com/in/CanadianFrailtyNetwork](http://www.linkedin.com/in/CanadianFrailtyNetwork)), and are encouraged to follow CFN on Twitter ([@CFN\\_NCE](https://twitter.com/CFN_NCE)).

## Funding

Funding is non-renewable, but the Fellow may apply for future CFN research, knowledge synthesis or knowledge translation funding after completion of the Fellowship, providing all other requirements are met. A Fellowship cannot be deferred.

Funding will go to the Host Institution of the Fellow’s Supervisor. The Supervisor and Host Institution must be eligible to receive funding under Tri-Council Guidelines and must enter into a standard CFN Network Agreement and agree to administer the Fellowship as per CFN’s Terms and Conditions and Tri-Council funding terms and conditions.

Funding will be paid out in installments, contingent upon satisfactorily completing specified activities and Network required progress reports. Failure to submit required progress reports or meet other requirements may result in a delay in receiving funding installments or a termination of funding.

## Eligibility Criteria and Application

Applicants will be enrolled in and be in good standing, or have completed, a professional, Master’s or doctoral degree program at a recognized university, and will have relevant employment or life experience

and the academic/other skills necessary to complete the Fellowship requirements. This program is open to Canadian citizens and those with Canadian Permanent Residency only.

**Preference will be given to applicants that have demonstrated current or prior personal or professional interest in late life issues related to frailty. Examples of demonstrated interest may include pursuing late-life courses or specializations, or relevant work, community service or leadership experience.**

To receive funds, a Fellow's Supervisor and Host Institution must be eligible to receive grant funding from CIHR, NSERC or SSHRC and will be required to execute a standard CFN Network Agreement, through which they will become a member of the Canadian Frailty Network, and take on all of the associated rights and obligations (an *Overview of the Supervisor Role* is available in the Training section at [www.cfn-nce.ca](http://www.cfn-nce.ca)). Fellows are considered Highly Qualified Personnel under the terms of the Network Agreement and are asked to comply with similar terms to those that cover Network Investigators. These requirements include providing the Network's Administrative Centre with progress reports as requested and complying with Tri-Council funding terms and conditions.

Successful Fellowship Applicants and Supervisors will also need to adhere to the [Network's Conflict of Interest Policy and Conflict of Interest Guidelines](#) and submit a [Conflict of Interest Declaration Form](#).

## Partner Participation

One of CFN's goals is to support productive partnerships and collaborations among all stakeholders as the Network recognizes that networking and partnership arrangements are critical to the successful realization of its vision and mission. Increased partnerships are the key to addressing better care for our aging population through knowledge creation and knowledge translation and mobilization activities addressed in a multidisciplinary, multi-sectoral manner.

CFN is dedicated to identifying and developing collaborations with other organizations and stakeholders to enhance the availability of funding and to create opportunities for knowledge exchange and translation. The Network encourages its Fellows and researchers to explore partnership opportunities with a wide range of potential public and private sector organizations.

Partners providing matching funds in cash for the Fellowship (50% CFN funds, 50% funds from Applicant's partners) must be NCE-eligible partners. Contact your Supervisor's Host Institution's research office for details on NCE-eligible partners. A letter confirming the cash contribution must be submitted on the letterhead of each eligible partner detailing the extent of their support. See the Application Instructions for details.

In New Brunswick, the competition is presented in collaboration with the [New Brunswick Health Research Foundation \(NBHRF\)](#). Up to two fellows from New Brunswick (NB) will be funded under the terms of the collaboration, with NBHRF as the matching fund partner for NB applicants. Applicants must also visit the NBHRF website to view the [Requirements Guide](#) for this program, and follow the instructions provided in addition to those from CFN.

## How to Apply

A [pre-application Intent to Apply](#) must be submitted online for this Fellowship competition, followed by an online application with associated documentation submitted online, or by mail, as outlined in the Application Instructions. Please read the Application Instructions carefully before registering your Intent to Apply.

You are also encouraged to review the *Overview of Deliverables, Roles and Responsibilities* prior to submitting an application.

All documents and forms [can be found here](#).

A full Application Package consists of:

1. Online Application, including Capacity Disclosure
2. Applicant's CV
3. Transcripts for all post-secondary and clinical/medical school studies (mailed directly from the Institutions to CFN in sealed envelopes)
4. [Supervisor Endorsement Form](#)
5. [Professional References Form](#) (2)
6. [Partner Letters of Support](#)
7. [Application Signatures Form](#)

## Evaluation Criteria

The criteria by which the Network's funds will be awarded are as follows:

- Alignment of the Applicant's research project with the strategic priorities of CFN and the goals of the Interdisciplinary Fellowship Program
- Potential of the Applicant's research project to have a positive impact on care for older Canadians living with frailty and to support their family/friend caregivers.
- Capacity and aptitude of the Fellow to be successful in the Interdisciplinary Fellowship Program
- Academic, professional and/or clinical experience and success relevant to the Interdisciplinary Fellowship Program
- Applicant's prior and current engagement with partners, stakeholders, knowledge users, and industry related to the care for older Canadians living with frailty.

## Acknowledgment of Funding

Funding recipients are required to acknowledge CFN support in any publication or presentation made during or resulting from the tenure of the Award. The Network shall be provided a copy, at the time of submission, of all manuscripts and presentations submitted for publication that arise from the efforts of the Fellowship recipient during the tenure of this Award. Details will be provided in the Notification of Award letter.

## Contact for Further Information

For questions about the Network's Call for Applications, please consult the *Frequently Asked Questions* document for this competition or contact [training@cfn-nce.ca](mailto:training@cfn-nce.ca).



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