CONNAUGHT NEW RESEARCHER AWARD – GUIDELINES

"The primary purpose of the Fund is the promotion of research and the application of the professional expertise and resources of the University to matters of public interest in all research fields. ...Connaught funds shall be used to support outstanding research by individuals or groups of scholars in the University. Grants are intended to encourage research of exceptional calibre or the development of new areas of research by scholars of outstanding achievement. Awards will be made in accordance with the most exacting standards of peer review."

Excerpt from the Connaught Fund Terms of Reference

Application Deadline: December 1, 2023

PURPOSE

The purpose of this program is to foster excellence in research and innovation by providing support for new University of Toronto faculty members who are launching their academic careers. These awards are intended to establish a strong research program, thereby increasing the faculty member's competitiveness for external funding. Up to $1,250,000 has been earmarked for this year's competition. Support for approximately 50 awards of up to $25,000 will be provided to the highest ranked proposals.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants include all full-time **tenure stream** appointees at the **Assistant Professor level** who are, as of the date of application, within five years of a first tenure-stream Assistant Professor appointment (at UofT or elsewhere) **AND** within **ten** years of having completed a PhD or equivalent. The aforementioned window of eligibility may be extended if an applicant has experienced significant interruptions in their academic career. Eligibility related questions should be addressed to Connaught Secretariat in advance of the submission deadline. Final determination of eligibility will be made upon receipt of an application.

Individuals who have received funding from the Connaught New Researcher program are not eligible to re-apply, however, unsuccessful applicants may reapply for funding from this program **once** more in a subsequent competition.

APPLICATION

Application is to be made using the form available on the website and submitted via MRA (My Research Applications). The submission deadline is **December 1, 2023.**

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The University of Toronto embraces Diversity and is building a culture of belonging that increases our capacity to effectively address and serve the interests of our global community. We strongly encourage applications from Indigenous Peoples, Black and racialized persons, women, persons with disabilities, and people of diverse sexual and gender identities.

The University also acknowledges that scholars have varying career paths and that career interruptions due to personal circumstances can be part of an excellent academic record. Review panel members have been instructed to give careful consideration to—and to be sensitive to the impact of—career interruptions in their assessments.

In order to be considered for this funding opportunity, all applicants are required to answer the [University of Toronto's Employment Equity Survey](), available through Employee-Self Service, by no later than the application deadline. Applicants may voluntarily self-identify in any of the groups or log a response indicating that they decline the survey. Self-identification data is important to the University's ability to accurately identify barriers to participation and to develop strategies to eliminate these barriers. Aggregated results as of the closing of this posting will be sent to the Research Equity and Diversity Strategist and may be accessed by only a small number of designated senior administrators within the Division of the Vice-President, Research and Innovation (VPRI). Any information directly related to you is confidential and cannot be accessed by the reviewers or by VPRI staff. The data is used by VPRI as part of our ongoing efforts to embed principles of equity, diversity and inclusion in the administration of internal funding programs. Please note that an updated Employment Equity Survey was launched in early 2023. If you have already completed this updated version survey, thank you; your responses will be included in the aggregated results. If you have not yet accessed the updated version, please do so prior to the competition deadline.

Applicants are also asked to describe how equity, diversity and inclusion have been considered and addressed in the development of the project team, and how considerations of sex, gender and/or diversity have been integrated into the research design and methods, as applicable to the project.

ELIGIBLE COSTS

Eligible expenses are to be consistent with the appropriate tri-agency guidelines for NSERC Discovery grants, CIHR Project Grants or SSHRC Insight grants. All budget items, e.g. laptops, must be justified in relation to the specific requirements of the project, as opposed to general research. Publication costs are eligible but cannot exceed $5,000. Proposals should clearly describe what role all research personnel will play in the research project. Questions on eligible expenses should be directed to the [Connaught Secretariat]().

Below is a sample of a Connaught New Researcher Budget:

Expense Item	Description/Justification	Cost
Graduate Student	Approx. 30 hrs/week for 5 months	**$16,000**
Transcription	80 1-hr interviews	**$2,000**
Participants Honoraria	30 participants to compensate participants for their time	**$300**
Materials and Supplies	Lab consumables	**$2,700**
Services	Research Sample Analysis x 20 samples	**$3,000**
Dissemination of Research Results	Expenses related to research publications	**$1,000**
	Total	**$25,000**

ADJUDICATION

Submissions will be directed for adjudication to the Connaught Review Panel designated by the applicant. Given the breadth of research activity presented to each panel, **submissions should be written with a non-specialist audience in mind.** Review Panels retain the right to redirect a submission to another panel as they deem appropriate. Applications will be judged solely on the basis of the information supplied in the submission; no supplemental information is permitted. Assessment criteria will be consistent with those applied by external agencies. Elements considered in this evaluation are equally weighted and consist of:

- Demonstrated capacity of the applicant to carry out research project proposed
- Clarity of research objectives and methodology, including consideration of sex, gender, and diversity, as appropriate to the project
- Project impact:
  - Potential impact to the research field
  - Potential impact to the community and society
- Engagement of trainees
- Description of concrete to actions to advance equity, diversity and inclusion in the development and management of the research team
- Budget justification (Is the budget realistic and is it well justified?)

Inasmuch as one of the goals of this program is to assist new scholars in increasing their competitiveness for external research support, applicants are requested to provide information on their strategy for using Connaught Fund support and/or the anticipated research outcomes resulting from this support to attract additional external research sponsorship, especially from the three federal granting agencies—CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC—which contribute toward the University's allocation of Canada Research Chairs.

Award recommendations are formulated by the Panels and forwarded to the Connaught Committee. The Connaught Committee makes final decisions on all Connaught awards. Award results will be released by May 2024.

DURATION OF AWARD

Funds will be made available to successful applicants by June 2024. The normal duration of a Connaught New Researcher Award is 2 years, with possibility for extension under exceptional circumstances. A written request must be submitted to Connaught Secretariat at least 1 month prior to the original fund end date.

QUESTIONS

Inquiries regarding this program should be addressed to connaught.secretariat@utoronto.ca