

Call for Aspiration Post-doctoral Fellowships 2026

Key information

Salary Minimum of \$60,000 per year, with \$30,000 in salary support provided by OVPRI and the rest provided by the faculty supervisor(s).

Duration 2 years.

Eligibility Candidates must be new to UVic, meaning they cannot currently be a UVic postdoc or have earned their PhD from UVic (barring special circumstances).

Candidates must have completed their PhD before the fellowship start date and no more than two years prior to the application deadline (barring special circumstances).

There is no citizenship requirement.

The proposed research may be in any area.

Help Contact postdocadmin@uvic.ca for any questions.

For the 2026-2027 competition:

Application deadline Thursday, November 19, 2026 at 5pm Pacific.

Start date Must begin on or before September 1, 2027.

Results Announced in early February 2027.

How to apply

Applications must be submitted using the online [application form](#). Candidates must also secure two letters of reference that must be sent directly to postdocadmin@uvic.ca.

Instructions for each application component are provided below. All submitted documents must be on an 8.5 x 11-inch size page with 12-point Times New Roman or Arial font and a minimum of 2 cm margins on all sides.

The deadline for the 2026-2027 competition is Thursday, November 19, 2026, at 5pm Pacific.

Application checklist

- Confirm eligibility and review conditions
- Compile all required documents into a single pdf with naming convention AspirationPDF_CandidateLastName(s). pdf
 - [Application cover sheet](#)
 - Candidate statement (1 page)
 - Supervisor(s) statement (1 page)
 - Research proposal (2 pages + references)
 - Candidate CV (no page limit)
 - Special circumstances (if applicable, 1 page)
- Request two letters of reference be sent to postdocadmin@uvic.ca
- Complete the online [application form](#)

Application components

Application cover sheet

- Download and complete the [1-page fillable pdf](#).
- To be completed by the post-doctoral fellow candidate.
- Post-doctoral candidate information
 - Name
 - Email
 - Current position (e.g. PhD student, post-doctoral fellow)
 - Current institution
 - The date, or anticipated date, of completion of your doctoral degree (mm/yyyy)
- Supervisor and co-supervisor (if applicable) information
 - Name
 - Email
 - Academic unit
 - Research centre affiliations (if applicable)
- Research project information
 - Project title
 - Lay abstract (max 50 words)
 - Proposed start date (must be on or before September 1, 2027)

- Aspiration Post-doctoral Fellowship in BC Biodiversity Conservation
 - Indicate if you wish to additionally be considered for the Aspiration Post-doctoral Fellowship in BC Biodiversity Conservation
 - To be considered, your proposed research must advance understanding of BC biodiversity conservation, with a preference for research that centres on or considers the impacts of climate change
 - If you choose to be considered for this fellowship, you will still be considered for all other Aspiration Post-doctoral Fellowships
- External fellowships
 - List at least one external fellowship that you intend to apply for or have already applied for
 - Please note the application deadline
 - This list will be used in part to assess the demonstrated and potential research and leadership success of the candidate (Evaluation Criterion I)
- Letters of reference
 - Provide the names and email addresses of your two referees
 - Your proposed supervisor(s) may not be a reference
 - Letters of reference must be submitted directly by email to postdocadmin@uvic.ca before the application deadline and not uploaded by the candidate
 - We will not email the referees to request letters

Candidate statement

- Maximum of 1 page.
- To be completed by the post-doctoral fellow candidate.
- The candidate statement should summarize how this fellowship will help the candidate advance their independent career, provide an outline of their background and training, describe their past contributions and future plans to advance EDI in their research and discipline(s), discuss the training and experience they expect to receive, and justify their choice of supervisor(s).

- This document will be used primarily to assess the demonstrated and potential research and leadership success of the candidate (Evaluation Criterion I) but may also be used to assess the quality of the proposed research environment, including synergy with the proposed supervisor(s) and integration with a research centre, group, lab, and/or partner organization (Evaluation Criterion III).

Supervisor(s) statement

- Maximum of 1 page.
- To be completed by the UVic faculty supervisor(s). If there are multiple supervisors, the maximum length is still 1 page, and the supervisors should collaborate on the statement.
- The supervisor(s) statement should address both the synergy of the proposed research with their own research, as well as the research environment.
- The supervisor(s) statement should describe the fit between their research interests and those of the candidate and the anticipated mutual benefits, provide specifics about how the proposed research complements their ongoing projects and/or new research directions, detail the contributions that both they and the candidate have made in the design and development of the proposed research, as well as highlight the contribution the candidate would make to their academic unit and/or research centre.
- The supervisor(s) statement should provide details concerning the candidate's proposed research environment and clearly state the commitment from themselves and their academic unit and/or research centre and/or partner organization. Examples of commitment include, but are not limited to, opportunities for professional development, collaboration, or knowledge translation, or resources such as funding, facilities, or personnel that will be available to support the candidate as they carry out their proposed research and develop their leadership potential. The supervisor(s) should also comment on the possibility for and commitments to career advancement of the candidate.
- The supervisor(s) statement should identify the source(s) of the required match funding.

- This document will be used to assess the quality of the proposed research environment, including synergy with the proposed supervisor(s) and integration with a research centre, group, lab, and/or partner organization (Evaluation Criterion III).

Research proposal

- Maximum of 2 pages, plus up to 4 pages of references. References should be in the format that is standard in the discipline of the proposed research.
- To be completed by the post-doctoral fellow candidate in collaboration with their faculty supervisor(s).
- The research proposal should provide a detailed description of the proposed research project and include any specific EDI considerations. If working closely with Indigenous communities, it should describe approaches to building respectful relationships and meaningful engagement. The research proposal should address:
 - the objectives of the proposed research project, including research goals, questions and/or hypotheses;
 - the background and importance of the proposed research project, including a brief overview of relevant information and/or rationale for the proposed research in order to position it within the context of current knowledge in the field;
 - the methods and approaches of the proposed research project, including an overview of the methodology and theoretical framing and the rationale in choosing the methods and approach;
 - the expected outcomes of the proposed research project, both in the short and long term; and,
 - the significance and impact of the proposed research project, including the novelty of the project, the potential contribution the project will make to the advancement of knowledge, and the plan to disseminate the findings and/or enhance the potential for impact.
- This document will be used to assess the quality and potential impact of the proposed research project (Evaluation Criterion II).

Candidate CV

- No maximum page limit, and no requirements for formatting.

- To be completed by the post-doctoral fellow candidate.
- The candidate CV should include details about the candidate's research outputs, awards, and funding. This should include societal research outcomes such as relationship-building, influence on policy or mentorship, in addition to traditional research outputs like publications and presentations.
- The candidate CV should also include any activities that may help reviewers assess the candidate's leadership abilities.
- This document will be used to assess the demonstrated and potential research and leadership success of the candidate (Evaluation Criterion I).

Special circumstances (if applicable)

- Maximum of 1 page.
- To be completed by the post-doctoral fellow candidate.
- Candidates may complete a special circumstances document that provides a strong justification for why they should be eligible for the fellowship if the candidate:
 - Received their PhD more than two years prior to the application deadline
 - Is not new to UVic
- If the candidate received their PhD more than two years prior to the application deadline:
 - Exceptions will be granted according to the Tri-Agency guidelines for exceptions to the eligibility period for the [Canada Postdoctoral Research Award program](#). These include exceptions of up to a maximum of three years for PDFs who became the primary caregiver after the birth or adoption of a child, who were employed in industry or government, or who experienced career interruptions.
- If the candidate is not new to UVic:
 - Eligible justifications may include established and ongoing relationships with nearby Indigenous communities, family reasons or obligations, health reasons, or community or cultural responsibilities.
- This document will only be used for pre-screening of eligibility and will not be shared with reviewers.

Letters of reference

- The post-doctoral fellow candidate must secure two letters of reference.
- The letters of reference must be submitted directly by email to postdocadmin@uvic.ca by the referees before the application deadline and not uploaded by the candidate.
- The references must not be from the proposed supervisor(s).
- The letters of reference will be used to assess the demonstrated and potential research and leadership success of the candidate (Evaluation Criterion I).

Eligibility

- **Eligible proposals will nominate one post-doctoral fellow candidate in collaboration with a primary supervising UVic faculty member.** A secondary co-supervising faculty member may be included. The primary supervisor must hold a regular academic appointment as defined in the collective agreement with the Faculty Association. The secondary co-supervisor can hold any appointment.
- **Faculty members may only serve as a supervisor or co-supervisor on one application.** They may also only supervise one Aspiration PDF at a time.
- **The award must recruit a new post-doctoral fellow to UVic.** Those who are currently or who have been post-doctoral fellows at UVic and those who completed their PhD at UVic are not eligible, barring exceptional circumstances. Those who hold other appointments at UVic (sessional instructor, affiliate, etc.) are eligible. If the candidate is not new to UVic, they may submit a special circumstances document that provides a strong justification for why they should be eligible for the fellowship. Eligible justifications may include established and ongoing relationships with nearby Indigenous communities, family reasons or obligations, health reasons, or community or cultural responsibilities.
- **Candidates must have completed all degree requirements for their PhD before the fellowship start date and no more than two years prior to the application deadline.** If the candidate received their PhD more than two years prior to the application deadline, they may submit a special

circumstances document that provides a strong justification for why they should be eligible for the fellowship. Exceptions will be granted according to the Tri-Agency guidelines for exceptions to the eligibility period for the [Canada Postdoctoral Research Award program](#). These include exceptions of up to a maximum of three years for PDFs who became the primary caregiver after the birth or adoption of a child, who were employed in industry or government, or who experienced career interruptions.

- **There is no citizenship requirement.** However, successful candidates must be legally entitled to work full-time in Canada and must not have an active affiliation with any entity on Canada's list of [Named Research Organizations \(NROs\)](#) by the fellowship start date. Delays to the start date will be accommodated when they are caused by major disruptions of service at [IRCC](#). Delays to the processing of a single candidate's file by IRCC are not a grounds for extension but may be accommodated if possible.
- **Applications can be in any research area.** Unlike previous competitions, research will not be evaluated according to its alignment with Aspiration 2030 Impact Areas. Candidates whose research proposal aligns with the goals of the Aspiration Post-doctoral Fellowship in BC Biodiversity Conservation must indicate that they wish to be considered at the time of application.
- **Successful candidates are required to reside in Victoria for the duration of the award.**

Conditions

- The post-doctoral fellowship appointment must be full-time for two years.
- Fellowships must begin on or before September 1, 2027.
- This funding opportunity follows [UVic's Post-Doctoral Fellows policy](#), and candidates must be eligible for an appointment according to the policy by the proposed start date.
- The post-doctoral fellow will receive a minimum salary of \$60,000/year for the duration of the award. OVPRI will contribute \$30,000/year in salary, plus the corresponding share of mandatory employment-related costs (MERCs) and employer extended health and dental costs on that amount. The

supervisor will contribute at least \$30,000/year in salary, plus the corresponding share of MERCs and employer extended health and dental benefits costs on that amount. The total minimum cost to the supervisor, including MERCs and benefits, will be around \$35,000/year, with the exact cost depending on the post-doctoral fellow's enrolment in benefits.

- Any source of internal or external research funds may be used to meet the supervisor's matching requirement.
- Fellowship recipients are permitted to teach a maximum of one course (1.5 units) per year. These salary funds can be included as part of the match-funding required.
- Successful Aspiration Post-doctoral Fellows are required to apply for at least one external Fellowship each year (e.g. CPRA).
- OVPRI will provide incentive funding of \$5000/year (plus MERCs and benefits) if the post-doctoral fellow is successful in securing external salary support during the term of this award. This will be a reduction from \$30,000/year, and the remaining funds will be returned to OVPRI. The supervising faculty contribution can also be reduced, so long as the post-doctoral fellow receives a total funding package that is at least \$5,000/year more than the amount they were receiving prior to securing the new award.
- In the case that a post-doctoral fellowship is relinquished before the end of the two-year period, the OVPRI funds will be returned to the OVPRI for future competitions.

Adjudication process and evaluation criteria

Applications will be reviewed by a multidisciplinary committee that will have varying degrees of expertise in different fields of research. Efforts will be made to assign applications to reviewers with relevant expertise. Candidates are encouraged to keep this in mind when preparing their applications.

All applications will be vetted for eligibility before being sent to reviewers. Applications will be assigned to two reviewers, who will score the applications for each criterion according to the rubric below. To score highly, applications must excel at every indicator for each criterion. The overall score for the application will be calculated according to the assigned weighting for each criterion. Applications

must receive an average score above 4.0 to be considered for funding. The reviewers will then meet and deliberate, using the scores as a guide, before providing final recommendations to OVPRI.

UVic is a proud signatory of the [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment \(DORA\)](#). Reviewers will evaluate applications according to DORA recommendations and will consider the value and impact of all scholarly outputs in addition to research publications and will adopt a broad definition of impact beyond Journal Impact Factor.

Reviewers will be required to complete UVic's [Increasing Equity in Decision Making](#) course. This course helps participants embed equity, diversity, inclusion (EDI) and anti-racism within decision processes so they will be inclusive of diverse forms of excellence.

Evaluation criteria

Evaluation Criterion I (50%)

Demonstrated and potential research and leadership success of the candidate

- Demonstrated capacity for research excellence based on track record as defined by the quality of the candidate's research contributions and demonstrated capacity for leadership in the research domain as defined by the sphere of influence achieved to date by the candidate
 - Excellence should not be limited to its narrow and traditional sense and should consider non-traditional career paths and metrics of research such as leadership, policy contributions, public databases, exhibits, and applied research
 - Assessments should not be limited to the number of publications, the quality of journals, or the Journal Impact Factor
- Contributions and potential of the candidate to advance EDI in their discipline(s)
- Potential to secure external funding
- **Where to look:** Candidate statement, candidate CV, letters of reference, and list of external fellowships in the application cover sheet.

Evaluation Criterion II (30%)

Quality and potential impact of the proposed research project

- Quality of the proposed research program in terms of its novelty/originality, feasibility and significance
- Potential of the proposed research program to position the candidate to have significant impact through a research-intensive career
- Potential impact of the research in the short, medium or long term
- Consideration of how proposed research design advances EDI
 - Research respectfully involves Indigenous peoples (if applicable)
- **Where to look:** Research proposal

Evaluation Criterion III (20%)

Quality of the research environment

- Quality of the environment(s) in which the proposed research will be conducted
- Synergy with the proposed supervisor(s)
- Integration with a research centre, group, lab and/or partner organization
- Consideration of EDI training and development opportunities
- **Where to look:** Supervisor(s) statement, possibly candidate statement

Rubric

- 6 The application excels in all indicators.
- 5 The application excels in most indicators and adequately addresses the rest. Small improvements may be possible.
- 4 The application excels in some indicators and adequately addresses the rest. Improvements are possible.
- 3 The application adequately addresses most indicators. Improvements are required.
- 2 The application does not adequately address all indicators with some flaws or gaps.
- 1 The application does not adequately address all indicators and there are serious flaws or gaps.