

## The Health Researcher Intensive at UVic Experience (THRIVE) – Cycle 3.0 Program Overview

### What?

As part of the UVic Health Initiative the Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health is launching the third iteration of strategic capacity-building to provide interested health scholars with an intensive group and individual development program focused on writing CIHR research grants. We will run the program from June 2026 to February 2027. We will select a cohort of 5-8 scholars through a competitive application process. This work supports [Aspiration 2030's](#) Health & Wellness Impact Area. The continuation of this program is progress towards our Research Community aspiration action to create dedicated support programs for early career researchers and individuals from equity-deserving groups.

### Why?

Health research funding is highly and increasingly competitive. Securing a large award such as a Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR) Project Grant (average size ~\$750,000) provides significant resources to an individual's research program, including precious financial support for trainees and research staff. Especially for early career scholars, receiving such an award can fundamentally change one's career trajectory and the scale of impact of their research program. For UVic, these awards bring prestige, raise our profile in health research, and additional CIHR funding increases our allocations of CIHR Canada Graduate Student and Canada Research Chairs. We want to invest in our scholars to support their health research funding applications to be as competitive as possible.

### Who?

We will support **early career researchers or scholars from equity deserving groups** at UVic to pursue an application to a CIHR Project Grant. We define **early career** as any regular faculty member who is within five years of their initial appointment as an independent researcher (excluding any time on leave). We encourage new faculty hires who are starting imminently to apply. Scholars from **equity-deserving groups** may apply at all career stages. We actively encourage applications from faculty members of [groups with historical and/or current barriers to equity](#), including, but not limited to:

- First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, and all other Indigenous peoples;
- members of groups that commonly experience discrimination due to race, ancestry, colour, religion and/or spiritual beliefs, or place of origin;
- persons with visible and/or invisible (physical and/or mental) disabilities;
- persons who identify as women; and
- persons of marginalized sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions.

Applicants who have participated previously in THRIVE are not eligible, and neither are those who currently hold a CIHR Project Grant as Nominated Principal Applicant/Investigator.

### How?

The program is a mix of group learning and individual mentorship. Each THRIVE participant will be assigned a mentor at UVic (or externally), who they will meet once a month throughout the program (6-7 times). **Group sessions will be held in-person at IALH (Hut R) every two weeks on Thursdays from**

**11:30am-2:30pm (lunch provided) between June 2026 and March 2027.** Here is a draft schedule and proposed curriculum (subject to change):

- Session 1 – Group Introductions and Program Overview (with **mentors**); Overview of Health Research Funding Landscape
- Session 2 – Mock Grant Review & Debrief, Witness the Process
- Session 3 – Making the Case, Articulating your Research’s Specific Aims
- Session 4 – Verbal Research Pitches by THRIVE Participants (with **mentors**)
- Session 5 – CIHR Proposal Structure & Strategic Approach
- Session 6 – Persuasive Writing & Effective Writing Strategies
- Session 7 – Building a Team, Common CV & CIHR’s Most Significant Contributions
- Session 8 – Sex- and Gender-Based Analysis+ and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Session 10 – CIHR’s Summary of Progress Document & Research Budgets, Finances and Timeline Planning
- Session 11 & 12 – Peer Review by THRIVE Participants (with **mentors**)
- Session 12 – Group Closing and Program Evaluation

### Where?

The program will be run in-person on UVic campus at the Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health (Hut R).

### What’s provided?

Each selected THRIVE participant will have an associated \$5,000 budget. The applicant and their supervisor (Chair/Director/Dean) must determine how these funds will be used to best support the applicant; the proposed use of funds must be clearly outlined in the Supervisor Letter (see application form). There is flexibility in how these funds are allocated, recognizing varying needs and realities of faculty members and units across campus. Potential expenses include replacement sessional instructor costs associated with a teaching release for the applicant, research assistant funding for the applicant to assist with grant application preparations (e.g. application systems, CVs, lit review, letters of support), salary for teaching assistant support for the applicant, expenses for equipment, supplies, or pilot research activities to improve the feasibility of the proposed CIHR Project Grant.

**Selected THRIVE applicants will be required to become IALH Affiliates (if they are not already).**

### Questions?

This cycle of THRIVE will be facilitated by Dr. Kelli Stajduhar (NURS). If you have any questions about the program or application please direct them to Kelli Stajduhar at [kis@uvic.ca](mailto:kis@uvic.ca)

## The Health Researcher Intensive at UVic Experience (THRIVE) Application Form

Interested faculty members should submit a complete application package (including this form and the documents detailed below) to [ialh@uvic.ca](mailto:ialh@uvic.ca) by **12noon on Friday, May 15, 2026**. Results will be available within three weeks of the application deadline. This should be submitted as **one** combined PDF file named “THRIVE\_LastName(s)\_FirstName(s)”.

**Applicant Full Name:**

**Applicant Affiliation(s):** Department/School, Faculty, Research Centre(s)

**Applicant Email:**

**Academic Unit Supervisor Name:**

**Academic Unit Supervisor Email:**

**Which THRIVE applicant group(s) are you a part of? (check all that apply)**

- Early Career Researcher
- Scholar from an [Equity-Deserving Group](#)

**Do you agree to attend all sessions as outlined in the Program Overview document (top of page 2), maintain affiliate status with IALH, and prepare and submit a CIHR Project Grant as part of THRIVE?**

- I agree

Please also append the following in your application package:

- **Applicant Letter—2 pages max**, which must describe:
  - your interests in the program
  - why you are competitive for the program
  - the research project/program application you hope to develop through the program
  - your current research environment (e.g. other scholars, space, equipment)
- **Signed Supervisor Letter (e.g., Dept. Chair/School Director)—1 page max**, which must detail:
  - why the applicant is competitive for the program
  - how the unit is supporting the applicant
  - details of how the \$5,000 of funding will be used
  - confirmation that no service or teaching commitments will be scheduled during the program’s scheduled sessions
- **Applicant’s Full Curriculum Vitae**, in any format, but UVic format preferred. No page limit.