

THE WILSON CENTRE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM POLICIES & PROCEDURES

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1. Preamble

The Wilson Centre for Research in Education (Wilson Centre) offers a full-time research fellowship for individuals who:

- Plan a career as a clinical faculty member in a health professions training program with a substantial portion of their academic time dedicated to research in education¹. (Research fellows in this category are drawn from the entire spectrum of health professions.)

OR

- Plan a career as a full-time scientist in health professions education research.

Masters and PhD Students

The emphasis of the fellowship is on mentorship and training in the initiation, design and conduct of innovative research relevant to the field of health professions education research and practice. Fellows are expected to complete a **minimum of two years full time research training** at the Wilson Centre under the supervision of a Wilson Centre Core Scientist. Additionally, Fellows are expected to complete formal graduate study leading to a Masters or PhD degree through an approved graduate program at the University of Toronto (for example, Faculty of Education [OISE/UT], Institute of Medical Science (IMS), or Dalla Lana School of Public Health) or elsewhere.

Post-Doctoral Fellows

The Wilson Centre also welcomes Post-Doctoral Fellows who have a primary supervisor at the Wilson Centre and who will commit to be onsite **for at least one year**.

Supervision

Supervising faculty have diverse areas of expertise that touch on various aspects of health professions education. Common areas of study include motor learning, technical skills, inter/intra-professional education and collaboration, history of medical education research, interdisciplinary research in health, sociopolitics of knowledge, health globalization, governance, professionalism, effect of stress on performance, simulation-based training

¹ Applicants interested in improving their skills as a teacher should consider discussing professional development opportunities with the Centre for Faculty Development (<http://www.cfd.med.utoronto.ca>)

education, program evaluation, assessment and evaluation, communication, cognitive decision-making and learning, and sociology.

Admissions procedures and requirements are detailed in the documentation that follows.

2. Description of the Course of Study

i) Residency Requirement

The length of the program varies depending on the individual's background and program of study, but typically ranges from two to five years. **The minimum fellowship duration requirement is two years** (except for Post-Doctoral Fellows). Fellows are expected to consider the Wilson Centre Fellowship a full-time position. Outside work (such as clinical work or other employment) will be limited in accordance with the definition of full-time status in the School of Graduate Studies (www.sgs.utoronto.ca). Typically this will be capped at 5-10 hours per week.

ii) Wilson Centre Educational Activities

- a) Fellows are expected to participate fully in the activities associated with the program including regular attendance at Wilson Centre Research-In-Progress Rounds, Wilson Centre Fellowship Professional Development Seminar Series, and the Richard K. Reznick Wilson Centre Research Day as well as participation in relevant local conferences and meetings.
- b) Within the first month of their fellowship, Fellows will provide a two-page written statement outlining their goals and expectations for the fellowship, areas of research interest, relevant past experiences and future academic plans. This statement will be submitted to their Wilson Centre supervisor and also to the Director of the Fellowship Program.
- c) One month prior to the completion of their fellowship, Fellows will provide a two-page written reflection on their experiences as a Wilson Centre Fellow. This may include reflections on how the Wilson Centre Fellowship has influenced their attitudes toward research, professional development, and intended career. This statement will be submitted to their Wilson Centre supervisor and also to the Director of the Fellowship Program.

iii) Graduate Training

All candidates will be expected to engage in graduate research training. The Wilson Centre is not a degree-granting unit, so fellows obtain their degrees (Masters or PhD) through enrollment in approved programs. The details of the program must be approved by their Wilson Centre supervisor prior to enrolment in the fellowship. The required coursework depends on the graduate degree program.

iv) Major Research Project/Thesis

Candidates are expected to engage in research activities relevant to health profession education and practice, culminating in a major research project or thesis under the supervision and/or mentorship of one of the Wilson Centre Core Scientists. Methods of inquiry have included qualitative, quantitative, observational, and experimental approaches. While candidates may be involved in many research projects throughout their tenure, they are expected to assume responsibility for the conception, design, implementation, and interpretation of at least one major research project (which may be their thesis).

v) *Dissemination of Work*

Fellows will be expected to create a unique contribution to the field, culminating in the submission and eventual publication of at least one research paper in a peer-reviewed journal or equivalent as approved by their Wilson Centre Core Scientist supervisor, as well as presentation of one or more papers or posters or equivalent at a national or international conference. In addition, candidates will be expected to present their work at least once per year at either a Wilson Centre Research-In-Progress Rounds or during one of the Wilson Centre Professional Development Series sessions. Fellows are encouraged to pursue presentation opportunities at departmental and other rounds including the Richard K. Reznick Wilson Centre Research Day.

3. Faculty Supervision

Each Fellow will be primarily supervised by a Wilson Centre Core Scientist who will assume primary responsibility for the Fellow's progress. Often the Wilson Centre Core Scientist supervisor also functions as the supervisor of the Masters or PhD thesis. Applicants are encouraged to read recent Wilson Centre Annual Reports to obtain a sense of the areas of research being enacted by the Wilson Centre Core Scientists (available online at www.thewilsoncentre.ca). A primary supervisor and Fellow may together decide to arrange for an additional co-supervisor within the Wilson Centre community (Core Scientist, Cross-Appointed Scientist or Educator Researcher) to provide necessary clinical, methodological or theoretical expertise. Under special circumstances, Wilson Centre Cross-Appointed Scientists may have the opportunity to be the primary supervisor of Wilson Centre Fellows subject to space, resource limitations, and Fellowship Committee agreement.

4. Space Policy of the Wilson Centre

Fellows will have access to an appropriate workspace and computer in accordance with the Wilson Centre Space Policy.

5. Application Process

i) *Application deadline*

The deadline for application package submission is **October 31** for fellowships beginning the following July. If you are past the application date and still wish to apply, please contact the Fellowship Director to inquire if your application will still be considered. In some years applications have been accepted past the deadline depending on availability of positions.

ii) *Supervision*

The applicant must already have met with a supervisor at the Wilson Centre and have received his or her agreement to serve in that capacity prior to submitting an application. This sole or primary supervisor must be a Wilson Centre Core Scientist. A primary supervisor and fellow may together decide to arrange for an additional co-supervisor within the Wilson Centre community (Core Scientist, Cross-Appointed Scientist or Educator Researcher) to provide necessary clinical, methodological or theoretical expertise. Under special circumstances, Wilson Centre Cross-Appointed Scientists may have the opportunity to be the primary supervisor of Wilson Centre Fellows subject to space, resource limitations, and Fellowship Committee agreement. Arrangements for meeting with Wilson Centre Core Scientists, Cross-Appointed Scientists, and Educator Researchers can be made through the Director of the Fellowship program.

iii) *The application package must be submitted to the Fellowship Director and include the following:*

- (1) A brief cover letter including:
 - (a) The name of the Wilson Centre Core Scientist who will serve as the applicant's potential sole or primary supervisor;
 - (b) Where appropriate, the name(s) of the Core Scientist, Cross-Appointed Scientist or Educator Researcher who will serve as the applicant's potential co-supervisor;
 - (c) The name of the Masters or PhD program to which candidate has applied or will apply;
 - (d) Description/documentation of salary support (or relevant application) for the fellowship period;
 - (e) The same process applies to Post-Doctoral Fellows with the exception of the information about their graduate program.
- (2) A current CV
- (3) For applicants with mandatory clinical responsibilities, a letter(s) of support from an individual(s) in the relevant clinical department who is in the position to guarantee protected time during the Fellowship (e.g. Department Chair, Hospital Chair/Chief, Dean, Program Director, etc.).

iv) Applications will be reviewed and applicants may be invited for an interview by the Fellowship Committee at their discretion.

v) *Acceptance notification*

Applicants will be notified by the Fellowship Director of their acceptance within two months of the application deadline.

6. **Related Programs**

i) *Graduate Programs*

All applicants to the Wilson Centre Fellowship (with the exception of Post-Doctoral Fellows) are expected to concurrently apply to a relevant Masters or Doctoral level graduate research program. This application process is independent of the Wilson Centre Fellowship application.

7. **Funding and Costs**

i) *Salary Support*

Fellowship salaries are not funded internally by the Wilson Centre. Fellows are responsible for securing their own funding. Funding for the program will be individualized, with potential sources including external funding, hospital funding or departmental funds, depending on the applicant's status. Additional information will be made available on the Wilson Centre website.

ii) *The Currie Fellowship at the Wilson Centre*

The Currie Fellowship Program at the Wilson Centre was established through a generous gift from Richard and Elizabeth Currie to support the development of leaders in health professions education research. Having previously endowed the Currie Chair in Health Professions Education Research, the Curries provided the new gift in the spirit of

developing leadership and academic excellence in health professions education research that would also overcome some of the financial hurdles that prevent the best and brightest from accessing training. The awards were designed to provide sufficient funding to allow health professional trainees or graduate students interested in the health professions, domestic or international, to access training at the Wilson Centre. The Currie Fellowship deadline is the same as the deadline for the Wilson Centre Fellowship application (October 31 of the year prior to commencement of fellowship in July). For more information see: <http://www.thewilsoncentre.ca/Fellowships/TheCurrieFellowship.aspx>.

iii) *Conference Travel*

Fellows will be expected to attend relevant research meetings, and will be eligible for limited funds for conference travel. Funding is normally only available for conferences at which the fellow is presenting. Details should be discussed with the primary Wilson Centre supervisor.

iv) *Research Project Funding*

Where necessary, candidates are expected to apply for external research funding with the assistance of their primary Wilson Centre supervisor.

v) *Tuition*

There is no fee for the Wilson Centre Research Fellowship program. However the candidate is expected to pay tuition in the applicable graduate program. The exact tuition amount depends on the applicant's graduate program. Note that these fees may or may not be covered by the fellow's financial sponsor.

8. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Please access the Wilson Centre website (www.thewilsoncentre.ca) for more information regarding the Centre, its Scientists, Educator Researchers, Programs and Meetings, and for additional information concerning the Fellowship Program.

A section addressing FAQ concerning the Fellowship Program can be found at; <http://www.thewilsoncentre.ca/Fellowships/FAQ.aspx>