

## 2025/2026 Career Establishment Research Award Guidelines

2025-26CERA

### GENERAL INFORMATION

#### Summary Table of Lung Health Foundation Career Establishment Research Award

(Note: This is a high-level summary. Please see the section on eligibility on page 2 for detailed eligibility criteria.)

Type of Award	Purpose of Award	Eligibility	Award Amount (\$)	Max. Term (Years)
Career Establishment Research Award	To assist mid-career investigators with the operating support needed to carry out independent research of relevance to lung health.	<p>At the time of application, applicants should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Be six to fifteen (6-15) years (i.e., between 61 through 180 months) from the date of their first academic appointment excluding eligible leaves such as maternity, parental, sick, family medical and bereavement leave (please see the section on eligibility on page 2 for more details).</li> <li>2) Be an independent researcher at an institution eligible to hold funds from the Tri Council funding agencies (please see the section on eligibility on page 2 for links to lists of eligible institutions) and must be eligible to hold funds as a Principal Investigator (PI).</li> <li>3) Have at least 40% of their independent position's professional activity dedicated to conducting research.</li> <li>4) Must not hold combined operating grant funds of more than CAN\$500,000 as the Nominated Principal Applicant (at the time of funding start date).</li> <li>5) Propose research that aligns with the key areas of focus for the LHF.</li> </ol> <p><b>Note:</b> Winners of previous Career Establishment Research Award are ineligible to re-apply for the same award for the succeeding <u>two</u> (2) granting cycles post-award.</p>	Up to \$75,000	1

## Application Schedule

Type of Award	Deadline – Letter of Intent	Deadline – Full Application	Notification
Career Establishment Research Award	August 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2025	October 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2025	Spring 2026

## AWARD DESCRIPTION

### Career Establishment Research Award

#### Purpose

The Lung Health Foundation (LHF) Career Establishment Research Award aims to increase the capacity and quality of research on lung disease in Canada by providing mid-career investigators with the support needed to carry out independent research. By purposefully dedicating funding to support mid-career scientists, LHF hopes to support researchers in leading innovative and impactful lung health research, and expand their research program with the goal of attracting large scale external research funding, particularly funding from the Tri-Agencies. The award is intended as a research grant to support a proposed research project for independent mid-career investigators who are working to lead important scientific studies while developing leadership in lung health, and are supporting the growth of next generation of scientists. Investigators who are experiencing mid-career challenges are also encouraged to apply.

#### Eligibility

At the time of application, the Nominated Principal Applicant (NPA) must:

1	Be six years to fifteen (6-15) years (i.e., between 61 through 180 months) from the date of their first academic appointment excluding leaves of absence for maternity, parental, medical, family medical, or bereavement purposes at the time of application deadline. <i>(Note: No accommodation is allowed for professional leave, or time spent on non-research-related duties such as training, sabbatical, or administrative leave.)</i>
2	<p>Be an independent researcher at an institution eligible to hold funds from the Tri Council funding agencies:  <i>Note: Clicking below will lead you to a list of eligible institutions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) eligible institutions</a></li> <li><a href="#">Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) eligible institutions or</a></li> <li><a href="#">Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) eligible institutions</a></li> </ul> <p>An independent researcher is an individual who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holds an academic or research position that commences by the full application deadline</li> <li>Engages in research related activities that are not under the direction of another individual</li> <li>Is able to supervise or co-supervise undergraduate or graduate students or postdoctoral fellows (if applicable, depending on their institution's policy) and publish the research results.</li> <li>Must be eligible to hold funds as a Principal Investigator (PI) at their appointed institution or organization.</li> </ul> <p>Individuals who are full- or part-time students, postdoctoral fellows or research associates are NOT eligible to apply as a Nominated Principal Applicant (NPA), regardless of whether they meet the definition of an independent researcher.</p>
3	Have at least 40% of their independent position's professional activity dedicated to research.

4	Must <b>not</b> hold combined operating grant funding of <u>greater than CAN\$500,000</u> inclusive of funding from home institutions as the Principal Applicant at the time of funding start date. Grants received towards salary support and start-up funds are exempt from the CAN\$500,000 threshold.
5	Not have been a recipient of an LHF Career Establishment Research Award as a Nominated Principal Applicant for at least two (2) grant cycles succeeding award disbursement.
6	Not have submitted more than one application towards this award as a Nominated Principal Applicant within a single funding cycle.
7	<p>Apply with a proposal for a project that aligns with LHF's topical areas of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Asthma</li> <li>▪ COPD</li> <li>▪ Lung Cancer</li> <li>▪ Infectious Respiratory Disease, specifically in the area of health promotion and prevention around Pneumococcal pneumonia, influenza, Covid-19, and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)</li> <li>▪ Nicotine Smoking/Vaping in youth, specifically in the area of prevention, cessation and/or examining the effects of nicotine use on lung health</li> </ul> <p>Applications deemed not in alignment with LHF's area of focus will not move forward in the application process.</p>
8	Not hold funding from the tobacco industry.

### Award Value and Terms

Up to \$75,000 for one (1) year. The funds may be applied to pay for costs directly related to the research proposal of the awardee as outlined by the Use of Grant Funds section of the [Tri-agency Guide on Financial Administration](#).

## Deadlines

<b>Friday August 15th, 2025 by 5:00pm ET</b>	Letter of Intent
<b>Friday October 24th, 2025 by 5:00pm ET</b>	Full application

*\*Note: There will be a two (2) week-long hold between the Letter of Intent deadline and opening of the full application form to allow LHF and the Scientific Review Committee Chairs time for a preliminary review to determine if eligibility criteria are met. Nominated Principal Applicants invited to continue to the full application will be notified through LHF's grant management portal, ProposalCentral. It is the Nominated Principal Applicant's responsibility to monitor ProposalCentral and their email spam folders to ensure that they do not miss this notification.*

LHF staff will be available to respond to questions or inquiries at [researchadmin@lunghealth.ca](mailto:researchadmin@lunghealth.ca) between 8:30am-5:30pm ET on business days. Email enquiries will typically receive a response within 24 business hours.

## Application Requirements

### Application Instructions

- 1) Prior to submission of the full grant application, applicants must submit a Letter of Intent form, preregistering their intent to apply for the Career Establishment Research Award. Failure to turn in a complete Letter of Intent form by August 15, 2025 at 5:00pm ET will disqualify applicants from being able to apply for the award.
- 2) Submitted Intents to Apply will be reviewed for completeness and eligibility. Complete applications that meet the eligibility criteria will be invited to submit a full application two weeks after the Letter of Intent deadline.
- 3) The application form and copies of all supporting documentation must be submitted to LHF via [ProposalCentral](#)
  - Applications or supporting documentation received via email or post will not be accepted.
  - Information in the full application must remain consistent with information provided in the Letter of Intent. Information provided in the Letter of Intent (e.g., project title, abstract). May not be edited once applications move on to the full application stage.

***It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure any content needed from external parties (e.g., institutional signatures) are received by LHF within the electronic application form by the deadline of September 26, 2025 at 5:00pm ET. Incomplete applications will not move forward in the review process.***

### Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Grant Application Preparation

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that the information provided in their grant applications is accurate, truthful, and complete, and that all sources are properly credited and cited. Applicants should be aware that utilizing generative AI could result in presenting information without proper recognition or acknowledgment or original authorship. Applicants must disclose whether and how generative AI has been used in the creation of their application.

### Notes on Documentation

- 1) Where noted on the electronic application form, supporting documentation should be attached in PDF format. Attached pages should be single-spaced on 8 ½ x 11 inch pages using 12 point Times New Roman font. Condensed type or spacing will not be acceptable. A margin of 1 inch around the page is needed. No photo-reduction except for figures.
- 2) The applicant should keep original copies of all supporting documents on file for future reference if required.

***LHF reserves the right to decline late or incomplete applications and will assume no responsibility in following up with applicants who submit incomplete applications. The entire responsibility to ensure completeness of the application submitted (including all required signatures) will rest with the applicant.***

### Grant Proposal Formatting

The grant proposal is a **maximum of five (5) pages**, excluding references, tables, charts, figures, and photographs. Additional materials (tables, charts, figures, etc.) must not exceed an **additional five (5) pages**. References are not subject to a page count. Representative publications may be uploaded as appendices but **cannot exceed three (3) pages** in number. The proposal should focus on the hypotheses/research questions, the background (no more than one page on the background) and the approach. Applicants should focus on explaining methods where they are critical to the application and avoid explaining detailed technical methods.

### Investigators and Co-Applicants (Research Team)

Applications must be submitted by the Nominated Principal Applicant. The LHF Career Establishment Research Award does not allow a Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) to apply for this award at present since only the Nominated Principal Applicant is expected to lead the intellectual direction of the proposed research activities. Please see the [Glossary of Funding Related Terms](#) for definitions of Nominated Principal Applicants and Co-Principal Investigators.

If the proposed research entails significant collaboration with investigators not named as co-applicants, the applicant(s) should include a signed statement of support for each collaborator(s).

### Ethics Approval

All applications and studies must be approved by the institution's Ethics Committee for Human or Animal Experimentation when research is conducted.

### Budget Justification

- 1) **Salaries and Benefits:** Provide names (if known), categories of employment and proposed salaries (including non-discretionary benefits) of all personnel identified in the budget. Please refer to the sections below for additional information.
- 2) **Equipment:** In your budget justification, provide a breakdown and justification of the equipment items requested. Give details of models, manufacturer, prices and applicable taxes. Please refer to [CIHR guidelines](#) for specifics.

In addition, for maintenance and/or equipment items listed, indicate:

- a. The availability and status of similar equipment;
- b. The anticipated extent of utilization;
- c. The reasons for choice of specific type, model or service contract, in relation to alternatives;
- d. Where applicable, the necessity for upgrading existing equipment or service contracts. For

equipment or service contracts costing more than \$5000, attach at least one quotation for cost.

- 3) **Experimental Animals:** Include species to be used and sample size justification along with calculations, if applicable. Provide a breakdown for procurement, breeding, boarding, feeding and wherever possible include a copy of the Institution's standardized costs for these tasks as they vary from institution to institution.
- 4) **Materials and Supplies:** Provide details and justify/explain major items. Do not simply list items.
- 5) **Others:** Provide justification/explanation for each item listed.
- 6) **Travel:** Provide justification and a brief explanation of how each activity relates to the proposed research. The purpose and estimated cost of such travel must be given.
- 7) **Financial Support (if applicable):** Provide a brief explanation of any financial (not-in-kind) contribution from other sources, if applicable.
  - If investigators already hold a grant, or if they are applying for grants, they must clearly describe the degree to which they overlap with the current application. This requirement includes grants funded or applied for from all sources.
  - Budget, budget justification, and summary page for other funding support (ongoing or applied) must be attached.
  - Applicants are required to disclose all other funding sources.
  - Priority will be given to scientifically meritorious grants that are not currently funded from other sources.

**Note:** Applicants must identify the institution through which funds would be administered by its business number as registered through the Canadian Revenue Agency. (For details, please refer to <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/taxes/business-number.html> and inquire through your institution's Financial Office).

#### Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

The Lung Health Foundation dedicated to promoting *Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)* within the research community. To support this commitment, we include sections in our grants application forms that reflect this strategic priority.

As part of the application process, all applicants will be asked to complete a self-*identification Equity and Diversity questionnaire*. Successful applicants may be asked to complete this questionnaire again upon receiving the award. Please note, all data will remain confidential and will not be shared with the peer review committee. It will be used solely to help LHF assess the accessibility and reach of its funding programs.

In addition to the questionnaire, the LHF expects applicants to describe how they have considered health equity in their proposed project. Given the health equity considerations made in the proposed project, applicants will also be asked to describe how they believe the proposed project will help promote health equity in the short, medium, and/or long-term.

The following link is a resource to guide applicants' reflections as they consider how their research addresses health inequities: <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/s11606-021-06789-3.pdf>.

Some examples<sup>1</sup> for applicants to consider might include:

- Does the proposed research address a priority problem for structurally and systemically

<sup>1</sup> Examples to consider adapted from the Equity Lens; Dans et al., 2007

disadvantaged<sup>2</sup> populations?

- Are research results likely to reduce or widen disparities? Have stakeholders from the population being studied been consulted?
- Have you considered how to address barriers to implementation in structurally and systemically disadvantaged populations?
- Will you monitor the impact of the recommendations on structurally and systemically disadvantaged populations?
- Do members of the research team have either lived experience or EDI training that can shape or enhance the quality and relevance of the project to structurally and systemically disadvantaged populations?

This section aims to encourage high-quality, inclusive science that considers equity and diversity factors, ultimately contributing to a broader understanding of health determinants across diverse populations.

Please be aware that the EDI principles will be accessible to peer reviewers and will be factored into the peer review process. If your proposed project does not incorporate EDI principles or considerations, you must provide a strong justification in your application.

## Review Process and Criteria

All complete applications submitted by the deadline will undergo a rigorous scientific review process. Assigned reviewers will have knowledge or expertise in the subject matter of the given proposal. Peer reviewers may include external reviewers identified by the applicant, when possible. Reviewers will not include individuals who have declared a conflict of interest with a given application.

Peer reviewers will be assigned to each application and will evaluate proposals based on the following criteria:

- Research approach/research design and methodology – 25%
- Originality – 20%
- Applicant – 20%
- Research environment – 10%
- Research impact – 25%

Applications will be primarily evaluated on scientific merit based on [criteria established by the CIHR](#).

The highest-ranking applications will move on to a review committee meeting. At the committee meeting, once the assigned reviewers have discussed their impressions of the applications, other committee members will be invited to contribute to the discussion. Health Equity considerations made in the proposal will also be taken into consideration during the committee discussion (please see the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion section above). After the committee discussion, the three reviewers will reach a consensus score. If no consensus is reached, the average of the three scores will be taken.

Once a consensus score is determined, all present committee members (except the Chairs) will provide a score between +/- 0.5 of the consensus score. All reviewer scores will be averaged to determine a final committee score. Although reviewers will also be asked to consider the budget justification, it will not contribute to the final score at this stage.

The highest ranked applications from the review committee will be forwarded to the Awards Advisory Committee (AAC) for final review. The AAC will include the Chairs from all review committees, acting as representatives for their respective committee. The purpose of the AAC is to determine the final awardees

<sup>2</sup> Consider disadvantaged groups who might be vulnerable to inequitable healthcare access because of their place of residence, race, occupation, gender, religion, education, socioeconomic status, or social network and capital

based on quantitative and qualitative reviewer comments (accounting for systematic scoring differences between committees) and potential for impact.

## Use of Awards

### Categories of Expenditures

Although the individual investigator is allowed discretion in the categories of expenditures within the approved budget, approval of the LHF should be obtained before undertaking any major changes in the way in which the award is spent. LHF-funded research and training grants do not provide for institutional overheads and/or indirect costs of research or clinical care and any limitations specified in the grant notification must be respected.

### Excess Expenditures

Any commitments (or expenditures) incurred by an investigator either in excess of the current grant funds or beyond the term of the grant are the responsibility of the investigator. All salary approvals and other special authorizations are given subject to the availability of the funds in the grant.

### Ineligibility for Payment of Dues

Grant funds may not be used to pay fees for membership in professional or scientific societies or for journal subscriptions.

### Travel

Grants are not intended to support travel costs unless there is a requirement for travel (exclusive of meeting attendance) as part of the project. Use of the award to defray costs of travel is acceptable only if a specific allocation for travel forms part of the approved budget.

### Equipment

Title to equipment purchased under a grant remains in the institution at which the grant is held but its use for research projects listed on the grantee's application or otherwise approved by the committee shall be given priority over other uses.

### Publication Costs

It is acceptable to include an anticipated publication cost of a maximum of \$2000.00 in total, into the expendables category of your budget. LHF strongly recommends that all research papers generated from LHF funded projects are freely accessible through the Publisher's website or an online repository within 12 months of publication

### Transfer of Awards or Equipment

The awards are to be undertaken at the institution named in the award. If the Nominated Principal Applicant moves to another institution, the award can be transferred only with the written approval of the LHF. Transfer of equipment requires, in addition, the approval of the institution where the grant was originally held.

### Patent Rights

LHF does not claim patent or intellectual property rights on any invention resulting from research supported by LHF funds. However, it expects the grantees and/or their institutions will seek patent protection for inventions or developments supported through a grant. Grantees wishing to obtain information concerning the patents applicable to discoveries arising from their research should seek advice from Canadian Patents and Development Limited, 275 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0R3.

### Indirect Costs Policy

LHF supports only the direct costs of research. No funding is to be used for indirect costs of research. The definition of indirect costs of research for the purposes of this policy is, costs which cannot be directly

associated with a particular research program or operating grant including costs associated with the general operation and maintenance of facilities (from laboratories to libraries); the management of the research process (from grant management to commercialization); and regulation and safety compliance (including human ethics, animal care and environmental assessment).

### Unspent Balance

Any unspent balance that remains following the end of the grant must be returned to LHF by a predetermined deadline as outlined in the contract drawn up at the time of funding acceptance. However, on a case-by-case basis, LHF will consider written requests for use of the unspent balance as a limited-time extension of the original grant.

### Inability to Complete Research

The institution is responsible for advising LHF promptly if the grantee is unable for any reason to carry out or complete the research for which the grant was given. LHF will consider written requests for a limited-time extension of the original grant.

### Acknowledgements

The support of the LHF should be acknowledged in any publication arising from research supported by the award as outlined in the funding agreement. Grant recipients will be provided with exact wording to be used in acknowledgements. Copies of abstracts, lay summaries and publications arising from the Career Establishment Research Award should be forwarded to LHF in accordance with the schedule outlined in the funding agreement

To facilitate communication of research funded by LHF, scientific abstracts and lay summaries of Career Establishment Research Award-funded research may be released for print and other media. Awards will be posted on the LHF website, social media, newsletters and interactive online platforms.

The awardee will be occasionally contacted to receive testimonials for fundraising and awareness campaigns (in videos, photos, and text articles) related to the benefits of receiving research funding through LHF. Additionally, they should agree that LHF will thereafter reserve the right to use the applicant's likeness to promote the benefits of receiving research funding through LHF.

### Location of research

Grant funds may only be used to support research conducted in Canada.

### Employment Under Grants

Guidelines for employment are the same as CIHR. For details, please see the Tri-Agency (CIHR, NSERC & SSHRC) [Financial Administration Guide tri-council website](#).

- 1) Technicians and research assistants may be employed under grants. The university's classification of technicians for whom funds are requested must be indicated on the application. The rates of pay shall be in accordance with the salary scale of the university or institution concerned. Investigators who seek funds for the employment of research assistants must describe the role of the individual in the research project. Provision may not be made under grants for the employment of practicing clinicians who wish to participate in a research project on a part-time basis, or for payments to individuals who receive remuneration for teaching or social work. Funding for graduate student support will be limited to CIHR guidelines.
- 2) Individuals paid from grants are not employees of the LHF. Employer contribution to superannuation, group insurance and other employee benefits normally available to the institution's employees may be paid by the institution on behalf of the individuals employed under the LHF's grants, and the cost of such contributions may be charged to the appropriate grant.
- 3) Funds provided by the LHF through this award are not to be used as salary support for the awardee.

The regulations of the university with respect to the employment of relatives also apply to the use of the LHF's funds for this purpose. Only under exceptional circumstances will the LHF approve payment to members of university staff for consultative or other services. It is important to complete in full the section on other research funds on the grant application. The applicant must include an indication not only of other grants received or applied for but also any which may overlap with the present application. Budget, justification and summary page of any ongoing or applied-for grants must be included with the application form.

- 4) Funding for graduate students or post-doctoral fellows will be considered as long as:
- The trainee is actively engaged on the proposed research;
  - Justification for salary support is provided; and
  - All additional sources of funding for the graduate student/post-doc are disclosed. Stipends paid to trainees shall be in accordance with institutional policies and pay scales.

### **Progress and Final Reports to LHF**

It is a requirement of the LHF that the awardee(s) document outcomes and impact of the research supported by awards.

Applicants should be aware that if they receive an Career Establishment Research Award in 2025-2026, they will be expected to submit progress reports and meet with LHF at prescribed intervals according to the conditions and schedule as outlined in the funding agreement.

The support of the LHF must be acknowledged in any publication arising from research supported by the award using this text: *"This research was funded through a Lung Health Foundation Career Establishment Research Award"*.

Copies of abstracts and publications arising from the LHF Career Establishment Research Award-supported research should be forwarded to the LHF at the time of the publication via [researchadmin@lunghealth.ca](mailto:researchadmin@lunghealth.ca).

### **Indemnification**

The LHF, its directors, officers, employees, and volunteers shall not be responsible for any claims or other matters arising from employment or any other matter occurring as a result of these applications.