

**Mitacs and MHRC
Partners for Innovation in Mental Health Research
Summer 2023 Internship Application Guide**

Deadline to apply: November 4, 2022

Established in 1999, Mitacs is a not-for-profit organization that fosters growth and innovation in Canada by solving business challenges with research solutions from the best academic institutions at home and around the world. For more than 20 years, Mitacs has worked with over 165 postsecondary partners, thousands of companies, and federal, provincial, and territorial governments to build partnerships that support industrial and social innovation in Canada. One of these partnerships is with Mental Health Research Canada (MHRC).

MHRC's Focus on Innovation in Mental Health Research:

The purpose of the partnership between MHRC and Mitacs is to support the development of the next generation of mental health researchers. Internships will provide opportunities to PhD, Masters', and/or College students that will have a direct impact on their communities. Our model aspires to narrow the gap between research and practice and ensure stakeholder engagement in research.

An MHRC studentship is financial support for a student which could encompass fellowships, internships, and scholarships. An internship is a form of studentship in which the student gains practical experience in a work environment with stakeholders (i.e. in a community organization, hospital, treatment centre). MHRC aims to drive systemic change by encouraging adoption of effective, research-informed and client-centric approaches to mental health treatment.

Proposal for Student Support:

MHRC and Mitacs developed a partnership through the [Mitacs Accelerate program](#), which will support the brightest PhD, Masters', or College students conducting research in mental health at one of Canada's many universities and/or colleges. These interns will share their time between academic institutions and community service providers, tying together their research with the end-users to ensure the project is tailored to and appropriate for that community's needs and people with lived experience. This application cycle is for the Summer 2023 term (for projects beginning in **May 2023**).

Eligible students must:

- **A Canadian citizen and/or permanent resident AND;**
- **Be enrolled in a Masters, College or PhD program at an accredited Canadian University or College, with a background in psychology or related field/discipline AND;**
- **Be seeking to conduct a mental health research project in collaboration with both an academic supervisor and an eligible community partner (see page 3). Preference will be given to projects addressing the unique needs of diverse and/or vulnerable populations in Canada.**

All projects must have clear potential for impact to studied population, and therefore must partner with a community service provider and integrate the insights of people with lived experience into each stage of their project.

Goals:

- ✓ To support the next generation of mental health researchers and to ensure that Masters', PhD and College students are actively engaged in innovative, useful and relevant mental health research
- ✓ To narrow the gap between research and its impact on end-users
- ✓ To strengthen relationships between community mental health service providers and academia through collaboration and knowledge sharing
- ✓ To contribute to the development of a more accessible and impactful mental health system in Canada

Critical Success Factors:

This fully-funded Mitacs–MHRC partnership is designed to address research gaps and improve mental health service delivery to various communities across Canada. Factors critical to success are as follows:

- Inclusion of members of the target community, ideally those with lived experience, throughout the development and implementation of the research;
- Presence of both a subject matter expert and an [academic supervisor](#) at the candidate's institution on the research advisory team to help guide the development of the project, and ensure research rigor, adherence to academic standards and relevance to the targeted population. Oversight by the subject matter expert will be prioritized;
- Collaboration with a direct service provider at which the research will be carried out;
- Design projects with the potential for scaling both within the community, and across Canada;

Financial Mechanics:

Candidates enrolled in a College, PhD, or Masters' program are eligible for funding of \$15,000 CAD, for one 4-6 month term, with potential for renewal. For this round of funding, **projects would begin in May 2023**. Funds are paid directly to the institution following Mitacs Accelerate guidelines.

Application Process:

Applications to the Mitacs-MHRC partnership is a 2-stage process: Preliminary application to MHRC, then formal Mitacs Accelerate application.

Stage 1:

Candidates must be identified at this stage and are the lead applicant for Stage 1. They will have identified their academic supervisor, and their partner organization (please contact [Jillian Murray](mailto:Jillian.Murray@mitacs.ca), Mitacs Director, Strategic Partnerships, to ensure eligibility).

NOTE: Each application should represent one unique student project. The same academic supervisor and partner organization can be present on multiple applications; however each submission must clearly demonstrate how the project is unique from the others. Each student may only submit one application per cycle.

Please send a research proposal using **MHRC's proposal template** addressing the questions below, along with your resume to Sarah Murphy, smurphy@mhrc.ca and cc: Jillian Murray, jhatnean@mitacs.ca

Due Date: by end of day Friday, November 4th, 2022.

Using the provided template, the research proposal must include the following:

- **A high-level description of the proposed research, including:**
 - Project title
 - What is/are the research question(s)/objective(s) you will address with your project?
 - What research gap(s) is/are being addressed?
 - Provide a background of relevant prior research that supports the need for your project. Please include references at the end of your application.
 - Please describe your planned methodology.
 - Please ensure to include a description how you plan to meaningfully involve people with lived experience in your work.
 - What are the anticipated deliverables? (expected outcomes, results, and/or documents (manuals, Best Practices, thesis, journal publication, etc.)
 - Projected timeline
 - Please briefly explain how the results of this project will help remove barriers of access to care, or improve the quality of care, for the target population
 - Please briefly describe your career goals in mental health, and how this internship will help you on your path.
 - Please include two letters of support from:
 - The **academic supervisor** addressing how they will provide mentorship and training to the student, based on their own experience.
 - The **partner organization/direct service provider**, confirming its commitment to co-supervising the student and its interest in the project.
- **Existing or proposed partners (APPLICANT MUST CONFIRM PARTNER'S ELIGIBILITY WITH MITACS BY OCTOBER 14, 2022)**
 - Community organizations

- Non-profit organizations in the healthcare sector
- Healthcare providers like hospitals, etc.
- **Financial Clarifications**
 - Is the student already receiving funding or a stipend? If so, from where and how much?
 - Are there eligible expenses other than the student's direct funding that this money may be used for by the institution or supervisor?

Stage 2:

Successful eligible applicants from Stages 1 will be invited to submit a [Mitacs Accelerate application](#) no later than **December 15th, 2022**. Successful projects must start by **May 31st, 2023**.

For questions pertaining to this partnership or application process, please contact:

Sarah Murphy, M.Sc., Manager, Grants and Studentships, Mental Health Research Canada
smurphy@mhrc.ca

Jillian Murray, PhD., Director, Strategic Partnerships, Mitacs Inc.
jhatnean@mitacs.ca