

# 2021 AbSPORU Graduate Studentship Competition

Information Session | October 2021



# Introductions

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# Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR)

- A national CIHR initiative
- *“SPOR focusses on moving what health researchers know into what health care providers do.”*
- More information: <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/41204.html>

# SPOR Guiding Principles

- **Patients** involved in all aspects of research;
- **Decision-makers and clinicians** involved throughout the entire research process;
- **Multi-disciplinary** approach;
- Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

# Alberta SPOR SUPPORT Unit (AbSPORU)

CIHR funding established provincial/territorial  
SUPPORT Units

“SUPPORT Units were designed to provide decision-makers and health care providers with the ways and means to connect research with patient needs so that evidence-based solutions can be applied to health care—and then shared throughout the country.”

<https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/45859.html>

# AbSPORU Graduate Studentships

## Objectives:

- Supporting and **building capacity** for Master's or PhD graduate students in patient-oriented research;
- Providing **patient-oriented research learning activities** through a multi-disciplinary approach that embeds EDI;
- Creating **opportunities for students to engage with stakeholders** to work from conceptualization of the research question to dissemination and implementation of results.

# AbSPORU Graduate Studentships

## Impacts over the first 5 years:

- Studentship program launched in 2015
- **Awarded ~\$2 million to 64 graduate students**
- Subsequent funding from elsewhere:  
**87 academic awards, >\$5 million**

# AbSPORU Graduate Studentships

Where to find more information:

<https://absporu.ca/capacitydevelopment/>

## Key documents/forms:

- Program Guide
- Applications Form and Instructions
- Supervisor Biosketch Form



# AbSPORU Graduate Studentships

- 13-month Award Period:  
**March 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023**
- **\$30,000 stipend**
- Thesis-based Master's or Doctoral degree

# Eligibility

- Enrolled in, or accepted to, a thesis-based graduate program at an Alberta CARU;
- Are in, or entering, any year of program, but:
  - have not undertaken thesis defense
  - will not undertake thesis defense during the award period

# Eligibility

- Must be undertaking health-related research training;
- **Research project demonstrate a patient-oriented research approach.**

# What is patient-oriented research?

A *continuum* of research that:

engages patients  
(and providers)  
as partners

... and aims to *apply knowledge generated* to improve healthcare systems & practices.

[\(CIHR Strategy for Patient Oriented Research\)](#)

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... and aims to *apply knowledge generated* to improve healthcare systems & practices.

[\(CIHR Strategy for Patient Oriented Research\)](#)



# Eligibility

## What is patient-oriented research?

***See: Appendix A in the Program Guide***

Applicants must describe:

- Where their research fits into and how it will contribute to the research continuum;
- How principles of equity, diversity and inclusion will be integrated in and/or addressed; and,
- Any anticipated community outputs.

# Eligibility

## What is patient-oriented research?

Applicants must clearly articulate their their research will do **all** of the following:

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- Focus on patient-identified health priorities;
- Aim to improve patient outcomes.



# 1. Meaningfully engage patients (and providers) as partners:

- Refers to active patient (and provider) involvement in the project that is mutually beneficial for all parties across the research process.

# 1. Meaningfully engage patients (and providers) as partners:

Examples include, but are not limited to, engagement in:

- Governance
- Identifying research topics to investigate
- Helping plan & organize a study
- Helping recruit participants & carry out the study
- Helping share the results with other patients/public

# 1. Meaningfully engage patients (and providers) as partners:

- Describe how patients will be **meaningfully engaged as partners**.
- For guidance, refer to:
  - [IAP2 spectrum of engagement](#)
  - [PORLET \(Patient-Oriented Research Level of Engagement Tool\)](#)
  - [IRLET \(Indigenous Research Level of Engagement Tool\)](#)

## 2. Focus on Patient-Identified Priorities

May be determined in a variety of ways including.

Examples:

- Core Outcome Sets for clinical trials that have been developed with stakeholder involvement
- Focus groups
- James Lind Alliance approaches or adaptations of this approach
- Online priority setting activities

# 3. Aim to Improve Patient Outcomes

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMS)
- Patient Reported Experience Measures (PREMS)
- Patient satisfaction measures; Quality of life measures
- Management of symptoms and pain measures
- Potential clinical improvement measures
- Length of stay; Cost effectiveness

\*\*\*NEW THIS YEAR\*\*\*

# SPOR Network Affiliation

- 5 awards reserved for applicants with SPOR Network-affiliated projects;
- Letter of Support from Network Executive Director (or delegate).



\*\*\*NEW THIS YEAR\*\*\*

# SPOR Network Affiliation

- “Affiliated” means some degree of formalized relationship with the SPOR Network whereby:
  - The project addresses a research priority of the Network;
  - The Network is an active partner throughout the project;
  - Results of the project will be implemented by the Network

# Evaluation Areas

**See: Appendix B in the Program Guide**

1. Academic Record
2. Research Outputs
3. Relevant Work, Research Experience, and/or Lived Experience
4. Career Development Plan
5. Personal Statement
6. Research Training & Mentorship Environment
7. Research Project Proposal

# Studentship Training Program

Successful applicants are required to participate in the *Studentship Training Program* during the award period.

This includes mentorship opportunities, course work, webinars, journal clubs, and participation in the annual AbSPORU Patient-Oriented Research Institute conference.

# Timeline

- **Applicants submit to their institution by the internal deadline;**
- Institutions transmit all completed applications to AbSPORU on **November 15, 2021** at 4:00pm MT.
- Referee(s) send letter(s) of support directly to AbSPORU by November 15, 2021 at 4:00pm MT.

# Timeline

- Decisions announced by February 1, 2022.
- Award period begins March 1, 2022.

# FAQs

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*In your application, you must demonstrate HOW your proposed work is patient-oriented.*

- *Use the resources and links from the Program Guide and the [absporu.ca](http://absporu.ca) website;*
- *Read the history of SPOR, why it was implemented;*
- *Understand the goals and principles of POR.*

# FAQs

I started my program in <month/year>.  
Am I eligible to apply?



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*The 2021 competition is available to students in any year of their graduate program, as long as they have not defended their thesis prior to the award start-date, and as long as they will not defend their thesis during the award period.*

# Resources

**AbSPORU Website** - Studentship page, profiles of previous awardees <https://absporu.ca/>

**CIHR Website** – SPOR <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/45859.html>

# Questions?

# Contact us:

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