# TIPS FOR BANTING POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP APPLICATIONS

Banting postdoctoral fellowships are competitive. Ensure you review the Application Guide carefully as well as the Selection Committee Guidelines before applying. There are three main components the reviewers will consider:

1. Excellence and leadership in your research domain
2. Quality of your proposed research program
3. Institutional commitment and demonstrated synergy between the applicant and institutional strategic priorities

You can always refer to the Banting website for the most detailed information available.

## Characteristics of successful applications

### Applicant
- Has demonstrated leadership and impact on their field (considering career stage)
- Has a significant publication record
- Brings new knowledge to host institution

### Proposed research
- Should significantly **advance knowledge base**
- Includes an aspect of **novelty**, is "game-changing"
- Contributes to **larger research context** (applicant, supervisor, institution)
- Demonstrates **synergy** with research environment
- Weighs risks vs. feasibility
- Considers **wider impact**: application of research, social impact

### Supervisor statement
- Speaks to research excellence of applicant, proposed research, aspects of synergy (with supervisor's research, research environment, institution)
- Explains added value of postdoc brings to research environment
- Demonstrates institutional commitment (professional development, additional funding, other support services specifically targeted to Banting fellows)
- Propels research leadership of applicant (supervisor biography, where are their alumni now)

### Referee
- Should be familiar with applicant's research
- Should have interacted with applicant (in research or leadership activities)
- One referee should be your PhD supervisor (if not, you need to explain why this is the case)

- You must also choose an "arm's length" referee who is not personally invested in your research program
- In selected referees, consider the balance between their public profile and someone who knows your research well

## Plan early!

o Begin preparing your application as soon as the competition is announced and forms are available. Create a timeline for completing the application and remember these applications always take longer than expected!

o Contact the faculty member with whom who wish to collaborate as early as possible and with a concrete idea for the research proposal. Your faculty supervisor and host institution will need to contribute substantially to the application, making it extremely important that they share your enthusiasm for the proposed project.

o Make a very strong case why you selected this institution and this particular supervisor.

o Give all involved plenty of time to prepare. The more all are aware of you and your proposed work, the better they can address your strengths in their supporting documents. Offer to provide a CV, a research proposal draft, or try to meet to discuss plans. Also, ensure they know the Banting program, its requirements, and all upcoming deadlines.

o Consider the academic environment and the strategic plan at the host institution, study your prospective supervisor's research 9see Queen's Strategic Research Plan, for example).

o Convey what you wish to accomplish during the Banting fellowship.

o You must demonstrate academic productivity. Your publication record matters, including the quality of the scholarly journals in which you publish.

o Consider contacting a successful Banting fellow, ideally from your discipline, to ask for advice and to see whether they would share their application.

## Research proposal tips

o Provide concrete examples of your research excellence and leadership.

o Communicate clearly and engagingly. State your work's relevance and feasibility. Reviewers must be convinced of its value so they can advocate for your application at review committee meetings.

o Tell a story while keeping your readers in mind. Make difficult concepts accessible to a non-specialist audience. Use an active voice wherever possible.

o Anticipate questions that might arise and address them explicitly, including limitations and how you will manage them.

o Distinguish your proposal from the competition!

o Build a persuasive case for receiving funding.

o Identify opportunities for collaboration with other sources of expertise at your proposed host institution.

## Preparing to submit

- o Ask someone in your field to review your application.
- o Ask a non-specialist to review your application and ask them to explain your project back to you
- o Revise and proofread! Ensure everything is grammatically correct and typographic error-free.
- o Create a checklist to ensure your application is complete. You can use the Banting Application Guide as a template.
- o Only provide requested material and respect formatting guidelines, page limits, and word counts. Additional material will be removed.