

shAIRe Rising Stars Professional Development Award

About this fund:

The **shAIRe Rising Stars Professional Development Award** provides financial support to Canadian lung-health research trainees and early-career researchers to attend conferences, workshops, training programs, and other professional development activities that strengthen data science skills, foster collaboration, and advance knowledge across the pan-Canadian lung health research community.

This award is intended to support opportunities that enhance professional growth, facilitate networking, promote knowledge exchange, and build research capacity in data science within the shAIRe community. It is not intended to fund research activities directly (e.g., manuscript publications or research scholarships).

This award is designed to complement, not replace, existing trainee or research funding sources that applicants may currently hold. An applicant is limited to receiving one award every 3 years.

Priority is given to participation in learning or professional development opportunities that align with shAIRe Rising Star's priorities:

1. Career development for lung-health data science research trainees
2. Using artificial intelligence in lung-health research and data science
3. Best practices for statistical analyses in lung-health data science research
4. Accessing and managing lung-health data

Supported activities may include:

- In-person or virtual attendance (as presenter or attendee) at a conference
- Specialized workshop, training courses or professional development activity
- Knowledge mobilization or networking event

Funding levels will vary based on the location, format, and anticipated costs of the event.

The following ranges provide general guidance on expected levels of support; final award amounts will be determined based on justification of need, available funding, and anticipated benefit to the applicant and the shAIRe community.

Event Type	Typical Funding Range	Examples of Covered Costs
Virtual event	\$500 - \$1,000 CAD	Only registration fees will be covered
In-Person Local/regional event	Up to \$100 CAD	Registration fees, local transportation
In-Person Provincial event	Up to \$1,000 CAD	Registration, travel, accommodations
In-Person National event	Up to \$2,000 CAD	Registration, airfare/train travel, accommodations
In-Person International event	Up to \$3,000 CAD	Registration, airfare travel, accommodations

To be eligible to apply for the professional development award individuals must:

- Be affiliated with a Canadian institution and conducting research related to lung health
- Have legal status to study or work in Canada and receive funds at a Canadian banking institution
- Have trainee or early-career status, which includes MSc, PhD, MD students or residents, allied health professional trainees, postdoctoral/clinical fellows, early-career researchers or allied health professionals within 5 years of their first appointment

Timeline of events:

Event	Timeline
Applications intake period	Applications will be accepted in 4-month cycles throughout the year. Each intake will support activities occurring within the corresponding 4-month period, as well as activities completed within the previous 4 months.
Application deadline	Applications are due three times per year: April 30th August 31st December 31st
Decision notification	Applicants will be notified of funding decisions within 4 weeks following each application deadline
Fund disbursement	Successful applicants may submit a payment requisition through DalBuy following acceptance (see FAQ for details)
Attendance at conference/workshop	Funded activities must occur within the eligible timeframe of the intake cycle or within 4 months prior to application submission.

Post-event reporting	Successful applicants will submit a brief summary describing what they learned and how the experience benefited their professional development. This may be featured as a “spotlight” post on LinkedIn and shared with the shAIRe community.
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Application Process

Single applications only are permitted for this fund (no joint applications between colleagues or trainees-supervisors). Applications must be submitted prior to attending the event unless exceptional circumstances apply. Applicants must submit their own application and supporting documentation.

To apply, please complete the application form, which includes:

1. Applicant’s full name, email address, current position and stage of training/career, institutional affiliation, and program or department name
2. Applicant’s supervisor’s or mentor’s name, email address, affiliation, and signature
 - a. *If early-career researcher or health professional without a supervisor, this section may be left blank.*
3. Event details, including conference/workshop name, location, dates, and format (i.e., in-person, virtual, or hybrid)
4. Indication of whether you are:
 - a. Presenting research (poster/oral/workshop), whether you are first author on the presenting research, or
 - b. Attending for professional development/networking
5. Supporting documentation:
 - a. Proof of conference/workshop registration or acceptance
 - b. Proof of abstract acceptance (if presenting)
6. A brief statement (maximum 250 words) describing:
 - a. Why you wish to attend the event
 - b. Expected professional or research benefit
 - c. Relevance to shAIRe Rising Stars’ priority areas
7. A detailed budget breakdown including estimated or confirmed costs for:
 - a. Registration fees
 - b. Travel (e.g., airfare, train, mileage, local transport)
 - c. Accommodation
 - d. Other relevant expenses (if applicable)
 - e. Receipts of purchases must be included, either as part of the application or when purchased have been made

8. A brief funding justification (maximum 150 words) outlining:
 - a. Why financial support is needed
 - b. Any other funding sources applied for or secured – if other funding is secured, brief description on how this additional funding is needed to cover costs
9. Curriculum vitae

Completed applications should be submitted to shAIRe@dal.ca

Evaluation process:

All applications to the shAIRe Rising Stars Professional Development Award will undergo a structured review led by members of the shAIRe Trainee Committee, with additional input from the Leadership Team. Applications will be assessed based on the relevance of the proposed conference, workshop, or professional development activity to the applicant’s career trajectory and its alignment with the priorities of shAIRe. The review process is designed to be transparent, equitable, and aligned with the goals of the shAIRe Rising Stars Network.

Evaluation Criteria	Rating Scale	Description
Eligibility Screening	Accept/Reject	Upon submission, applications will be screened to ensure all eligibility criteria are met (Canadian institution affiliation, trainee/early-career status, program stage, supervisor sign-off if necessary, and completeness of all required sections in the application form). Applications failing to meet eligibility requirements will not proceed to full review.
Full Application Review		
Evaluation Criteria	Rating Scale	Description
Alignment with shAIRe Priority Areas (e.g., lung health and/or data science)	Adequate or Inadequate	The extent to which the proposed conference, workshop, or professional development activity aligns with lung health research, data science, artificial intelligence, statistical methodologies, or other areas relevant to the priorities of shAIRe. Clear justification must be provided if alignment is indirect.
Relevance to the applicant’s career trajectory in lung health and/or data science	Adequate or Inadequate	The degree to which attendance at the proposed event supports the applicant’s professional development, research goals, skill advancement, networking opportunities, or career progression within lung health and/or data science research.

The full application review process will be based on the following rating scale:

Outcome	Descriptor
Adequate	The application sufficiently meets eligibility requirements and demonstrates clear relevance to shAIRE’s priority areas, strong professional development benefit to the applicant, and appropriate justification for the requested funding. The application will be accepted for funding.
Inadequate	The application does not sufficiently demonstrate alignment with shAIRE’s priority areas, does not demonstrate direct professional development benefit to the applicant, nor is there appropriate justification for the requested funding. The application will not be accepted for funding.

Review Decision:

Applicants will be notified of the final decision of acceptance within **4 weeks** of the submitted application. Additional questions may be posed to the application to clarify certain points at the reviewer’s discretion. At minimum, two members of the Rising Stars Trainee Committee and one member of the Leadership Team will review each proposal.

Stipend Disbursement:

Awardees will be required to submit a payment requisition through DalBuy. The chair of the shAIRE Rising Stars Trainee Committee will submit the required information into DalBuy for the payment installment, where the applicant will then receive a link to sign up on DalBuy and input their direct deposit information. Please note it may take 4-6 weeks before the stipend is processed and inputted into the applicant’s account. See FAQ for additional details on the DalBuy process.

Successful applicants will receive an official letter of recognition, suitable for inclusion in their curriculum vitae, if and when the award has been presented.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

1. Is this professional development fund open to international students?

Yes, international students are eligible to apply as long as they are registered and affiliated with a Canadian institution.

2. How many shAIRE Rising Stars Professional Development Awards will be awarded in a single year?

The number of stipends given per year is funding dependent, therefore there is no fixed number. We anticipate awarding 10-20 stipends per year.

3. Can I still apply if I am transitioning from trainee status to early career stage?

Yes, both trainees and early-career researchers and/or professionals are eligible to apply; therefore, applications can be submitted during a transitional career period.

4. What happens if my application for the professional development fund gets rejected?

Applicants may submit a new application in the following application cycle, but it is never guaranteed that an applicant may be funded.

5. What happens after I have attended the conference, workshop, or professional development activity?

Successful applicants are required to submit a brief statement describing what event they attended, what they learned, and how it was beneficial to their career. Successful applicants may be ‘spotlighted’ on shAIRE’s LinkedIn page and network. The chair of the Rising Stars committee will communicate with successful applicants following attendance of their event to acquire their statement.

6. How do I receive my stipend?

Awardees will be required to submit a payment requisition through DalBuy. The chair of the shAIRE Rising Stars Trainee Committee will reach out to the successful applicant to obtain the applicant’s details to begin the DalBuy process. The chair will then submit the required information into DalBuy for the payment installment, where the applicant will then receive a link to sign up on DalBuy and input their direct deposit information. Please note it may take 4-6 weeks before the stipend is processed and inputted into the applicant’s account.

7. Can applications be submitted in French?

Yes, applications may be submitted in English or French. Review of French-language applications will be conducted as reviewer capacity allows.

8. When submitting my Curriculum Vitae, does it need to be in the Canadian Common CV (CCV) format?

No, submitted Curriculum Vitae do not need to be in CCV format. They can be submitted in any professional format.

9. What are some examples of conferences, workshops, or professional development activities that align with shAIRE's priority areas?

- Canadian Respiratory Conference: <https://cts-sct.ca/crc/>
- Canadian Bioinformatics Hub Conference: <https://bioinformatics.ca/hub/cbhc/>
- Canadian Bioinformatics Workshops: <https://bioinformatics.ca/workshops/current-workshops/>
- American Thoracic Society Conference: <https://site.thoracic.org/conference>