

Call for Applications for Two (2) Undergraduate Student Fellowships

The McMaster Health Forum's goal is to generate action on the pressing health-system issues of our time, based on the best available research evidence and systematically elicited citizen values and stakeholder insights. We aim to strengthen health systems – locally, nationally, and internationally – and get the right programs, services and drugs to the people who need them. Through Forum+, we are expanding our work to include social systems.

As part of our commitment to prepare action-oriented leaders in addressing pressing health and social challenges creatively, we offer the McMaster Health Forum Fellows Program, an exceptional opportunity for students to be part of the Forum community. For the 2021-2022 academic year, we will sponsor two undergraduate student fellowships.

About the McMaster Health Forum Fellows Program:

Forum Fellows will have the opportunity to:

- 1) be part of a community of Forum staff and faculty who are committed to meeting pressing health and social challenges creatively;
- 2) meet the many health and social system stakeholders who will be participating in Forum events, which can include (among others) concerned citizens, heads of medical associations, hospital CEOs, deputy ministers of health, and World Health Organization (WHO) directors;
- 3) develop a work plan that helps to advance the aims of the Forum and a skill-development plan that will ensure that the fellowship experience supports fellows' personal development in five areas including policy analysis, political analysis, systems analysis, evidence synthesis and stakeholder engagement; and
- 4) undertake a capstone experience as an intern in an organization charged with meeting pressing health or social challenges, which could include (among other organizations) the Ontario and federal governments and internships in other countries.

While the Forum will endeavour to match students to their preferred internship selections, no guarantees can be made about the location of an internship. If no internship can be arranged to the satisfaction of both the Forum Fellow and the Forum, the internship will be organized at the Forum.

Elements of the Forum Fellows' work plans include one or more of the following:

- 1) participate as a member of the planning team for high-profile, off-the-record stakeholder dialogues where participants work through ways to address pressing health challenges (examples of topics addressed to date are available on the Forum [website](#));
- 2) contribute to work related to the development and implementation of the [McMaster Optimal Aging Portal and McMaster/Labarge Optimal Aging Knowledge Translation Enterprise](#), as well as Health Systems Evidence and Social Systems Evidence, which support the Portal and Enterprise;
- 3) participate as a member of the 'rapid response' team that responds to requests from health and social system policymakers and stakeholders to prepare syntheses of the available research evidence within short turn-around times;
- 4) participate as a member of the planning team in citizen panels where concerned citizens work through ways to address pressing health and social challenges, which could include (among others) topics related to optimal aging;

- 5) participate as a member of the Learn How planning team in developing on-line versions of training workshops offered for health system stakeholders who wish to develop skills related to finding and using research evidence to support decision-making, and/or organizing and evaluating deliberative dialogues; and
- 6) write content for the Forum's website, Facebook account, student blog and student Twitter account, and marketing/communications materials, editorials for publications (including the Student Subcommittee column, ForumSpace, in the Meducator), and outputs linked to Forum events (e.g., high-level summaries of the stakeholder dialogues).

Eligibility requirements:

- 1) completion of the second or third year of any McMaster undergraduate program by April 2021 and plan to enrol full-time in the third or fourth year, (with a strong preference for those enrolling in third year) of any McMaster undergraduate program in September 2021;
- 2) a firm commitment to participate actively in the Forum's activities during the 2021-2022 academic year (up to 10 hours per week from mid-September through mid-December 2021 and from January through March 2022) and to complete a three month internship during summer 2022; during the internship the Fellow will represent herself/himself as a Forum Fellow and will provide regular updates to the Forum's director and assistant director, and both a written final report to the Forum and a face-to-face debriefing with the Forum's director and assistant director at the end of the internship.

These hours will be planned flexibly to ensure that fellows can continue to meet the other demands associated with their respective academic programs and their extra-curricular activities. The internship will follow the COVID-19 health and safety guidance established by McMaster University and the Faculty of Health Sciences to determine whether there will be any 'in person' components in 2021-22. Please note that this firm commitment means that you have not applied for or been granted interviews for professional schools for admission in September 2021, or that you have applied, but will know by mid-May whether you are planning to take up an offer of admission. Students who have been placed on one or more wait lists for admission to professional schools in September 2021 will not be considered eligible for the fellowship.

Application requirements:

- 1) two-page cover letter that describes both what you would bring to the Forum (in terms of knowledge, skills and experiences) and what you would gain from the fellowship;
- 2) resume;
- 3) transcript (please note that a PDF of the unofficial transcript is acceptable at the time of application; short-listed candidates will be required to provide an official transcript); and
- 4) separate note indicating your current or planned commitments that may influence how you would participate in Forum activities (please provide a list of all professional programs that you have applied to for admission in September 2021, indicating whether you have been granted interviews or any other available details about the status of your application).

Application deadline and timeline for notifications:

- 1) Applications must be submitted electronically to James McKinlay (mckinlj@mcmaster.ca) by 1:00 p.m. on Monday 22 February 2021.
- 2) Interviews for short-listed candidates will be scheduled soon after the deadline.

- 3) Preliminary notifications will be sent to successful applicants in early April 2021, and these successful applicants will be given 10 days to notify us whether they will accept the offer and, if so, to confirm that they are not on one or more wait lists for professional schools for admission in September 2021.

Terms of the Fellowship:

- 1) \$4,000 payable in instalments throughout the duration of the Forum Fellowship
- 2) economy airfare and ground transportation costs associated with travel to and from the internship location (if applicable)

For more information about the McMaster Health Forum, visit our website at www.mcmasterhealthforum.org.