

# Ontario Health Teams Impact Fellows Program: Information for OHT Hosts

## The Opportunity

The OHT Impact Fellows program places skilled evaluators and researchers directly within OHTs. During their 10-month placement, OHT Impact Fellows will support the implementation and evaluation of local projects and contribute to rapid learning and improvement. Impact Fellows will bolster implementation and evaluation capacity within OHTs and support rapid learning across the OHT network.

## Benefits for Host OHTs

- Access to a skilled Fellow working on projects aligned with host OHT priorities
- Opportunity to develop local capacity for implementation, data analytics, evaluation, performance measurement, and change management
- Contribute to rapid learning and improvement as part of a network of learning OHTs

## Who are Impact Fellows?

OHT Impact Fellows are skilled researchers with advanced training in evaluation, data analytics, quality improvement and implementation science. OHT Impact Fellows have completed a PhD or research-based graduate degree and professional degree (e.g., MD, MSW). They have expertise in cutting-edge evaluation and analytics that can be harnessed to help advance an OHT’s priority projects, generate innovative solutions grounded in evidence and build in-house capacity for evaluation and rapid learning.

## Why host a Fellow?

As OHTs experiment with new models of care, they can benefit from embedded supports to help plan, evaluate and rapidly learn, adapt and improve. Feedback from OHTs indicates a need for more hands-on support, particularly around implementation and evaluation. With their advanced training, OHT Impact Fellows can support implementation and evaluation of local priority projects and be a conduit for knowledge exchange and learning across OHTs.

## Timelines

Program launch	January 2023
EOIs due	February 24, 2023
Application adjudication	April 2023
Notice of decision	May 2023
Fellowship start date	June 2023
Placement in host OHTs	June 2023 – March 2024

## About the Program

The OHT Impact Fellowship is designed to provide OHTs with hands-on resources to directly support implementation and evaluation of high priority projects and encourage rapid learning across OHTs. By placing researchers in a host organization, OHTs gain access to highly trained personnel while Fellows are given a unique opportunity to apply their skills to address critical challenges faced by OHTs.

The fellowship program provides trainees with a ten-month paid experiential learning opportunity. Working with a host OHT, each Fellow supports the implementation and evaluation of priority projects, thereby contributing to improved performance, outcomes and system transformation. Each Fellow is paired with two mentors: a health system mentor from the host OHT and an academic mentor from an Ontario university.

- The health system mentor is an executive-level decision-maker at the host OHT who supervises the Fellow's embedded project(s), immerses the Fellow within the team, and ensures the necessary connections and enabling conditions are in place to support the Fellow's success.
- The academic mentor is a faculty member of a graduate training program at an Ontario university with a strong connection to the host OHT and relevant expertise who co-supervises the Fellow and mentors them on matters such as research, interdisciplinary and intersectoral collaboration, publication, and career development.

Additionally, Fellows will receive ongoing training and support throughout their fellowship. Fellows and their supervisors are linked and supported through an Impact Fellows Learning Collaborative, which provides online training, webinars and communities of practice designed to support OHT implementation, evaluation and rapid learning.

During their placement, Fellows will be exposed to how OHTs work, how health system decisions are made, the role of OHTs in improving health and health system performance, and how their training and skills can contribute to health systems improvement. Most significantly, Fellows will directly support OHTs to implement, evaluate and rapidly learn in pursuit of their goal to deliver integrated care that improves population health.

The OHT Impact Fellows program builds on the experience and lessons learned from other embedded fellowship programs, notably, the [CIHR Health System Impact Fellowship](#) and features opportunities for cross-program learning and engagement for fellows and mentors.

## What do Impact Fellows do?

Fellows can expect to spend around 80% of their time embedded with the host OHT working on local projects. Sample activities might include evaluating a new model of care, developing performance indicators, supporting change management and rapid learning within a project, etc. The remaining 20% of their time will be spent on training and program activities that support learning across OHTs.

## How are Impact Fellows supported?

Fellows' embedded positions are enriched with customized training components:

- **Springboard Training:** An intensive, multi-day workshop held prior to the start of fellowships to help to orient new fellows to the program and each other, to OHTs and their role in the Ontario health system, and to introduce the skills and concepts fellows will need to succeed in their positions (e.g., implementation science, patient engagement, learning health systems).
- **Ongoing training:** Through monthly meetings and webinars, OHT Impact Fellows will have access to ongoing professional development, research training, mentorship and support. They will also have regular opportunities to connect with each other and with fellows from other programs, such as the CIHR Health System Impact Fellowship.

## Who pays for the Fellow?

The Fellow's stipend is fully covered by the fellowship program. The number of fellowships is contingent on funding.

## Expectations of hosts

Host OHTs are expected to provide mentorship and a supportive work environment for their Fellow.

- Mentorship involves a senior, executive-level decision-maker who will supervise the Fellow and champion their role within the OHT. This person plays a critical role in ensuring that outputs from the Fellow (e.g., data, knowledge syntheses, policy recommendations) are received and utilized effectively by the host OHT.

## Who Can Host?

Any OHT can apply to host a Fellow. All that is required is a good project, an enthusiastic mentor, and a commitment to continuous learning.

Interested OHTs will be asked to submit an Expression of Interest in which they identify:

1. A project or program of work aligned to the OHT's goals and priorities that would benefit from the attention of a Fellow
2. A senior/executive-level decision-maker in the OHT who can mentor and champion the work of the Fellow
3. OHT capacity to effectively host a Fellow

Program staff will work with interested OHTs to assess their readiness for the program. OHTs and Fellows will then be matched. All OHTs are eligible to apply. Host OHTs may be located anywhere in the province of Ontario. Priority will be given to OHTs who have not yet hosted an Impact Fellow.

## How to apply

OHTs interested in hosting a Fellow should submit an Expression of Interest (EOI), the link to which is posted on the [OHT Impact Fellows website](#). In your EOI, please identify a project or program of work that aligns with your OHT's goals, objectives and priority populations. Projects should align with the strategic priorities of the host OHT, work that is already underway and would clearly benefit from the attention of a Fellow, and work that aligns with [OHTs: The Path Forward](#) document announced by the Ministry of Health and Ontario Health in November 2022.

Examples of project areas include:

- Population health management across the OHT
- Expanding scope of services across the OHT
- Patient partnership and community engagement for the OHT
- Redesigning patient care across the OHT
- Digital health to support care delivery
- Leadership, accountability and governance across the OHT
- Performance measurement, evaluation and continuous learning for the OHT
- Clinical pathways for people living with the following chronic conditions: Congestive heart failure (CHF), Diabetes (focused on avoiding amputation), Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and Stroke.

Interested OHTs are also asked to identify a senior, executive-level decision-maker who can supervise and mentor the Fellow. This is someone who will champion the role of the Fellow and connect them to key OHT staff, so that the Fellow is able to work effectively within the OHT.

We recognize that OHTs may have questions as to what constitutes an appropriate project or mentor. Program staff will work with interested OHTs to develop their project ideas and provide feedback during the EOI stage.

To reach out to program staff, please email [ohfellows@utoronto.ca](mailto:ohfellows@utoronto.ca)

## Review criteria

Expressions of interest will be reviewed for the following:

- Alignment of proposed project with OHT goals, objectives and priority populations
- Feasibility of proposed project
- Appropriate and effective use of Impact Fellow
- Capacity to host and mentor Impact Fellow
- Likelihood that project will have a meaningful impact, especially on patients, caregivers, or healthcare providers
- Potential to advance overall OHT goals and objectives

## Matchmaking Process

Expressions of interest that satisfy the above criteria will be entered into a matchmaking pool, where they can be viewed by fellowship candidates. (A separate vetting process for fellowship applicants will simultaneously take place this spring.) Fellowship candidates will be encouraged to consider review proposed projects and explore potential fit.

During the matchmaking stage, OHTs will be given the opportunity to rank fellowship candidates and vice versa. These rankings, along with other inputs, will be used to match Fellows to host OHTs.

## Instructions for Expression of Interest (EOI) form for Host OHTs

The application form for OHT Hosts can be found by visiting:

<https://ohtfellows.ca/apply/host-a-fellow/>

**1. OHT Name, Location, and Website**

*Please list your OHT's name, location and a link to the OHT website if applicable.*

**2. OHT Primary Contact**

*This is the primary contact for program staff to liaise with regarding the OHT's application.*

**3. Host Mentor**

*OHT mentors will be "executive sponsors" for the fellow, supporting them internally. Executive sponsors are senior decision makers who can integrate the fellow into the OHT work and link them to internal experts. For host mentors, we are looking for senior, executive-level decision makers who can champion the work of the fellow.*

**4. OHT Priority Areas**

*Identify priority areas (strategic priorities, content areas, programs or projects, methodological areas) of relevance that would benefit from a fellow's expertise.*

**5. OHT Goals**

*Identify a clear goal that the OHT would like to achieve within the fellowship period that would benefit from an OHT Impact Fellow's leadership and attention.*

**6. Proposed Projects**

*Describe the nature of the work the fellow can anticipate engaging in and whether it is a discrete project or a program of work (series of interrelated projects). Note: Work should be able to be accomplished within the 10-month fellowship.*

**7. Desired Competencies**

*List any specific essential competencies you're seeking in a fellow. E.g., is it essential for a fellow to have advanced statistical training, familiarity with large data sets, experience with stakeholder engagement, etc.? Is there a need for the fellow to have bilingual proficiency?*

**8. OHT Environment**

*Please address why your OHT is an attractive environment for a fellow. Describe the team or groups with whom the fellow would work. Consider whether the timing of projects that would benefit from a fellow's skills coincide with the fellowship timeline, whether a senior decision-maker within the OHT has the interest and capacity to mentor a fellow, whether your OHT is able to meaningfully embed and engage the fellow as a core member of the team, and whether your OHT is at the stage where you would find support for evaluation, rapid learning, and improvement to be valuable.*

*Please also indicate the preferred working arrangement of the fellow: in-person, virtual, hybrid?*

**9. Opportunities for Professional Growth and Development**

*Describe any opportunities your OHT can offer a fellow to accelerate their professional growth and development. Why is your OHT a valuable learning environment for a fellow?*

**10. Additional Information and files**

*Please include any additional information or materials that relate to your OHT's fit with this program.*