

Training at the Centre: how to apply

Why McGill?

For those serious about pain research, training as either a graduate student or Postdoctoral Fellow (PDF) at the Alan Edwards Centre for Research on Pain makes a lot of sense. Pain Research has a long and proud history at McGill, tracing its history back to Ron Melzack, co-author of the most influential publication in the field, The Gate Control Theory of Pain (*Science*, 1965), leading up the present day where the Centre has over 40 full members, basic scientists and clinicians, coming from a diverse set of disciplinary backgrounds and specialities, well-recognized for their expertise in their respective fields.

McGill is also an excellent training environment, ranked 32nd overall in the QS World University Rankings in 2021, and for 16 years in a row (2005-2021) ranked #1 in Canada by the *Maclean's* magazine University Rankings, in the Medical-Doctoral category. And, finally, Montreal is just a great place to live: affordable, with a mixture of historic and ultramodern facilities, and a great *joie de vivre* that permeates every aspect of life.

About the Centre

An individual pursuing a training phase at the Centre is presented with a host of opportunities to develop new technical skills in a truly multidisciplinary environment. With over 40 PIs in the Centre, where else can one find expertise in advanced imaging systems, molecular biology, electrophysiology, genetic techniques, quantitative sensory testing modalities, and clinical trials, all with a direct interest in the complex problems of chronic pain? The Centre also affords opportunities to develop the all-important network of contacts and collaborations that are essential to the launch of a successful research career.

In addition, Centre programs and activities enhance this experience by bringing to the University world-leading speakers through its Frontiers in Pain Research lecture series as well as through its annual McGill Pain Day celebration, where in addition trainees at all levels may present their own research findings to the Centre's membership. Other activities which enhance the training experience include bi-monthly journal clubs and the opportunity to participate in public communication events such as the annual Brain Awareness Week and Pain Awareness Week activities.

How to apply

Applicants should be aware that the Centre does not have a direct role to play in the selection or approval of either graduate students or PDFs at the University. This process is handled by the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, who make the final decision based upon recommendations they receive from the academic units (e.g. Department) within which the trainee will be enrolled. In addition to the general guidelines of the Faculty, each of these units might have additional requirements which you will need to meet prior to acceptance.

Perhaps the most important first step in this whole process is to identify the supervisor that you are interested in working with, and contacting them directly to see if there are any opportunities for such training in their lab (a full list of members is provided on our website). An email explaining your research interests and why you would like to study with them, together with a copy of your CV, is usually sufficient to get things started. Once a potential supervisor has agreed to accept you into their lab, they will help guide you through the application process.

PDF applicants should be aware that this status has a legal definition (due to Quebec law) at the University. A PDF must have recently been awarded (within 5 years) a PhD or equivalent degree, notably a health professional degree (e.g. MDCM, DVM, DDS) plus a Medical Specialist Diploma/Certificate. A health professional degree on its own is not sufficient. A complete list of all eligibility requirements is available on the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies website.

International students should be aware that there are a number of visa and similar issues which need to be addressed before they come to Canada, and they should therefore be sure to verify that they have completed all such requirements by consulting the Faculty's webpages.

Some useful websites that you might like to utilize are the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies website and the University of Montreal website.