



**AMS Healthcare**  
**Fellowship in Compassion and Artificial Intelligence**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**  
**December 14, 2021**

**AMS Background**

AMS Healthcare (AMS) is an Ontario-based charity with a legacy that dates back to 1937 during the prepaid health insurance era. Today, it is a self-funded organization that focuses on two key areas in the healthcare domain: the history of healthcare and medicine; and, the transformation of the healthcare system.

The vision of AMS is ***Compassionate, quality healthcare for all Canadians, in a system advanced by technology, innovation, and a rich understanding of our medical history.*** The AMS mission states that ***...our work advances a Canadian healthcare system through innovation and technology while remaining rooted in compassion and our medical history. We convene networks, develop leaders, and fund crucial activities in medical history, healthcare research, education, and clinical practice. Our work helps improve care for all Canadians.*** Compassion in the roots of AMS and see technology as the opportunity.

AMS is well known for the Hannah Chairs and Hannah Studentship programs that are offered as part of the history of medicine mandate. Starting in 2011, AMS began the Phoenix Compassion Project with a real focus to understand the concept of compassionate care and to look at the way we educate and prepare healthcare providers in this critical area of care.

Compassionate Care in a Technological World assumes that healthcare is not immune to the technological change impacting all industries. Technology will transform healthcare in ways we are only beginning to understand and healthcare's readiness to embrace this transformation – and ability to translate technology opportunities into sustainable solutions to the most pressing issues in healthcare – will be the central challenge for practitioners, providers and policymakers alike. Expectations about compassionate care will also evolve as patients increasingly look for empathy, as well as connectedness, responsiveness, and empowerment to act together to improve health and address illness. AMS believes that health professionals, educators, researchers and clinicians of all disciplines must seize the opportunity to explore and lead this transformation by deepening our understanding of the various aspects of compassion through the lens of technology and better ensure that technologies are enabling of healthcare's compassionate purpose.

The AMS [website](#) is a great source of background information on the funding programs and the importance of compassionate care. Check out the Funding Opportunities page to learn more about AMS

Compassion and Artificial Intelligence funding programs. <https://www.ams-inc.on.ca/2022-funding-opportunities/>. The AMS website also features a series of podcasts on the various dimensions of compassion. <https://www.ams-inc.on.ca/ams-podcast-good-tech-compassionate-healthcare/>. Finally, check out the first chapter of a e-new book: [Without Compassion, There is No Healthcare](#) which gives a clear description of what is meant by compassion in healthcare.

### **Fellowship Program**

In response to the explosion of disruptive technologies in the healthcare system, AMS began focusing its efforts in 2018 to better understand the impact of digital technologies and artificial intelligence (DT/AI) and compassionate care. This focus is intended to provoke a dialogue on what is going to happen to compassionate healthcare with the introduction of time-saving technologies and what will be the place of humans in a healthcare environment employing AI-driven technologies and the subsequent impact on health and health-related (bioethics, law, etc) disciplines. The gift of time technologies could allow us to be more human, more empathic, more compassionate in the care we give. Compassion and technology are not an “either/or” proposition, technology can potentially enable compassionate care.

The goal of the AMS Fellowship in Compassion and Artificial Intelligence is to develop scholars and researchers to lead in this area. The Fellowship supports early and mid-career individuals with learning opportunities and competency development in this field. Ideally the Fellowship will feed cross-discipline training opportunities across all successful applicants and form the basis of networks of leaders and scholars. AMS is hoping to attract applications from the research and health discipline communities as well as from relate fields areas such as computer science, law, ethics and others to develop a community of expertise in this area.

This is the third year of the AMS Fellowship program. Over this past year, there has been a lot of discussion on the importance of compassion in the delivery of care as the pandemic has forced rapid adoption of virtual care and lead to the “burn-out” of health care providers.

The program will fund up to twelve (12) Fellowships this year. AMS has identified a particular interest in supporting at least four (4) Fellowships on the “...*wellbeing and mental health of healthcare providers, patients and caregivers to address the challenges of living and working through the COVID-19 pandemic*”. Applicants can refer to the AMS website to see the diversity of projects that were funded last year.

Applicants are encouraged to carefully read the core criteria for the Fellowships. These criteria are purposefully crafted to help guide applicants to prepare their submissions. Compassion needs to be at the core of the project you are proposing.

Applicants are also encouraged to consider how they can incorporate patient/caregiver partnership and engagement in their projects as either collaborators or advisors. Information regarding patient/caregiver partnership and engagement can be found at the OSSU website. [www.ossu.ca](http://www.ossu.ca)

## Application Details

Applicants are required to submit a complete Letter of Intent (LOI) to OSSU, at [ossu@ossu.ca](mailto:ossu@ossu.ca), by **5:00pm (eastern time), Thursday January 20, 2022**. Applicants will receive an email within 24 hours confirming that their submission has been received. If you do not get this email, please send another email to us.

Applicants will be notified of the results of their application on or before February 28, 2022.

Please follow the instructions in the Submission Guide for the formatting and document requirements for the application. The core documents for the LOI submission are: LOI Submission; Signature Page; abbreviated curriculum vitae of the Fellow; and a letter of support from the host institution. It is not a requirement that all signatures must appear on one Signature Page. An application may submit multiple Signature pages.

AMS funding may be used to support salary costs and/or project costs. Applicants are asked to provide a brief budget and justification for the award. Please include a budget table similar to the one provided here in your submission.

Applicants may submit additional questions to [ossu@ossu.ca](mailto:ossu@ossu.ca).

AMS Healthcare		
Sample Budget Table for LOI Submission		
Budget item	AMS Fellowship cost	Host Institution cost
Salary and Benefits		
Honoraria		
Travel		
Software licenses		
Communications		
Travel		
Other (specify below)		
<i>Specify cost</i>		
<i>Specify cost</i>		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### Applicant Eligibility

**Q: As a post-doc, would I be eligible for this Fellowship?**

**A:** Yes. What will be important to show in your application is an understanding of how the Fellowship will support your development in relation to the goals and objectives of the program. As an early career applicant, you should think about the mentorship and sponsorship you will receive to optimize your growth and development generally and as a leader in DT/AI and compassionate care.

**Q: Can you clarify the timelines for an early career researcher given that CIHR has revised the timelines due to COVID?**

**A:** CIHR has extended the definition of an early career research to a researcher within seven (7) years (0-84 months) from the date of their first research-related appointment.

**Q: Are applicants from outside Ontario eligible to apply for this award?**

**A:** As a result of the regulations governing AMS as a charitable organization, we are obliged to focus our funding primarily in Ontario. However, AMS is interested in funding the best scholars in this program and have funded applicants from other provinces in the past. You will notice that there is a requirement that applicants be either Canadian citizenship or have landed immigrant status. Our goal is to create scholars who lead in this area in Canada.

**Q: Would someone with only an MD degree (without a Masters or PhD training) be eligible to apply.**

**A:** The program is focused on developing scholars, researchers and others to lead in this area. Individuals are required to hold either a Masters (health or technology-related discipline) degree or PhD. Unfortunately, the answer is, no.

**Q: The call states that the applicant must have Masters or PhD training, can the Masters degree be in a professional discipline (eg: Masters of Health Administration, Nursing, etc)?**

**A:** Yes, a professional Masters degree would be considered. You will need to think about the type of leadership development you will be experiencing. Leadership is a focus of AMS. Consider what activities, learning and development that you are going to experience as an individual in order for you to effectively lead and contribute knowledge in this area.

**Q: For mid-career researchers, could a multi-mentor model be used instead of engaging a supervisor?**

**A:** Yes, it may be more suitable for a mid-career researcher to engage multiple mentors in order to access the best advice, guidance and resources in order to successfully develop expertise and leadership in the area. Overall, we are looking to see that the applicant has built the right team around them.

**Q: How can we position a multi-mentorship model in the application form.**

**A:** For applications with more than one mentor, identify a lead mentor (Signature Page). In the "Expectations of the Supervisor and the Mentor" field, name the mentorship team and discuss the multi-mentorship model.

**Q: Can you distinguish the roles of the Supervisor and the Mentor**

**A:** The Supervisor would oversee the general development of the applicant, their relationship with the host institution and financial management. The Supervisor may be your department head that signs off on release time and other institutional contributions. The Mentor is an external person that brings a different perspective to your development as a Fellow and brings needed expertise (equity piece, AI piece, etc) to this learning opportunity.

**Q: Can proposals include multiple co-applicants or is it one applicant with multiple collaborators?**

**A:** the purpose of the Fellowship is to develop the individual to lead in this area. You may do that through a project which engages others as a collaborator, or they may act as a mentor or supervisor to the Fellow. The goal is not to conduct a particular research project, it is really to support a developmental opportunity for the Fellow.

**Q: Can the mentor be from outside Ontario or Canada?**

**A:** Yes. One of the issues to consider in your proposal is where the funding will be held. The funding should be held at an institution in Canada.

**Q: We were originally planning on having a Post-doc student work with us on the project. But since our institution is not very big, we may not be able to secure a Post-doc. Could a PhD student in a related field of study (someone who works on medical robots, to be precise) be involved?**

**A:** As you would be the applicant for the fellowship, you might be able to incorporate the PhD student as a collaborator or as a sponsor organization's contribution. Their primary issue with the Fellowship is the quality of the program for the applicant and achieving the outcome of a scholar/leader to advance knowledge and discussion on AI/Digital technology and compassionate healthcare.

**Q: Furthermore, we understand that we need to have a supervisor and a mentor, but in addition to those, we are wondering if we can have two or three co-principal investigators, one of whom is currently working in another country. If co-principal investigators is not an option, then could we have multiple collaborators?**

**A:** The addition of other researchers supporting the development of the Fellow would be welcome, especially if they are bringing unique expertise to the learning experience. The purpose of the funding is to develop scholars and leaders in this field, and not to specifically fund a research project. The only caveat to note is that AMS Healthcare funding held through an institution in Canada must be used to support activities in Canada.

**Q: In terms of time commitment, how much is expected for this award?**

**A:** There is no specific amount of time required for this award. It needs to be reasonable based on the proposed activities and developmental plan, and the background, environment and discipline of the applicant.

**Q: Is there a minimum amount of release time for this award**

**A:** No minimum amount of release time (time dedicated to the project) is stated. We understand that the cost of release time can vary depending on the discipline you are in (nurse, physician, lawyer, bioethicist, computer science researcher). We will be looking at a reasonable amount of time to complete the proposed activities, develop as a leader and comply with the requirements of the award. This should be indicated as a % of time. In the full application, applicants are required to identify what percentage of their time will be allocated to the fellowship.

**Eligible Expenses**

**Q: Can the award be used to fund the project if the hospital pays my salary?**

**A:** Yes, the funding can be used for salary replacement (release time) or project specific expenses. It will be important for you to demonstrate in your proposal that there is adequate release time in order to be focused on the Fellowship. Additionally, the release time provided by the institution can be considered an in-kind contribution.

**Q: If my institution provides salary support, can the award be used for the cost of the research itself?**

**A:** As previously stated, release time can be considered as an in-kind contribution to the project. In broad terms, the Fellowship award is to be used to support the learning and development of the Fellow. This may be achieved through a particular project or through travel to learn from experts in other centres, or attend meetings. Applicants are encouraged to use creativity in what they want to use the funding for. Overall, the funding should be used to support the development of the Fellow.

**Q: What is the value of in-kind supports to this program?**

**A:** While In-kind contributions are not a requirement of this funding opportunity, they are an important measure of the support that is being provided to the Fellow that enables them to grow and develop and to help support their overall success. CIHR provides some advice on how to value in-kind contributions at: <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/3758.html>. Please ensure that the Sponsor letter specifically supports the in-kind contributions stated in your proposal.

**Q: Can the start date be moved?**

**A:** AMS has some flexibility regarding the start date of the award. However, AMS would like to flow the funding before the end of 2022.

**Q: With respect to the use of funds to support salary support, can the salary of a Research Assistant (RA) who is supporting the project be eligible?**

**A:** Yes. If the RA's work is specific to the activities. Expenses for equipment (i.e. computers) and institutional charges/overheads are not eligible.

**Q: Would activities that occur outside of Canada be eligible for this Fellowship?**

**A:** AMS recognizes that there is a lot of expertise within Canada that can be engaged to support this Fellowship and one of the principal goals of the program is to develop scholars and leaders

in Canada. The intent of the award is to support learning opportunities at organization located in Canada. However, if there is a really good reason for the Fellow to study or conduct some activities internationally, assuming that is even possible given the current environment, and the need is clear and compelling, then it would be eligible.

For example, there is an opportunity, when people collaborate across the country, to start to build some of the relationships that, for the most part, probably don't quite exist for equity, compassion and technology. The technology group is fairly well connected across Canada through CFAR and its work, however the addition of the equity lens may present an opportunity for some international networking.

It is important to note that the award is not intended to fund an international study tour.

### Other questions

**Q: What if my background is not strong in “well-being and mental health”, can I still apply?**

**A:** Absolutely! AMS will fund at least four Fellowship awards with an additional lens on well-being and mental health. This approach was used to attract a whole range of proposals for scholars and leaders. AMS expects that many applications may not have a well-being and mental health component in their proposals.

**Q: What if a lot of applicants apply to the focused stream of “well-being and mental health”, how the remaining 8 spots be decided?**

**A:** In such a case, AMS will fund the top twelve scoring applications ensuring that at least four (4) apply to the focus stream.

**Q: Are the review guidelines posted?**

**A:** The Review Panel will be struck with clinical and non-clinical experts representing the diversity of proposals submitted. Standard review guidelines have been prepared for the review panel to use, however, they are not posted on the website. The LOI Submission Guide contains information about the review process and some important considerations to include in your proposal.

**Q: Once I become a funded Fellow, will there be an opportunity to meet other Fellows in this program and see what projects they are working on?**

**A:** Yes, this is an important part of the Fellowship program. Through the partnership with the OSSU, all Fellows will be invited to participate in a workshop to network with each other and learn about patient-oriented research and how to prepare policy briefs for government. Fellows will also be encouraged to participate in a DT/AI and compassionate care community of practice. Finally, OSSU will support Fellows to participate at one of our Research Round Tables where project outcomes can be presented to key stakeholders and government decision makers. AMS will also bring fellows together at the annual conference and other events.

**Q: If your proposal includes a “well-being and mental health” piece, does that need to be stated explicitly?**

**A:** Yes, the LOI Signature Page includes a field for you to declare the stream you are submitting to. AMS will fund at least four Fellowships that include a focus on wellbeing and mental health in the proposal.

**Q: Can applications request less funding from AMS.**

**A:** Yes. AMS will fund Fellowships up to \$75,000.

**Q: Is there any information available on the website about the scope of the projects that get funded for this fellowship?**

**A:** There is no specific document describing the scope of proposals suitable to this program. However, the AMS website lists all of the funded awards with project descriptions.

**Q: Is sponsoring institution the university where the Fellow is based or the institution where the supervisor is based?**

**A:** In the most practical terms, the Sponsoring Institution (whether it be a university, research institute, hospital, college) is an accredited institution which will hold and report on the Fellowship funding. The Supervisor is generally associated with this institution.

**Q: Can an applicant apply to both the Fellowship and the Small Grants program? If yes, are they eligible to hold both if awarded?**

**A:** Yes, you can apply to both awards, however, you may only hold only one award at a time.

**Q: Can an applicant who is near the end of graduate training with a letter of proposed completion date of Spring 2022 from the faculty apply to this program?**

**A:** Applicants must have completed their graduate training by the time the funding term commences. A letter from institution attesting to your anticipated graduation date must be included in your submission.

**Q: Does the supervisor also need to bring in subject expertise in addition to ensuring resources and support, even if a fellow has mentors with subject and methodological expertise?**

**A:** The supervisor may also bring subject expertise to the Fellowship program.