



2025-2026 Translational Breast Cancer Research Traineeship Program

Application Deadline: Monday, June 23, 2025

(A) Description

This program is made possible by a major donation from Breast Cancer Canada (BCC) to the Translational Breast Cancer Research Unit (TBCRU) within the London Regional Cancer Program, as well as donations from other groups interested in supporting translational breast cancer research. The BCC has strategically moving towards a national “Centres of Excellence” model for the research units that they support across Canada. The TBCRU’s area of research excellence has been identified as **advanced cancer/metastasis**. Additionally, BCC has a particular interest in **precision oncology** approaches to breast cancer research and treatment.

In support of this, the purpose of the 2025-2026 Translational Breast Cancer Research Traineeship Program is to provide studentship/fellowship funding for **graduate students**, **postdoctoral fellows**, and **clinical fellows** engaged in translational research projects focused on the understanding, prevention, tracking and/or treatment of breast cancer in the context of advanced disease, metastasis and/or precision oncology.

(B) Value and Duration of Awards

MSc Graduate Studentship

- **Annual Value of Award:** \$12,000
- **Matching Funds Requirement (from Supervisor or other source):** As per trainee’s graduate program funding guidelines

PhD Graduate Studentship

- **Annual Value of Award:** \$16,000
- **Matching Funds Requirement (from Supervisor or other source):** As per trainee’s graduate program funding guidelines

Postdoctoral Fellowship

- **Annual Value of Award:** \$20,000
- **Matching Funds Requirement (from Supervisor or other source):** At least \$30,000

Clinical Fellowship

- **Annual Value of Award:** \$25,000
- **Matching Funds Requirement (from Supervisor or other source):** At least \$35,000
- Awards will be made for one (1) calendar year, with a start date of **September 1, 2025**. Partial funding requests (e.g., for 1 or 2 terms) will also be considered with justification related to program start or completion date.
- It is expected that award recipients will make every effort to apply for and obtain other national or international funding during their programs, thus freeing up funds for other trainees. Trainees are permitted to hold other scholarships/fellowships up to a value of \$15,000 concurrently with a TBCRU award.
- All tuition costs and/or additional minimum stipend requirements related to a trainee’s education program are the joint responsibility of the trainee/supervisor/department.
- Trainees who do not require any funding but would still like to participate in the TBCRU program are invited to send a brief email to TBCRU Director Dr. Alison Allan (alison.allan@lhsc.on.ca) describing their research, its translational applicability to breast cancer, and their interest in participating in the program.

(C) Timeline and Deadlines

- **Applications Open:** May 20, 2025
- **Application Submission Deadline:** June 23, 2025 (5 pm EDT)
- **Anticipated Notice of Decision:** By July 28, 2025

(D) Eligibility Criteria

Project Eligibility

1. Research projects **must** have a focus on the understanding, prevention, tracking and/or treatment of breast cancer in the context of advanced disease, metastasis and/or precision oncology; and
2. Projects **must** involve both basic science and clinical investigators (i.e. as co-supervisors, advisory/mentorship committee members, research collaborators etc.)

Graduate Student Eligibility

1. MSc and PhD graduate student applicants must be enrolled as a new or continuing full-time student in a graduate program at Western University as of September 1, 2025.
2. Funding will only be awarded to graduate students who are within their normal residency funding period (2 years for MSc; 4 years for PhD; 5 years for direct-entry or transfer PhD students).
3. Applicants must be carrying out research under the supervision of a Western faculty member who is actively engaged in breast cancer research and/or clinical care.

Postdoctoral Fellow Eligibility

1. Applicants must have completed all requirements of their PhD before the start date of the award but no earlier than August 31, 2021.
2. Applicants who received their PhD before August 31, 2021 but who have experienced career interruptions are also eligible to apply. Such applicants must provide additional details outlining the nature and dates of these circumstances.
3. Applicants must be carrying out research under the supervision of a Western faculty member who is actively engaged in breast cancer research and/or clinical care.

Clinical Fellow Eligibility

1. Applicants must have a medical degree; have completed residency training in a specialty/subspecialty related to oncology; and be licensed with, or be eligible for an educational license from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO).
2. Applicants must be carrying out research under the supervision of a Western faculty member who is actively engaged in breast cancer research and/or clinical care.
3. It is expected that approximately 50% of a Clinical Fellow's time will be spent on research during the award period.

(E) Award Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Academic accomplishments and research experience/potential of the trainee (50%)
- Scientific quality of the project (15%)
- Translational relevance of the research and applicability to metastatic breast cancer and/or precision oncology (15%)
- Quality and appropriateness of the mentor and training environment (20%)

(F) Expectations and Reporting

- Annual lay and scientific reports are to be submitted to the TBCRU Committee, which will be the basis of reports to the Breast Cancer Canada and other donors.

- Trainees and mentors are expected to participate in donor stewardship activities, (i.e. research blogs, lab tours, fundraising events, community speaking engagements and/or social media) in support of Breast Cancer Canada and/or other donors as part of their fundraising efforts for breast cancer research.
- Support from the program **must be acknowledged in publications and presentations** arising from the trainee's research, as follows: *"Supported by a Studentship/Fellowship funded by Breast Cancer Canada"*.

(G) How to Apply

Submit applications **electronically as a single pdf file** (including scanned signature page) to Dr. Alison Allan (alison.allan@lhsc.on.ca), TBCRU Director, by **Monday June 23, 2025 at 5 pm EDT**. You will receive an email to confirm receipt of your electronic application. Please assemble the following items, in the order specified, into a **single PDF**; do not include any additional pages. *NOTE: All pages must be formatted as follows: single spaced, Arial or Calibri 11 pt font, 1" margins.*

1. A completed **Application Form**.
2. A **Scientific Summary** of the research project, using the structured format provided in the application form. Maximum 1 page.
3. A **Lay Summary** which can be used to explain the aims of the research project and its relevance to breast cancer patients to the BCC and other donors. Maximum 150 words.
4. A **Translational Relevance Statement** describing how the research project is translational; how it applies to metastatic breast cancer; and how both basic science and clinical investigators will be involved in the project and/or mentorship of the trainee. Maximum 300 words.
5. An **Abbreviated CV of the Trainee and Additional Information**, maximum 5 pages for the CV. Additional information should include undergraduate and graduate transcripts (unofficial or PDF made from photocopy). Note: transcripts are not required for post-doctoral or clinical fellows, although they may be provided.
6. An **Abbreviated CV of the Mentor**, with evidence of sufficient operating funds to support the trainee's project and a list of relevant publications from the last 5 years. Maximum 5 pages.
7. Trainees who currently hold a TBCRU award and are seeking renewal of this award must provide a **Progress Report** describing progress during the tenure of the current award, any presentations or publications resulting from the project and award, any external funding received, and your participation in BCC donor stewardship activities (i.e. blogs, lab tours, fundraising events, community speaking engagements, social media etc.)

Questions?

Please contact Dr. Alison Allan via email at alison.allan@lhsc.on.ca or via telephone at 519-685-8600 extension 55134.