

2026-2027 Translational Breast Cancer Research Traineeship Program

Application Deadline: Friday, July 03, 2026

(A) Description

This program is made possible by a major donation from Breast Cancer Canada (BCC) to the Translational Breast Cancer Research Unit (BCC-CRU) within the Verspeeten Family Cancer Centre, as well as donations from other groups interested in supporting translational breast cancer research. The BCC has strategically moved towards a national “Centres of Excellence” model for the research units that they support across Canada. The BCC-TRU’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 2026-2027 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

Category	Annual Value of Award	Matching Funds Requirement (from Supervisor or other source)
MSc Graduate Studentship	\$14,000	As per trainee’s graduate program funding guidelines
PhD Graduate Studentship	\$16,000	As per trainee’s graduate program funding guidelines
Postdoctoral Fellowship	\$20,000	At least \$30,000
Clinical Fellowship	\$25,000	At least \$35,000

- Awards will be made for one (1) calendar year, with a start date of September 1, 2026. 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 BCC-TRU 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 BCC-TRU program are invited to send a brief email to BCC-TRU Director Dr. Alison Allan (<mailto: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: June 8, 2026
- Application Submission Deadline: **July 03, 2026 (5 pm EDT)**
- Anticipated Notice of Decision: By July 31, 2026

(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, 2026.
2. Funding priority will be given to meritorious 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). However, if funds allow, requests for funding within the first "Year X" only will be considered with appropriate justification.
3. Applicants must be conducting 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, 2022.
2. Applicants who received their PhD before August 31, 2022 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 conducting 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 conducting 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 BCC-TRU 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."