

Killam Research Fund

Phase 1 Q&A Session
January 30, 2026



UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA



Land Acknowledgement

The University of Alberta, its buildings, labs and research stations are primarily located on the territory of Néhiyaw,, Niitsitapi, Métis, Nakoda, Dene, Haudenosaunee, and Anishinaabe, lands that are now known as part of Treaties 6, 7 and 8 and homeland of the Métis. The University of Alberta respects the sovereignty, lands, histories, languages, knowledge systems and cultures of all First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.

What is the Killam Research Fund?

The Izaak Walton Killam and Dorothy Killam bequest to the University of Alberta provides \$1M in funding each year to support research programs in the fields of Humanities, Fine Arts, Social Sciences, Education, Business or Law. The suite of programs was named the Killam Research Fund (KRF).

The KRF supports research that aligns with the University of Alberta's and with the Killam Trusts' priorities to:

- promote and achieve **Research Excellence** by increasing external funding
- attract and retain **Research Talent** by funding research at all career stages
- advance **Institutional Research Goals** (i.e., Forward with Purpose) by building capacity for large-scale, interdisciplinary research

Why has the Killam Research Fund changed?

- Feedback from a recent program review highlighted a need for clearer **research development options**, stronger strategic **alignment with external funders**, and more opportunities for **early-stage seed funding** as well as support for **building interdisciplinary teams**.
- **The Proposed Solution:** This new model provides clearer research development pathways and options for projects at different scales, including smaller seed grants. It is designed to enhance researcher skills by aligning the application and review processes with those of major external agencies.

What are the new programs?

The new suite of programs will be launched in two phases.

Phase 1: December 1, 2025

- Launch of the Cornerstone Research Seed Grants and Knowledge Mobilization Grants

Phase 2: Spring 2026

- Launch of the Catalyst Grants, Killam Research Chairs, and Killam Award for Societal Impact

Cornerstone Research Seed Grants

- Support investigator-driven **research projects** in the fields of Humanities, Fine Arts, Social Sciences, Education, Business, or Law.
- These projects, led by **individual researchers or collaborative teams**, are focused on advancing scholarly knowledge.
- This program prepares researchers to apply for external funding, such as the SSHRC Insight Development Grant (IDG), the Insight Grant (IG), or equivalent external competitions that would benefit from **project-focused seed funding**.
- Applicants are expected to **apply for external funding** within two years.

Cornerstone Research Seed Grants

Cornerstone Small Seed Grant (\$5,000 - \$10,000)

- The primary entry point for a new project idea.
- Provides funds for pilot studies, archival work, proof-of-concept development or other smaller-scale projects to be competitive for external funding.

Cornerstone Large Seed Grant (up to \$30,000)

- Provides enhanced seed funding for new projects or distinct phases of an existing research program that, due to their scope, require a larger investment to be competitive for external funding.
- Supports resource-intensive activities such as establishing national or international collaborations, conducting multi-site pilot studies, or broadening participant and/or community engagement.

Knowledge Mobilization Grants

- Support events and outreach activities geared toward **short-term, targeted knowledge mobilization initiatives** in the fields of Humanities, Fine Arts, Social Sciences, Education, Business, or Law.
- These events and activities represent opportunities to exchange knowledge and **engage with participants** on research issues they value.
- These events and outreach activities can often serve as a first step toward **more comprehensive and longer-term externally funded projects**.

Knowledge Mobilization Grants

Knowledge Mobilization Grants (\$1,500 - \$10,000) support activities such as:

- Hosting workshops/conferences
- Attending a conference to present works that have not been previously published or presented externally
- Creating podcasts or films
- Publication costs
- Developing other tools to exchange knowledge, engage collaborators, or connect with new audiences

Adjudication Criteria

Adjudication criteria for both Cornerstone Seed Grants and Knowledge Mobilization Grants are based on three main criteria:

- **Challenge:** The quality and significance of the research
- **Feasibility:** The efficacy, justification, and adequacy of the timeline and budget
- **Capacity:** The expertise to succeed

The Cornerstone Research Seed Grants have an additional criteria:

- **External Funding Plan:** The plan to seek external funding

Priority Groups

Demand for funds typically exceeds the available funding, so not all meritorious projects can be supported. Priority will be given to the following applicants:

- New and junior faculty
- Indigenous faculty and faculty in Equity-denied groups
- Knowledge mobilization activities that will lead to larger, externally funded projects
- Applicants who have not received previous grants from the Killam Research Fund (Knowledge Mobilization, Cornerstone, or Catalyst).

Contact & Resources

Email: killamresearchfund@ualberta.ca

Website: [OVPR Internal Research Funding](#)

Terms of Reference:

[Killam Cornerstone](#)

[Killam Knowledge Mobilization](#)

2026 deadlines: Feb 6, July 3, Nov 6

Questions? Please reach out—we're here to help.



UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA