AVA Health Research Training Platform

AVA Early Career Researcher (ECR) Teaching Release Guidelines

AVA's Objectives & Guiding Principles

- ***Strengthen and build capacity*** to transform population (community) health and social services to promote the health and wellness of girls, women, and gender-diverse people, at risk/affected by violence and adversity over the lifecycle;
- ***Use a collaborative, innovative***, cross-sectoral/disciplinary/jurisdictional training platform to train hundreds of Canadian service providers and academics in the social services/community health field working with this population; and
- ***Make intergenerational and population impacts***, and promote a positive lifespan for girls, women, and gender-diverse people.

AVA is also committed to addressing inequities and health disparities disproportionately impacting girls, women, and gender diverse people with intersectional identities. This includes, but is not limited to, (dis)ability, race, and gender identity. AVA relies on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) initiatives, and Sex and Gender-Based Analysis (SGBA+) is at the core of reaching AVA's objective. See Appendix A for more details.

Section 1: Program Overview

Background

The purpose of the AVA Early Career Researcher[1] (ECR) Teaching Release program is to support ECR training and research career development by allowing ECRs to be released from their teaching obligations, and devote that time and energy to participating in multiple activities of the AVA Training Platform including:

- *Mentoring trainees in the Triadic Mentorship Program;*
- *Participating as a trainee or content creator (i.e. presenter) in AVA Online;*
- *Strategy Development, Management and Evaluation Training;*
- *Another activity connected to AVA's objective.*

This program will be available competitively to ECRs who want to engage in their own training or training others in high-need areas that relate to girls, women, and gender-diverse people.

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[1] Early Career Researchers (ECRs) are academics with <8 years from first academic position in a tenure track.

These "high-needs" areas (deemed as such, by the Canadian Institute for Health Research (CIHR) Girls' and Women's Health and Wellness Research Pool) include:

- **Youth and Family Wellness,** especially gender roles and identities, mental health and wellness (e.g. stress, anxiety, depression), physical and psychological abuse (e.g. gender-based violence, harassment, discrimination, racism and cyber abuse), justice system involvement (e.g. witness to/victim of crime) and substance misuse.
- **Sexual and Reproductive Health**, especially postpartum health, including depression, often an outcome of exposure to childhood adversity and violence and sexually transmitted infections including HIV.
- **Health Services and Population-Based Approaches to Wellness**, especially limited access to health services, health promotion and social determinants of health for non-communicable disease (e.g. mental health problems).

Timeline

- January- Call for Applicants
- April- Reminder (Repeat Call for Applicants)
- July-Reminder (Repeat Call for Applicants)
- Late September- Application deadline (applicants will be released up to 18 months after award receipt)
- Early October- Application adjudication
- Mid October- Award announcement

ECR Responsibilities

- Participating in activities in other AVA Programs (e.g. in the first year of the Strategy Development, Management and Evaluation program, the ECR would be expected to attend the Strategic Planning workshops; in years thereafter, they would be expected to attend videoconferencing to learn about strategic management and tracking, necessary to evaluate achievement of AVA milestones over time).
- Addressing high-needs areas noted above via delivery of training (e.g. AVA Online course delivery) or trainee engagement (e.g. Triadic Mentorship).
- Supporting AVA program delivery, review, and/or maintenance.

Recruitment

Our recruitment approaches will take many forms and will include the call for applications (CFA) in shorter and longer forms as appropriate (e.g. shorter Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and list-serve postings; longer CFA postings on university and centre websites). We will utilize a range of platforms to attract high-caliber ECRs, including: the seven Alliance Centre websites, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn sites of all active Alliance Centres and leaders (e.g. NPA N. Letourneau has nearly 25,000 Twitter followers) and those of their host faculties and institutions. We will rely on the listservs of all team members' faculties and departments and partnering community agencies to advertise in regional university electronic news/media sources.

Award Value and Funds Available

Course "buy-out" is provided for one to two courses, and is dependent on affordability of requested course buy-out (varies based on ECR's university). It is anticipated one to two ECRs' one-course buy-out per year to be used within 18 months of being awarded (with approval or knowledge of applicant's senior administrator). This is in addition to the teaching releases that will be offered annually to Co-Principal Applicants (PAs)/ECRs K. Ross and A. Stewart-Tufescu.

Eligible Expenses

Funds will be paid to the ECR's university to cover the costs of teaching release for one to two courses (dependant on affordability for AVA) in the award's fiscal year.

Section 2: Eligibility & Evaluation Criteria

Teaching Release Eligibility Criteria

- Applicant must be an ECR, defined as an independent researcher who is within 8 years of beginning their first independent research or faculty position.
- The ECR should hold an academic appointment at a Canadian post-secondary institution and be affiliated with or willing to be affiliated with the AVA Training Platform.
- There is no limit on the number of ECR Teaching Releases that an applicant can apply for or be awarded over the 6 years of AVA Training Platform; however ECR's can only receive one to two course buy-out per year (dependent on affordability for AVA).

Evaluation Criteria

AVA ECR Teaching Release Applications will be evaluated by delegated sub-committee members (see adjudication process) based on the following criteria:

1. Alignment with the eligibility criteria
2. Alignment of the ECRs research program with the AVA Training Platform objective (Appendix A) and HRTP high-priority areas (see pages 1-2)
3. Excellence of candidate's research program potential, knowledge translation training, and productivity (e.g. publications, social media), and awards
4. Quality of anticipated impact of participating in the AVA Training Platform
5. Quality of anticipated contribution to the AVA Training curriculum and mentorship
6. EDIA considerations (Appendix B);

*Adjudication will also depend on the affordability of the request for teaching release, and whether the applicant has spoken to their senior administrator about the course buy-out.

Section 3: Application & Adjudication Processes

How to Apply

Applications should be submitted using the online application form that can be accessed on the AVA website at www.avatraining.ca. An ECR may also request access to the online application and application guidelines by contacting avatraining@ucalgary.ca.

If you require assistance with completing the application process, please contact avatraining@ucalgary.ca .

For an example of the application form, please see Appendix C. It consists of:

- The ECR's contact and EDIA information
- AVA ECR Teaching Release Application Form and ECR Statement (see below)
- One-page letter of support from more experienced AVA Training Platform member
- ECR's two-page curriculum vitae (CV) from ECR. The CV should detail the following:

- o Education: Current and completed post-secondary degrees (degree, institution, country, supervisor, years)
- o Current Position: Title, Institution
- o Past/Other Positions: Relevant work experience (year, position, institution/company, country
- o Awards: Prizes, honours and awards (name, awarded by, year won/held)
- o Research Grants: Funder (years, amount)
- o Knowledge Translation: Publications, presentations, etc. in traditional and social media forms.

Deadline for Applications (2023/2024)

The deadline for applications for AVA's second year of ECR Teaching Release will be September 25, 2023 The ECR who is awarded the teaching release will be able to use the "course buy-out" within 18 months of award. Application deadlines for subsequent years is TBA.

Adjudication Process

Applications will be adjudicated using a score card with weighted criteria, by the ECR Teaching Release Working Group Chair, the AVA Program Manager, and working group members unless there is a perceived conflict with an applicant. Guest adjudicators (e.g. EDI Champion) may be invited.

Appendix A

AVA Guiding Principles

AVA's Objectives

- **Strengthen and build capacity** to transform population (community) health and social services to promote the health and wellness of girls, women, and gender-diverse people, at risk/affected by violence and adversity over the lifecycle;

- **Use a collaborative, innovative**, cross-sectoral/disciplinary/jurisdictional training platform to train hundreds of Canadian service providers and academics in the social services/community health field working with this population; and

- **Make intergenerational and population impacts**, and promote a positive lifespan for girls, women, and gender-diverse people.

The following Guiding Principles outline the AVA team's commitment to fair and equitable policies and practice.

What are AVA's Guiding Principles?

- AVA is committed to addressing inequities and health disparities disproportionately impacting girls, women, and gender-diverse people with intersectional identities. This includes, but is not limited to, (dis)ability, race, and gender identity. AVA relies on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) initiatives, and Sex and Gender-Based Analysis (SGBA+) is at the core of reaching AVA's objectives.
- AVA seeks to ensure EDIA in all aspects of the AVA Training Platform by engaging with Patient Partners and AVA designated Champions who specialize in EDIA, Indigenous Knowledge, SGBA+ and Black and Other racialized people.
- AVA aims to strengthen and build capacity to address the intersections between sex, race, (dis)ability, social locations, gender-diversity and other identities, while acknowledging (to the degree possible) the impacts of colonialism, classism, racism, and Canadian culture (albeit recognizing that AVA may influence, but cannot itself change, these things).
- AVA recognizes that diverse voices from community experts, as well as Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit, and Metis), Black, and other racialized people, continue to be minimal and minimalized in academic research; hence, our aim is to have academic, community, Indigenous, Black, and other racialized people, as partners, co-creating culturally safe, supportive, and reciprocal learning for all team members.
- All team members whether academic or community partners, or mentees, are considered trainees engaged in reciprocal learning.

How will AVA do this?

- AVA seeks to ensure EDIA in all aspects of the AVA Training Platform by engaging with Patient Partners and AVA designated Champions who specialize in EDIA, Indigenous Knowledge, SGBA+ and Black and Other racialized people.

- EDIA will influence selection of participants to take part in AVA programs (e.g. Community Agency Internship; Early Career Researcher Teaching Release).
- All AVA team members will be asked to attend mandatory annual EDIA training.
- AVA Online includes courses specifically designed to enhance trainee and team members' knowledge and practice related to EDIA.
- SGBA+ and intersectionality are core AVA Online curriculum components. AVA team members, especially leadership, have training in SGBA+, intersectionality and research knowledge that address racialized people.
- AVA prioritizes the inclusion of Indigenous, Black, and other racialized people on the AVA team and in trainee recruitment.
- In all training activities, including experiential learning activities, internships, networking and/or other innovative training opportunities, attention will be paid to ensure that the Guiding Principles of AVA are upheld (e.g. by including EDIA assessments in meeting agendas)
- The EDIA, Indigenous Knowledge, and Black and Other racialized people Champions are represented at the highest level by being part of the Platform Advisory Committee (PAC). These Champions' opinions are sought frequently and as appropriate.
- The call for applicants will prioritize racialized, (dis)abled, gender-diverse and other identities.
- We will employ best practices in EDIA recruitment and application adjudication, with our EDIA, Indigenous Knowledge, and Black and Other racialized people Champions reviewing/providing input into the process and written materials in every form.
- We will seek equity by removing systemic barriers and biases to recruitment by ensuring all PAC members, who will approve calls for applicants and approve final adjudication of applications, have training on unconscious bias (individual) but also from a systems approach (systemic).
- The AVA training platform will develop a broad range of research skills and provide training on emerging approaches to advance rigorous and responsible research (e.g., sex- and gender-based analysis (SGBA+), research data management, research involving Indigenous Peoples, ethics, unconscious bias).
- AVA trainee recruitment efforts will aim to ensure that diverse perspectives and lived experiences (e.g. race, place of origin, religion, immigrants and newcomers, ethnic origin, ability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and age) are represented among AVA trainees. An example of how this will be done is by advertising training opportunities via community partners and academics that provide services and support to diverse people.
- AVA's mandatory core activities will address EDIA (including unconscious bias assessed with the Harvard Implicit Association Test and training with the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, which includes unconscious/implicit bias recognition training), Sex and Gender-Based Analysis (SGBA+), and intersectionality, and Indigenous research methods.
- AVA Team Champions will review and edit these principles and definitions annually.

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Appendix B

AVA's Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility (EDIA) Principles

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EDIA Definitions

Equity
Means fairness; people of all identities being treated fairly. It means ensuring that the processes for allocating resources and decision-making are fair to all and do not discriminate on the basis of identity. There is a need to put measures in place to eliminate discrimination and inequalities which have been well described and reported and ensure, to the best degree possible, equal opportunities. Equity is needed to achieve equality. For example, treating people as equals in an environment in which historical and systemic disadvantages prevent people from operating as equals can be inequitable – it lacks the fairness of a truly equitable situation (NSERC, 2017)

Diversity
Consists of the conditions, expressions and experiences of different groups identified by age, education, sexual orientation, parental status/responsibility, immigration status, Indigenous status, religion, disability, language, race, place of origin, ethnicity, culture, socio-economic status and other attributes. Recognizing and valuing diversity must be accompanied by concerted efforts to ensure inclusion of diverse populations, meaning that individuals are and feel valued, respected and equally supported (NSERC, 2017).

Inclusion:
Requires creating an environment in which all people are respected equitably and have access to the same opportunities. Organizationally, inclusion requires the identification and removal of barriers (e.g., physical, procedural, visible, invisible, intentional, unintentional) that inhibit [applicants'] participation and contribution. Inclusion values and principles include fairness, justice, equity, and respect, by being open to different voices and perspectives, developing an understanding of different cultures, experiences and communities, and making a conscious effort to be welcoming, helpful and respectful to everyone (NSERC, 2017).

Accessibility:
"The provision of flexibility to accommodate needs and preferences, and refers to the design of products, devices, services, or environments for people who experience disabilities. It can also be understood as "a set of solutions that empower the greatest number of people to participate in the activities in question in the most effective ways possible"" (Baker & Vasseur, 2021).

AVA's EDIA Principles

1) Priority will be applied to Indigenous, Black and Other racialized people, as well as disabled, gender-diverse and other identities.
2) We will seek equity by removing systemic barriers and biases in recruitment, application and participation processes (see AVA's Guiding Principles for examples).
3) We will ensure diverse perspectives and lived experiences (e.g. races, places of origin, religions, immigrants and newcomers, etc.) are represented amongst the AVA team.
4) We will focus on inclusion by valuing and respecting all contributions, particularly eliminating hierarchies, by treating team members equally.

5) Seeking to address the 2 key objectives of the Government of Canada's EDI Tri-Agency Action Plan for 2018-2025 by ensuring fair access to Tri-Council resources and ensuring equitable participation in recruitment of trainees (i.e. Triadic Mentorship Program)
6) All AVA members shall participate in EDIA training and it will be part of the core AVA courses in AVA Online.

Appendix C

AVA ECR Teaching Release Application Form

The purpose of the AVA Early Career Researcher (ECR) Teaching Release program is to support ECR training and research career development by allowing ECRs to be released from their teaching obligations, and devote that time and energy to participating in multiple activities of the AVA Training Platform including:

- Mentoring trainees in the Triadic Mentorship Program;
- Participating as a trainee or content creator (presenter) in AVA Online;
- Strategy Development, Management and Evaluation Training;
- Another activity connected to AVA's objective.

This program will be available competitively to ECRs who want to engage in their own training or training others in high-need areas that relate to girls, women, and gender-diverse people. Please see the complete program guidelines for detailed information.

1. **ECR Contact Information**

   Name and preferred pronouns

   Post-secondary Institution

   Email Address

   Phone Number

2. **What is the dollar amount of 1 course buy-out for you?**

3. **Have you spoken to your senior administrator about your intent to apply for this teaching release?**

Questions 2-7 will help us ensure that we are honoring the AVA Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) guiding principles. As it pertains to recruitment, the AVA's EDIA Guiding Principles are:

- Priority will be applied to Indigenous, Black and Other racialized people, as well as disabled, gender-diverse and other identities.
- We will seek equity by removing systemic barriers and biases in recruitment, application and participation processes.
- We will ensure diverse perspectives and lived experiences (e.g. races, places of origin, religions, immigrants and newcomers, etc.) are represented amongst the AVA team.
- We will focus on inclusion by valuing and respecting all contributions, particularly eliminating hierarchies, by treating team members equally.
- Seeking to address the 2 key objectives of the Government of Canada's EDI Tri-Agency Action Plan for 2018-2025 by ensuring fair access to Tri-Council resources and ensuring equitable participation in recruitment of trainees.

4. What is your gender identity?

5. What city and province are you in?

6. What languages are you fluent in?

7. If you identify as a racialized person, please tell us how you identify.

8. Do you have a (dis)ability?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please tell us if you require accommodations (please specify).

9. If you have any other diverse perspective(s) or lived experience(s) we should take into consideration, please use the field below to tell us about it (e.g. newcomer, immigrant, multiple intersecting identities, etc.).

10. **Alignment of ECR's Research Program with CIHR Health Research Training Platform High-Priority Areas (check all that apply). See the program guidelines for more details.**

☐ Youth and family mental wellness

☐ Sexual and reproductive health

☐ Health services and population-based approaches to wellness

Other (please specify)

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11. **For every checked item in question 2, indicate how your research program addresses the high-priority area (300 words maximum).**

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12. **ECR Statement**
    In 1500 words maximum, please describe:
    - The alignment of your research program with the AVA Training Platform objective;
    - Your research career goal(s) and how your past training, achievements, publications, awards and research experiences have prepared you to meet your goals;
    - How participation in the AVA Training Platform can supplement your past training, achievements, etc. (as above) to advance your research career goals into the future;
    - The curriculum content that you may be able to generate;
    - The mentoring experience/skill/training you have that would be beneficial for the AVA Training Platform and AVA Trainees.

    Please attach a separate file with your answer. Please contact avatraining@ucalgary.ca if you require assistance.

13. **Please include a one-page letter of support from more experienced AVA Training Platform member.**

    Please attach as a separate file. Contact avatraining@ucalgary.ca if you require assistance.

14. **ECR's two-page curriculum vitae (CV) from ECR.**
    The CV should detail the following:
    - Education: Current and completed post-secondary degrees (degree, institution, country, supervisor, years)
    - Current Position: Title, Institution
    - Past/Other Positions: Relevant work experience (year, position, institution/company, country
    - Awards: Prizes, honors and awards (name, awarded by, year won/held)
    - Research Grants: Funder (years, amount)
    - Knowledge Translation: Publications, presentations, etc. in traditional and social media forms

    Please attach a separate file with your CV. Contact avatraining@ucalgary.ca if you require assistance.