

Postdoctoral Fellows

About Postdoctoral Fellows and Research Funding

At Memorial University, there are two classifications for Postdoctoral Fellow (PDF) positions:

1. **PDF-Honorary (PDF-H)** are those who have independently obtained their own fellowship, such as through Tri-Agency and are therefore not an employee of Memorial or subject to the [LUMUN PDF Collective Agreement \(CA\)](#). PDF-H are governed by the [Guidelines for PDF-H](#).
2. **PDF-Employee (PDF-E)** is an employee of the university and is paid, at least in part, through research grants that have been awarded to other researchers; they can be employed full- or part-time. The terms and conditions of employment are governed by [LUMUN PDF CA](#) as well as the [PDF University Policy](#).

This **guide pertains only to PDF-E** positions. The [LUMUN PDF CA](#) outlines the minimum PDF-E salary and benefits. We recommend, however, using a salary based on the relevant Tri-Agency PDF fellowship (which is higher) to make the position more competitive and help recruit a high-quality PDF. The LUMUN CA, however, has been renegotiated but not yet published. The below salary figures are base rates and are based on the old CA; we recommend adding at least 10% to these totals starting in 2023: :

PDF-E position description (see details below)	Base annual salary	Annual salary after mandatory benefits	Base hourly rate (based on 1960 hrs/yr)	Hourly rate after benefits (based on 1960 hrs/yr)
Full-time or part-time more than 20 hrs/wk and over 6 months, based on LUMUN CA	\$35,000	\$42,000	\$17.86	\$21.43
Full-time or part-time more than 20 hrs/wk and over 6 months, based on SSHRC/NSERC fellowship	\$45,000	\$54,000	\$22.96	\$27.55
Full-time or part-time more than 20 hrs/wk and over 6 months, based on CIHR fellowship	\$40,000	\$48,000	\$20.41	\$24.49
Part-time, less than 20 hrs/wk and under 6 months, based on LUMUN CA	\$35,000	\$42,000	\$17.86	\$19.87
Part-time, less than 20 hrs/wk and under 6 months, based on SSHRC/NSERC fellowship	\$45,000	\$54,000	\$22.96	\$25.55
Part-time, less than 20 hrs/wk and under 6 months, based on CIHR fellowship	\$40,000	\$48,000	\$20.41	\$22.71

Other considerations for hiring PDF-E

Grant Employee vs PDF-E: It is useful to consider whether a PDF-E appointment is warranted or appropriate for your project. If you have need of a project manager, are not able to support an independent researcher, or have Intellectual Property considerations, a [Grant Employee](#) position, e.g., a Research Assistant (RA) or a Research Associate (RAssoc), may be more appropriate.

Independent Researcher: At Memorial PDF-Es are considered independent researchers and, as such, should be provided the time and resources to work on their own research. Their project may be in conjunction with the Principal Investigator's, but the results and analysis of the project remain the PDFs own.

Intellectual Property (IP): All Postdoctoral Fellows enjoy equal rights to academic freedom. The [LUMUN CA](#) states that PDFs, "shall share ownership in all inventions, discoveries or creations conceived or developed by them in the course of their employment in accordance with the University policy on [Intellectual Property](#)." If you have questions, contact your department head and/or one of the HSS Grant Facilitation Officers (GFO).

PDF-Es are members of LUMUN: If you are preparing an application for a Tri-Agency competition, note that Memorial PDF-E must be paid a *salary* (as opposed to a "stipend") so benefits can be charged to the grant; benefits cannot be added to stipends since stipends are not considered employment income.

- Also in accordance with the LUMUN CA, you **must have secured work space and office computing resources** for the duration of the PDF-E's employment. Documentation confirming the space and resources must be submitted to HSS along with the grant proposal. Note that library facilities and a Memorial email address must also be provided.

Duration of PDF-E position: The [Tri-Agency Guide on Financial Administration](#) defines PDF studies as: "a short-term period of training to prepare individuals for research careers. To this end, the Agencies aim to promote the mobility and career progression of postdoctoral fellows by encouraging reasonable compensation for time spent working on grant recipients' funded research/activities. The Agencies defer to the administering institutions' policies concerning the length of tenure of postdoctoral studies."

- Memorial's PDF Policy does not state a time limit for a PDF-E position; typically, however, PDF positions are no more than 2, sometimes 3, years in length.

Offer of Appointment: Once the supervisor has identified a PDF-E candidate, the Dean must send an Appointment Letter to the candidate. The supervisor requests this Appointment Letter by submitting a ["Post-Doctoral Fellows Appointment Letter" request form](#) (signed by Department Head) to the HSS Dean's Office. The PDF-E cannot begin work until they have received this offer of employment. Also note that searches and appointments to PDF-E positions can only proceed once funding has been awarded.

Full-time PDF-E

- The below information is based on the previous LUMUN CA; this document will be updated once the new CA has been published.
- The old CA set the minimum base salary at \$35,000/yr; anticipate increases when the new CA is published (see salary chart on page 1 of this document).
- A normal work-week is 40 hrs/week and PDF-E cannot work more than 160 hours in a period of four consecutive weeks, starting with the first week worked and more than 180 hours in a period of four consecutive weeks without their written agreement. PDF-E shall

be granted time off for time worked in excess of 160 hours in a period of four (4) consecutive weeks at the rate of 1.5 hours for each hour worked.

- Vacation includes 15 days for “complete years of appointment” that are less than 3 years (so, 1960 working days/year) and 17 days for appointments that are beyond 3 years (1944 working days/year).
 - To calculate “Complete Years of Appointment”, all of the PDF-E’s appointments are added together, so long as the period of time between any two appointments does not exceed 12 months.
- Benefits for PDF-E positions depend on work history and other factors. There could be other fees connected to the position such as visa renewal fees, so it is recommended to **budget 20%** to ensure all benefits and fees are covered. Ask your departmental administrative staff person to check with HR if you know who you are hiring and want a more accurate benefits rate.

Part-time PDF-Es

- Initial appointments for PDF-Es are normally for periods of 12 months or greater. However, part-time positions are possible.
- To calculate an hourly wage for a part-time position, take the annual before-tax income and divide it by number of hours worked/ year. For example, using LUMUN’s base annual salary of \$35,000, divide by 1960 (if the PDF-E has worked less than 3 years) = **base hourly rate of \$17.86/hr**. Benefits must now be added and there are two scenarios depending on how many hours a week the part-time PDF-E has been employed to work and for how many months:
 - A. **If hours exceed 20hrs/wk and 6 months**, benefits are similar to full-time PDF-E positions and should follow the same rate (see chart above), e.g., add 20%:
 - a. At \$35,000/year = \$17.86/hr x 20% (+ \$3.57) = **\$21.43/hr**
 - B. **If hours do not exceed 20 hrs/wk and 6 months**, add 4% vacation pay to the base rate, then add 7% benefits:
 - a. At \$35,000/year = \$17.86/hr x 4% (+ \$0.71) = \$18.57 then add 7% (+\$1.30) = **\$19.87/hr**