

CANSSI Distinguished Postdoctoral Fellowship
Instructions for Reference Letters

Reference letters should be emailed to info@canssi.ca.

Name of postdoctoral applicant	
Date of Submission	
Name of Reference	
Home department and university or Company of the Reference	
Email address of Reference	

Please attach:

A letter that describes how you know the applicant, how long you have known the applicant, and comments on the applicant's research ability/potential and on the applicant's communication, interpersonal and leadership abilities. (See guidelines on the content of your letter, on the following page.)

Best practices for limiting unconscious biases (adapted from NSERC)

CANSSI is committed to promoting diversity, equity and inclusion to ensure equitable access across its programs.

The following best practices and considerations should be taken into account when drafting the report:

- Be accurate, fair, clear and balanced.
- Avoid being unduly personal.
- Support your points by providing specific examples of accomplishments where possible.
- Use superlative descriptors (for example, excellent, outstanding) judiciously and support them with evidence.
- Include only information that is relevant to the selection criteria (for example, do not include information related to ethnicity, age, hobbies, marital status, religion, disability status, financial need, etc.).

- Avoid sharing personal information about the applicant. Such information may be helpful only in explaining academic delays or interruptions and should be addressed with caution.

CANSSI strongly encourages the use of inclusive language (for example, “the applicant” or “they” instead of “he/she”). The report should be free from words or sentences that reflect prejudiced, stereotyped or discriminatory language of particular people or groups or their institution.

Content of your letter (adapted from NSERC)

In your report, comment on the selection criteria listed below, if applicable. Rather than providing general comments, assess the applicant’s strengths and limitations for each criterion. Include examples of the applicant’s accomplishments and contributions to support your assessment, while taking measures to mitigate implicit or unconscious bias, as previously mentioned.

Criteria	Description
Research ability and potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contributions to research and development (publications, conference presentations and/or proceedings, poster presentations, technical reports or patents) • researcher attributes (critical thinking, application of knowledge, judgment, originality, initiative, autonomy and enthusiasm for research) • ability to complete projects independently within an appropriate time period (if applicable, the applicant’s explanation of any special circumstances must be taken into consideration)
Communication, interpersonal and leadership abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • professional, academic and extracurricular interactions and collaborations with supervisors, colleagues, peers, students and members of the community • teaching, mentoring, supervising and/or coaching • participation and/or leadership in departmental or institutional organizations, associations, societies and/or clubs • work experience in industry or applications • awards for papers, reports, posters, oral presentations, teaching and/or volunteer/outreach work • participation in publication writing

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