National Killam Program Referee User Guide

Dorothy Killam Fellowships & Killam Prize

Contents

1. Purpose of This Guide

This guide provides information on how to provide a letter of support as a Referee for the National Killam Program on the following website: *National Killam Program · Portal.*

Note: Referees can send their letters of support to their contact (typically the nominator for the Killam Prize, or the applicant or their institution's award office contact for the Dorothy Killam Fellowship), by email to the *National Killam Program Office*.

If you need help logging into or creating an account, please refer to the *Killam portal user guide.*

To request this content in a different format, please contact the National Killam Program Office at KillamProgram-ProgrammeKillam@nrc-cnrc.gc.ca

2. About the National Killam Program

Vision

Dorothy Killam cared about the future. She had a vision of "building Canada's future through advanced study". Through her Will, Dorothy Killam established a perpetual trust to realize that vision. The trust funds generations of scholars in Canada with the goal to increase research attainments and promote sympathetic understanding between Canadians and the peoples of other countries. The National Killam Program endeavors to uphold the vision of Dorothy

Killam, strengthen the research ecosystem broadly, and improve the lives of Canadians through research advancements.

Mission

The mission of the National Killam Program is to support novel and diverse research fields, and to ensure that Killam Prize Laureates and Dorothy Killam Fellows are reflective of Canada's diversity.

Attributes

Fellows and Laureates conduct research that is superior, ground-breaking, and stands to positively improve the lives of Canadians, but they are not one-sided people. They are leading researchers who demonstrate a special distinction of intellect and contribute to the advancement of learning, and reflect Killam attributes.

> **Inclusive Collaborator** - whose work exemplifies inclusion and understanding of people, cultures and needs with participation among all economic, social and cultural backgrounds.

> **Barrier Breaker** - whose original, transformational, future-focused generation of knowledge and technology stands to change the way we live.

> **Research Leader** - who activates thoughtful cooperation among scholars, disciplines, and institutions.

3. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Statement

Inclusive excellence affirms that excellence is not attainable without inclusion. It recognizes the relationship between diversity and quality of research, and upholds equitable participation in Canada's research mission. In order to achieve research excellence, we must address systemic barriers that limit the full participation of Canadian talent. The National Killam Program's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan outlines our commitment to taking specific actions to achieve equitable and inclusive access to programming.

4. Additional guidelines for providing a letter of support

The National Killam Program Office wishes to thank you for generously offering your time and expertise in providing a letter of reference for a Killam Prize nominee or an applicant to the Dorothy Killam Fellowship. Letters of reference are carefully considered by peer reviewers and the selection committee and form an important part of the selection process.

In your letter of support, please clearly specify the nature of your relationship with the applicant.

To reduce the potential for unconscious bias in the evaluation process:

- Please refer to applicants consistently by their surname(s) and use gender-neutral pronouns.
- Please remove institutional letterhead.

Best Practices informed by the Canada Research Chair Best Practices in writing Letters of Reference[1], please consider the following when drafting your letter:

- Be accurate, fair, clear and balanced.
- Avoid being unduly personal (i.e., do not use the nominee's first name, always use gender neutral pronouns).
- Support your points by providing specific examples of accomplishments where possible.
- Use superlative descriptors (e.g., excellent, outstanding) judiciously and support them with evidence.
- Include only information that is relevant to the reviewer (e.g., do **not** include information related to ethnicity, age, hobbies, marital status, religion, etc.).
- Avoid revealing personal information about the nominee. Such information may be helpful only in explaining a gap in the nominee's productivity record (e.g., circumstances where health issues or family responsibilities have led to career interruptions) and should be addressed with caution.
- Be aware of unconscious bias and choose your words carefully (see below).

Limiting Unconscious Bias

Research shows that social and environmental factors (including unconscious bias) contribute to the under-representation of women and other equity-deserving groups in science. According to a report issued by the American Association of University Women, implicit biases operate at an unconscious level, are influenced by our cultural environment and can impact our decision making.

It is important to avoid unconscious bias within letters of recommendation, nomination, and letters of support as it can potentially have an unintended negative impact on the overall success/career of individuals—especially in the case of women and other equity-deserving groups.

In order to limit the influence of unconscious bias within your letter, consider the following:

- Focus on comparing the candidate with the specific evaluation criteria.
- Avoid using stereotypical adjectives when describing character and skills, especially when providing a letter for a woman (e.g., avoid words like nice, kind, agreeable, sympathetic, compassionate, selfless, giving, caring, warm, nurturing, maternal, etc.).
- Consider using 'stand-out' adjectives where appropriate (e.g., superb, excellent, outstanding, confident, successful, ambitious, knowledgeable, intellectual etc.).
- Use the nominee's formal title and surname instead of their first name.

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[1] *Letters of Reference (chairs-chaires.gc.ca)*

- Consider whether your letter unintentionally draws attention to gaps, doubts, or negative or unexplained statements (e.g., 'might make an excellent leader' versus 'is an established leader').
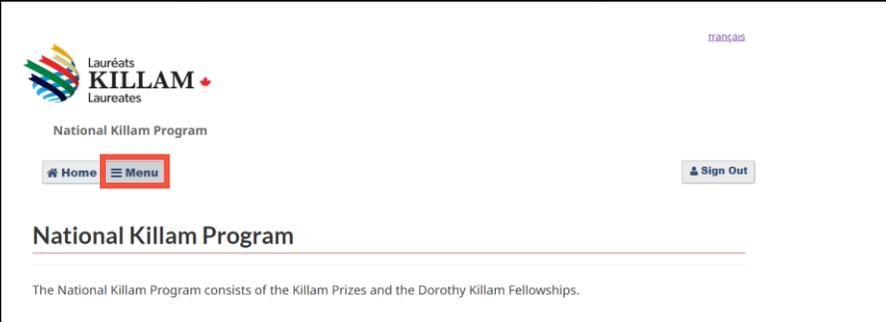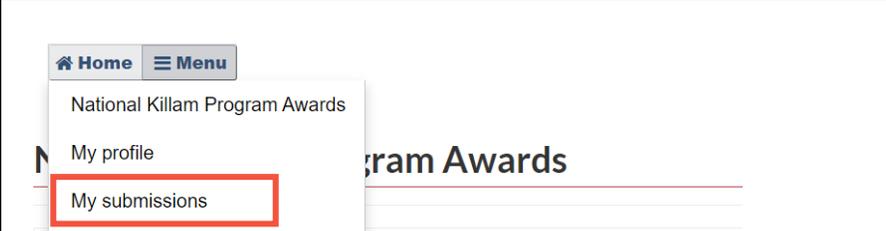
Thank you for considering these **Best Practices** when writing your letter and for supporting the National Killam Program.

5. Guide for Referees – Uploading letters of support

Referees can send their letters of support to their contact (typically the nominator for the Killam Prize, or the applicant or their institution's award office contact for the Dorothy Killam Fellowship), or by email to the *National Killam Program Office*. Referees also have the option to upload a letter directly to the National Killam portal.

The following table describes how to support a nomination or application with a letter of support for either a Killam Prize or a Dorothy Killam Fellowship. You may wish to save a copy of this guide, which is available without creating an account on the portal, as a reference. If you are experiencing issues logging into your account, please see the Killam portal user guide.

To upload a letter it is necessary to log in to a portal account: account creation, including instructions on redeeming an invitation to upload a letter of support, are available in the *Killam portal user guide*.

Submitting a letter or support for the National Killam Program	
After logging in to the portal, click on the main **Menu**.	
Select **My Submissions**.	

All submissions requesting your support are listed. Select **Edit.**	
Validate your information is correct under **Referee identification.** Make any necessary corrections and **Validate and submit**.	

Killam Prize - Review the **Nominee identification.**

Dorothy Killam Fellowship – Review the **Identification of Applicant.**

Navigate using **Previous** or **Next** buttons at the bottom of the page.

Nominee identification

Referee identification ✓

Nominee identification

Acceptance ⓘ

Letter of support ⓘ

Applicant/nominee research category

Validation and submit

The nominee information for this submission:

Title

First name

Last name

Department or school

Institution

Mount Allison

Previous Next

Identification of Applicant

Referee identification ✓

Identification of Applicant

Acceptance ⓘ

Letter of support ⓘ

Applicant/nominee research category

Validation and Submit

The applicant information for this submission:

Award type

Dorothy Killam Fellowship

Title

First name

Last name

If you will be providing a letter of support for the candidate, select **Accept** and then click **Validate and save.**

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Lauréats **KILLAM** Laureates

National Killam Program > My submissions > **Killam Prize**

⌂ Home   ≡ Menu   👤 Sign Out

Acceptance

Referee identification ✓

Nominee identification

Acceptance ⓘ

Letter of support ⓘ

Applicant/nominee research category

Validation and submit

Please indicate whether you will be providing a letter of support

Letter acceptance
○ Refuse ● Accept

Validate and save

Previous Next

Click **Add document.**	
A pop-up window opens. Select **Choose File.**	
Select the file from your computer and select **Open.** When you see the name of the attached file in the upload window, click **Submit.**	

If the file is incorrect, you can **Remove** it for replacement. When you have completed the upload. Click **Validate and save.**	
Referees for both the Dorothy Killam Fellowships and the Killam Prize may review the applicant's or nominee's research category, but may not edit this information.	
Once you have accepted and uploaded your letter of support, please click **Submit form.**	

Once you submit, you will no longer be able to modify the submission.	**Submit** Once you submit, you will no longer be able to modify the submission. [Submit] [Cancel]
When the green checkmark appears below **<u>Validation and submit</u>**, the letter has been submitted. Thank you!	 Lauréats **KILLAM** Laureates National Killam Program > My submissions > **Killam Prize** [# Home] [≡ Menu] [& Sign Out] **Validation and submit** Referee identification ✅ Nominee identification Acceptance ✅ Letter of support ✅ Applicant/nominee research category Validation and submit ✅ If you have accepted and added your letter of support, please click Submit form. [Submit form] [Previous] [Next]
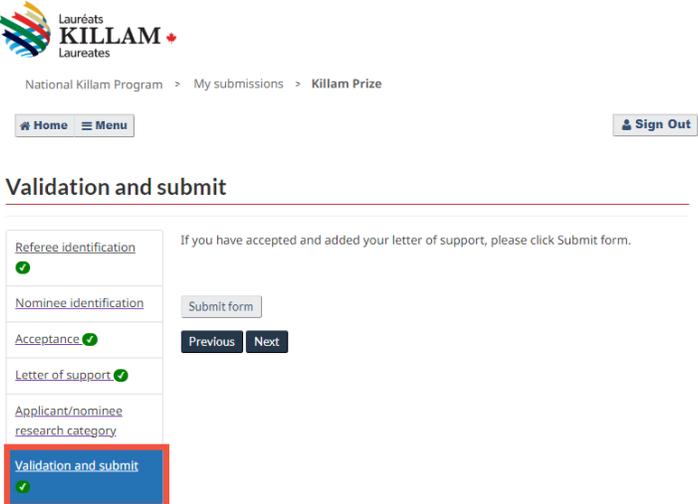
If you have any questions not covered in this guide, contact the National Killam Program Office for assistance.