



Conseil national de recherches Canada National Research Council Canada



National Killam Program Referee User Guide

Dorothy Killam Fellowships & Killam Prize

Contents

- 1. Purpose of This Guide 1
- 2. About the National Killam Program 1
- 3. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Statement 2
- 4. Additional guidelines for providing a letter of support 2
- 5. Guide for Referees – Uploading letters of support 5

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 Laureates 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/or 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 Reference¹, 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.

¹ [Letters of Reference \(chairs-chaires.gc.ca\)](https://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.

For the Killam Prize

Three (3) letters of support (1,000 words in English or 1,200 words in French). If applicable, one (1) additional letter of support for community-based research (1,000 words maximum)

New - One letter of support must be provided by an expert in the field who is arm’s length from the nominee.

New - Nominees who focus on community-based research must provide one additional letter of support from a community leader or a community member. This letter should focus on the importance of the nominee’s research to the community or communities.

- Please ensure that each letter of support is unique, clearly describes the impact of the research nationally and/or internationally, and/or speaks to efforts on the part of the nominee to have a multiplier effect in their field.
- Please clearly specify the nature of the letter writer’s relationship with the nominee.

Please ensure your letter contains a review of the applicant which references the following:

- exceptional quality of the candidate’s research achievements
- evidence of the candidate’s outstanding commitment, creativity and efforts to share research knowledge beyond the academic community
- enduring contribution of the candidate’s ideas and research results to Canadian society, including the nation’s intellectual and/or cultural life
- scope of the candidate’s research contributions, taking into account the norms of the field of study
- international stature of the candidate, where appropriate

For the Dorothy Killam Fellowship

Two (2) letters of support (Up to 1,000 words in English or 1,200 words in French). If applicable, one (1) additional letter of support for community-based research (1,000 words maximum)

- Please ensure that each letter is unique, and that at least one letter speaks to the importance, the impact, and the quality of the proposed research; and the other focuses on the quality and impact of the researcher themselves, and their alignment with the Killam Attributes.
- Please clearly specify the nature of the letter writer’s relationship with the nominee.

A Dorothy Killam Fellow is a leading researcher whose superior, ground-breaking, best-in-class research stands to have significant impact on a national or global scale. A Fellow is someone who also reflects one or more of the 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 to create a multiplier effect within the research ecosystem.

The Dorothy Killam Fellowship is meant to support scholars who:

- demonstrate commitment to building Canada’s future and alignment with Killam attributes.
- are early- to mid-career researchers (typically have completed their PhD no more than 15 years prior).
- are employed at a Canadian research institution.

Please consider addressing in your reference letter how the applicant embodies at least some of the Killam attributes.

New – Applicants who focus on community-based research must provide one additional letter of support from a community leader or a community member. This letter should focus on the importance of the applicant’s research to the community or communities.

Note: Community-based research involves active participation of stakeholders whose lives are affected by the research in all phases of project for the purpose of producing useful results that lead to positive changes.

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.

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**.

français

Lauréats **KILLAM** Laureates

National Killam Program

Home Menu Sign Out

National Killam Program

The National Killam Program consists of the Killam Prizes and the Dorothy Killam Fellowships.

Select **My Submissions**.

Home Menu

National Killam Program Awards

My profile

My submissions

Program Awards

All submissions requesting your support are listed. Select **Edit**.

français

Lauréats **KILLAM** Laureates

National Killam Program > My submissions

Home Menu Sign Out


My submissions

Submission ID ^	Beneficiary name ↓	Program name ↓	Modified on ↓	Status ↓
SM-23-001136	Dorothy Killam Fellowship	2/20/2023 3:13 PM	Released for review	View Edit
SM-23-001145	Killam Prize	2/20/2023 12:49 PM	Released for review	View Edit

« < 1 2 »

Validate your information is correct under **Referee identification**. Make any necessary corrections and **Validate and submit**.

français



National Killam Program > My submissions > Killam Prize

[Home](#) [Menu](#) [Sign Out](#)

Referee identification

- Referee identification** (highlighted)
- Nominee identification
- Acceptance
- Letter of support
- Applicant/nominee research category
- Validation and submit

Title

* First name (required) *

* Last name (required) *

Department or school

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** (highlighted)
- 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](#) (highlighted)

Identification of Applicant

- Referee identification
- Identification of Applicant** (highlighted)
- 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**.

The screenshot shows the 'Acceptance' step of the Killam Prize application. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Menu', and 'Sign Out' buttons. The main heading is 'Acceptance'. On the left, a sidebar contains a list of steps: 'Referee identification' (checked), 'Nominee identification', 'Acceptance' (highlighted in blue), 'Letter of support', 'Applicant/nominee research category', and 'Validation and submit'. The main content area asks the user to indicate if they will provide a letter of support, with radio buttons for 'Refuse' and 'Accept' (the 'Accept' button is highlighted in red). Below this, there is a 'Validate and save' button (highlighted in red) and 'Previous' and 'Next' buttons.

In the **Letter of Support** section click **Add document**.

The screenshot shows the 'Letter of Support' section. At the top right, there is an 'Add document' button (highlighted in red). Below it is a table with columns for 'Name', 'Type', 'Created On', and 'Actions'. The table is currently empty, with a yellow message box stating 'There are no records to display.' At the bottom, there are 'Validate and save', 'Previous', and 'Next' buttons.

A pop-up window opens. Select **Choose File**.

The screenshot shows the 'Create' form for a letter of support. It has a 'Type' dropdown menu set to 'Letter of Support/Lettre de soutien'. Below it is a 'Description' text field. Further down, there is a section for 'Attach a file *' with a 'Choose File' button (highlighted in red) and the text 'No file chosen'. At the bottom, there is a 'Submit' button.

Select the file from your computer and select **Open**. When you see the name of the attached file in the upload window, click **Submit**.

Create x

Type

Description


Attach a file *
 Letter of support.docx

If the file is incorrect, you can **Remove** it for replacement. When you have completed the upload. Click **Validate and save**.

Name ↑	Type	Created On	Actions
Letter of support_Alisa_Nguyen_Foo_Bar.docx	Letter of Support/Lettre de soutien	3/31/2023 1:03 PM	<input type="button" value="Remove"/>

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.

[Français](#)

 Lauréats KILLAM Laureates

National Killam Program > My submissions > Killam Prize

Applicant/nominee research category

[Referee identification](#) ✓

[Nominee identification](#)

[Acceptance](#) ✓

[Letter of support](#) ✓

[Applicant/nominee research category](#)

[Validation and submit](#)

Informed by the Canadian Research Development Classification (CRDC) system, applicants for the Fellowship and nominees for the Prize are asked to identify at least one (1) and up to five (5) relevant disciplines for purposes of peer review.

Details about the CRDC are available here: [Canadian Research and Development Classification \(CRDC\) 2020 Version 1.0 \(statcan.gc.ca\)](#). This information needs to be completed by the researcher being considered for the award.

Division ↑	Group	Class	Sub-Class
Natural sciences / Sciences naturelles			

Once you have accepted and uploaded your letter of support, please click **Submit form.**

francais

Lauréats KILLAM Laureates

National Killam Program > My submissions > Killam Prize

[Home](#) [Menu](#) [Sign Out](#)

Validation and submit

If you have accepted and added your letter of support, please click Submit form.

Referee identification	✓
Nominee identification	Submit form
Acceptance	✓
Letter of support	✓
Applicant/nominee research category	
Validation and submit	

[Previous](#) [Next](#)

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 **Validation and submit**, the letter has been submitted.

Thank you!

francais

Lauréats KILLAM Laureates

National Killam Program > My submissions > Killam Prize

[Home](#) [Menu](#) [Sign Out](#)

Validation and submit

If you have accepted and added your letter of support, please click Submit form.

Referee identification	✓
Nominee identification	Submit form
Acceptance	✓
Letter of support	✓
Applicant/nominee research category	
Validation and submit	✓

[Previous](#) [Next](#)

If you have any questions not covered in this guide, contact the [National Killam Program Office](#) for assistance.