

STUDENT APPLICATION

The purpose of **SPARK for Black and Indigenous Medical Students** is to provide a highly supported experience for these students to explore research/quality improvement and to complete a research/quality improvement project. **SPARK** has the following goals:

1. To provide Black and Indigenous students who might not otherwise have had the opportunity to engage in research/quality improvement, with the opportunity to do so
2. To identify and support promising young Black and Indigenous researchers
3. To help Black and Indigenous students identify and realize their career goals
4. To increase and support Black and Indigenous representation in the field of medical research and quality improvement

Program description: First year Black and Indigenous medical students and first and second year MD/PhD students are eligible for this 1 year program. Students will work full-time for 10 weeks (June 10th to Aug 16th 2024) during the summer following first year (or possibly second year for MD/PhD students) and on a part-time basis during the following academic year (approx. 8hrs/week, TBD by student and mentorship team). Each student will work with a mentorship team consisting of the research/quality improvement supervisor, career mentor, community mentor. Under the guidance of the supervisor and the other team members, the student will complete a research project over the course of the year and will contribute to a publication-quality manuscript. Over the year, **SPARK** will pay the student an hourly wage that is comparable to similar student research programs at Sunnybrook.

Please note that it is expected that students will schedule their summer vacation outside of the program period, specifically avoiding the timeframe between June 10th and August 16th.

Student project: Students will engage in a research or quality improvement project in internal medicine, surgery, or trauma (other programs will likely become available but are not yet finalized). Supervisors are responsible for providing a suitable research/quality improvement project for the student to work on during the 1 year program. Descriptions of available projects will be circulated in early March. Note that projects may be in person, virtual or hybrid – this will be specified in the descriptions. Students accepted into the program will rank projects in order of preference and will be matched to a project based on their ranking. Every effort will be made to ensure that the student is matched to their top choice. In the event that 2 students select the same project as their first choice, names will be drawn randomly to determine the student who will work on that project.

Role of mentorship team: The mentorship team, along with the student, will establish a regular meeting schedule with the student. Specific requirements for each team member are listed below:

- a. **Research/quality improvement supervisor:** Supervisors will commit to providing necessary resources (e.g., lab/office space, equipment, travel, analytic support) as well as guidance and supervision for the duration of the research project. During the summer, supervisors must commit to meeting weekly with their students. The cadence is expected to be less during academic year.
- b. **Career mentor:** These individuals will provide advice and guidance for a career in medicine. We expect at least 3 meetings – the actual number will vary depending on student needs.
- c. **Community mentor:** These individuals will provide mentorship and guidance through a shared experience of being Black or Indigenous in medicine. Community mentoring may involve group mentorship and/or near-peer mentorship, depending on the availability of community mentors. We expect at least 3 meetings – the actual number will vary depending on student needs.

Application: Medical students who identify as Black or Indigenous and meet the eligibility requirements are encouraged to submit their applications:

1. Curriculum vitae
2. A statement of intent (up to 1 page) describing their interest in research/quality improvement, their career goals and how they anticipate that they will benefit from the program in general and as a Black or Indigenous medical student in particular. Note that previous experience with research/quality improvement is not a requirement for the program; applicants are encouraged to share their motivation to do research/quality improvement.

Please submit applications by March 15th 2024 to natalie.hakim@sunnybrook.ca.

Notification of decisions: Early to mid April 2024.

Questions or concerns: natalie.hakim@sunnybrook.ca

Website: www.sunnybrook.ca/spark