



Canada Impact+ Emerging Leader in AI-based Protein Modeling and Design
Assistant Professor, tenure track, Michael Smith Laboratories (MSL) and the Department of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology (BMB)

Date Posted: 16th September, 2026

Closing Date: 15th November, 2026

The Michael Smith Laboratories (MSL) and the Department of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology (BMB) at the University of British Columbia (UBC) invite applications for a **Canada Impact+ Emerging Leader in AI-based Protein Modeling and Design**. This is a tenure-track appointment at the rank of Assistant Professor, jointly appointed in MSL and BMB, with an anticipated start date no later than July 1, 2027.

AI-driven protein design is one of the most rapidly advancing frontiers in science, with transformative potential in medicine, biotechnology, and the life sciences. We seek outstanding candidates with an innovative and impactful research program integrating deep learning and AI-driven approaches across the protein design pipeline. Research programs may leverage structure-based models, protein language models, generative AI, or novel hybrid approaches. Areas of interest include, but are not limited to, developing predictive and generative models for protein structure and function, advancing AI-enabled design-build-test-learn workflows, and creating new tools for the characterization and validation of engineered proteins.

Example application areas include the design of protein binders with tailored binding specificity and affinity, protein conformational switches that sense and respond to their environment, *de novo* enzymes for applications in medicine and sustainability, and proteins that interact selectively with non-protein molecules (e.g. nucleic acids, carbohydrates, small molecules).

About the Canada Impact+ Emerging Leaders Program

The Canada Impact+ Emerging Leaders program is a one-time initiative designed to support institutions in attracting internationally based Early Career Researchers to Canada. Emerging Leaders will receive research funding and institutional supports to advance transformative research in Canada's strategic priority areas, build partnerships across sectors and borders, and translate their research into applications and impacts that benefit Canadians and the world. Canada Impact+ Emerging Leaders are six-year positions valued at \$100,000 annually, renewable once for an additional six years, intended for exceptional emerging scholars who have the potential to lead in their fields. Applicants must be [early-career researchers](#) and be eligible to hold a full-time, tenure-stream appointment at the rank of Assistant Professor at UBC.

Under the Canada Impact+ Emerging Leaders program, nominees must be working and residing outside Canada when the Eddie Goldenberg Research Chairs of Canada award (<https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-plus-chairs.html>) is formally accepted (July 1st 2026). Applicants may apply regardless of their current location; however, candidates selected for nomination must meet this eligibility requirement on the award acceptance date in order to proceed. Expatriate Canadians wishing to relocate to Canada are welcome to apply.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

At UBC, we believe that attracting and sustaining a diverse workforce is key to the successful pursuit of excellence in research, innovation, and learning for all faculty, staff and students. Our commitment to employment equity helps achieve inclusion and fairness, brings rich diversity to UBC as a workplace, and creates the necessary conditions for a rewarding career.

The successful candidate will contribute to fostering an environment that promotes inclusivity and embodies values of respect, integrity, compassion, collaboration, and equity. Equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice are essential to academic excellence, as well as to fostering an inclusive community for voices that have been historically underrepresented or discouraged.

Research Environment

The successful candidate will benefit from a highly collaborative research environment that includes the new Centre for Applied Protein Design (CAPD), Canada's Immuno-Engineering and Biomanufacturing Hub (CIEBH), the Centre for AI Decision-making and Action (CAIDA), and internationally recognized strengths in structural biology, immunology, and translational medicine. These connections create unique opportunities to develop and apply AI-driven approaches to protein engineering, from fundamental discovery through to therapeutic translation.

Envisioned by Dr. Michael Smith, a Nobel Laureate and a pioneer at the interface of biology and technology, the Michael Smith Laboratories (MSL; <https://www.msl.ubc.ca/>) was one the first institutes in the world that recognized the power of scientists and engineers working together in interdisciplinary contexts. Our highly interdisciplinary and collaborative research environment supports faculty with focus in genomics, molecular biology, engineering, and biotechnology. Today, the MSL is home to a world class team of researchers with diverse expertise, from faculties including Science, Medicine, Applied Science, Forestry, and Land and Food Systems.

The Department of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology (BMB; <https://biochem.ubc.ca>) is a dynamic, internationally recognized research community advancing fundamental and translational discoveries in biochemistry, molecular biology, structural biology, genomics, cell biology, and biotechnology. Our interdisciplinary research addresses important questions in health, disease, and the molecular basis of life, supported by state-of-the-art technologies and strong collaborations across UBC and Vancouver's biomedical and biotechnology community.

Responsibilities

The successful candidate will be expected to establish and lead an independent externally funded research program in AI-based protein design and modeling, teach undergraduate and graduate course on fundamental and current topics as relevant to BMB, supervise and mentor undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate learners, establish intramural collaborations, participate in service to the departments, university, and the broader academic and professional community. The successful candidate will report to the Director of the MSL and the Head of BMB.

Qualifications

The successful candidate will hold a Ph.D. in computer science, chemistry, biochemistry, physics, engineering, or a related field as part of the UBC requirement. They must be eligible for appointment at the rank of Assistant Professor at UBC. They will have demonstrated evidence of ability in teaching and scholarly activity, and a strong publication record in AI-based protein modeling, design, or a closely related area. In addition, the successful candidate will demonstrate a willingness to respect diverse perspectives, including perspectives in conflict with one's own, and a commitment to enhancing one's own awareness, knowledge, and skills related to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Compensation

The expected salary for this position is \$150,000–\$170,000 per annum, commensurate with qualifications and experience. At UBC, in addition to a generous benefit package and highly valued pension plan, faculty members also

have access to a comprehensive range of leaves, services, resources, and career development opportunities. For more information, please visit: <https://hr.ubc.ca/working-ubc>.

Applications should be submitted online at <https://ubc.wd10.myworkdayjobs.com/ubcfacultyjobs> (JR26070) and include the following:

1. A cover letter describing the applicant's research vision and accomplishments (1 page)
2. The main application, containing the following sections:
 - a. Most significant contributions statement (1 page)
 - b. Research program proposal describing two potentially fundable projects as well as how your research fits within the MSL and BMB (5 pages, excluding references)
 - c. Teaching and mentorship statement describing your philosophy and accomplishments (1 page)
 - d. Equity, diversity, and inclusion statement of the applicant's current or planned contributions to advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion in academic, professional, or community contexts (1 page)
3. A full *curriculum vitae* including a list of publications (no page limit)
4. The names and contact information of three references

Should you have any queries around this position, please contact our Human Resources Manager at ayaka.bosshard@ubc.ca.

Review of applications will begin on **November 15, 2026** and continue until the position is filled. Emerging Leaders are must start their positions at UBC no later than July 1, 2027.

Equity and diversity are essential to academic excellence

UBC hires based on merit and is committed to [employment equity](#). Equity and diversity are essential to academic excellence. An open and diverse community fosters inclusion for underrepresented voices and those who feel discouraged. Inclusion is built through individual and institutional responsibility, achieved by continuous engagement with diversity, to inspire people, ideas, and actions for a better world. We encourage applications from members of groups that have been marginalized on any grounds enumerated under the B.C. Human Rights Code, including sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, racialization, disability, political belief, religion, marital or family status, age, and/or status as a First Nation, Metis, Inuit, or Indigenous person.

UBC is committed to creating and maintaining an [inclusive, non-discriminatory, and accessible](#) work environment for all members of its workforce. UBC is also committed to ensuring that the application and interview process is accessible to all applicants. Throughout this hiring process, we will work to ensure accessibility for all candidates.

If you have any questions regarding accommodations or accessibility during the recruitment and hiring process or for more information and support, please visit UBC's Center for Workplace Accessibility website at <https://hr.ubc.ca/health-and-wellbeing/workplace-accessibility/centre-workplace-accessibility> or contact the Centre at workplace.accessibility@ubc.ca. Job applicants requiring confidential accommodation or accessibility, or requests for adaptive measures to participate in the hiring process, should contact Ayaka Bosshard, ayaka.bosshard@ubc.ca or 604-822-5471.

UBC's campuses are located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Syilx (Okanagan) Peoples and of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Stó:lō and Səlilwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil Waututh) Nations. UBC is dedicated to being a world leader in advancing Indigenous peoples' human rights and is guided by a mission of reconciliation, as articulated by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. It is firmly committed to recruiting Indigenous faculty, students, and staff as outlined in its Indigenous Strategic Plan. As one of the world's leading universities, UBC creates an exceptional learning and research environment that fosters global citizenship and advances a civil and sustainable society, serving the people of British Columbia, Canada, and the world.

UBC recognizes the legitimate impact that leaves (e.g., maternity leave, parental leave, leaves due to illness, leaves due to caring for family members, slowdowns due to chronic illness or disability, or COVID-19 impacts) can have on research achievement and commits to ensuring that leaves are taken into careful consideration during the assessment process. Candidates are encouraged to highlight in their application how career interruptions and personal circumstances have affected their careers.

Nominations are subject to review by the Tri-agency Institutional Programs (TIPS) Secretariat, and appointment as a Canada Impact+ Emerging Leader is conditional upon their approval. Consult the Canada Impact+ Emerging Leader recruitment website <https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-plus-chairs/program-details/competition/2026/requirements-for-recruitment.html> for further details.

With gratitude, we acknowledge that the University of British Columbia Faculty of Medicine and its distributed programs, which include four university academic campuses, are located on traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of First Nations Peoples and communities around the province.

Our Vision: To Transform Health for Everyone.

Ranked among the world's top medical schools with the fifth-largest MD enrollment in North America, the UBC Faculty of Medicine is a leader in both the science and the practice of medicine. Across British Columbia, more than 12,000 faculty and staff are training the next generation of doctors and health care professionals, making remarkable discoveries, and helping to create the pathways to better health for our communities at home and around the world.

The Faculty of Medicine is comprised of approximately 2,200 administrative support, technical/research and management and professional staff, as well approximately 650 full-time academic and over 10,000 clinical faculty members - is composed of 19 academic basic science and/or clinical departments, three schools, and 24 research centres and institutes. Together with its University and Health Authority partners, the Faculty of Medicine delivers innovative programs and conducts research in the areas of health and life sciences. Faculty, staff and trainees are located at university campuses, clinical academic campuses in hospital settings and other regionally based centres across the province.

The Faculty of Science is one of Canada's leading science faculties and is internationally recognized for excellence in research and teaching. As part of UBC, which is consistently ranked among the world's top public universities, the Faculty is home to globally recognized programs and research strengths across the natural, physical, computational, and life sciences. One of the largest and most research-intensive faculties at UBC, it comprises approximately 480 faculty members, 700 administrative, managerial, technical, and research staff, and 12,000 graduate and undergraduate students. The Faculty operates across more than 28 large and complex buildings and includes nine academic departments, three interdisciplinary academic institutes, ten research centres, and three public venues. Together, these units foster excellence in education, research, and community engagement, advancing scientific discovery and contributing solutions to challenges of local, national, and global significance.

UBC - One of the World's Leading Universities. As one of the world's leading universities, the University of British Columbia creates an exceptional learning environment that fosters global citizenship, advances a civil and sustainable society, and supports outstanding research to serve the people of British Columbia, Canada and the world.

UBC hires on the basis of merit and is committed to employment equity. All qualified persons are encouraged to apply. Equity and diversity are essential to academic excellence. An open and diverse community fosters the inclusion of voices that have been underrepresented or discouraged. We encourage applications from members of groups that have been marginalized on any grounds enumerated under the B.C. Human Rights Code, including sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, racialization, disability, political belief, religion, marital or family status, age, and/or status as a First Nation, Metis, Inuit, or Indigenous person.