

To: Graduate Coordinators and Graduate Assistants
From: Monica Corbett
Date: August 19, 2024
RE: **2025-26 Canada Graduate Scholarships –Doctoral (CGS-D) competition**

APPLICATION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 10, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. EST

COMPETITION DESCRIPTION AND WEBSITE

The CGS-D program supports and promotes research excellence in a wide variety of disciplines and broad fields of health, natural sciences and engineering, and social sciences and humanities, including interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research. This support allows scholars to fully concentrate on their doctoral studies, to seek out the best research mentors in their chosen fields and to contribute to the Canadian research ecosystem during and beyond the tenure of their awards.

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) have harmonized the Canada Graduate Scholarships –Doctoral (CGS-D) funding program. The primary goals of a harmonized CGS-D Program across the three federal granting agencies (also called the tri-councils, or tri-agencies) are to:

- Have consistent processes across the three agencies.
- Simplify the application and adjudication processes.
- Remove barriers.

This is the website for the harmonized CGS-D competition:

https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/PG-CS/CGSD-BESCD_eng.asp

The harmonized timeline and program description are also shown on that website. The website is hosted by NSERC, so NSERC is in the website address. But this is where all students and programs must go, for information, guidelines and complete instructions about the 2025-26 CGS-D competition.

All information is also available in French from this main website and all related websites. Under the *Official Languages Act*, federal institutions including the tri-councils must ensure respect for the rights of individual Canadians to receive services from federal institutions and organizations that provide services on their behalf, in the official language of their choice. Applications can be submitted in either official language.

APPLICATIONS TO CGS-D

There is NOT one harmonized CGS-D application or application portal. Each agency has maintained its own CGS-D application and their agency-specific application portals. The agencies' application portals are all now open and applicants may begin preparing their applications (see below).

DEADLINE

There IS a harmonized deadline, both at the university level and the Tri-council level. Queen's University deadline is **OCTOBER 10, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. EST.**

Please inform your students of this competition and university deadline as soon as possible.

Below are details of the **2025-26 CGS-D competition.**

Online Applications: Currently there is no harmonized application for this competition. Each agency's CGS-D application is online, and there are agency-specific application portals and process. The applications, or access to the application via the agency-specific portals, are located as follows:

CIHR: <https://www.researchnet-recherchenet.ca/rnr16/LoginServlet?language=E>

NSERC: https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/OnlineServices-ServicesEnLigne/Index_eng.asp

SSHRC: https://webapps.nserc.ca/SSHRC/faces/logon.jsp?lang=en_CA

Overview of CGS-D program*:

Value of award	\$40,000 per year
Duration of Award	36 months
Tenure of award	To be held at a Canadian university only
Queen's deadline to apply	October 10, 2024
Results announced by agencies	April 2025

*** This is not the process or deadline for current students or post-doctoral fellows to apply to the post-doctoral competitions of each agency. Check the agency's website for information about post-doctoral level funding.**

NEW: VALUE AND DURATION OF DOCTORAL AWARDS: Both the CGS-D and the agency-specific doctoral level award have a value of \$40,000 per year and a maximum duration of 36 months (3 years). This means the SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship has been revised to have a duration of 12, 24, or 36 months, depending on how many months a student has been enrolled in the doctoral program at the time of application to the competition.

DEADLINE FOR DIRECT APPLICANTS: Applicants who are eligible for CGS-D funding, but who do not meet the criteria for applying through a university (see below) have to apply directly to the appropriate agency using that agency’s application, before 8:00 p.m. (ET) on October 17, 2024. If this deadline falls on a weekend or federal holiday, applications can be submitted the following business day before 8:00 p.m. (ET).

Applicants who meet the criteria for applying through a university, **must not apply directly to CIHR, NSERC or SSHRC**. If they do so, their application will be rejected from the competition. There are no exceptions.

Agency-specific doctoral awards: In addition to the CGS-D, each agency has its own doctoral awards. As has always been the case, applicants complete and submit one application to be considered for both a CGS-D scholarship and an agency-specific doctoral award. CGS-D scholarships are offered to top-ranked eligible applicants and other applicants are offered the agency-specific doctoral award. Refer to the appropriate agency’s website for details.

Selecting the appropriate agency: Applicants must complete the agency application that is best aligned with their research subject matter to ensure that it is reviewed by experts in disciplines closest to their field(s) of study. For more information on selecting the appropriate federal granting agency, refer to science.gc.ca.

Quotas: The term “quota” refers to the maximum number of applications Queen’s can forward to each agency’s national competition. Eligible universities receive separate quotas from each agency (CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC). For the 2025-26 competition, our quotas are:

CIHR: 20
NSERC: 46
SSHRC: 70

Eligibility to apply¹: To be eligible to apply for CGS-D, an applicant must:

- be a Canadian citizen, a permanent resident of Canada or a Protected Person² in Canada, as of November 21, 2024;
- have completed **no more than 24 months** of full-time study in their doctoral program by December 31, 2024 if previously enrolled in a graduate program;

¹ These are eligibility requirements for the CGS-D competition. Some eligibility requirements for CGS-D differ from those of the agency -specific doctoral awards. Applicants must review the eligibility requirements for the agency -specific doctoral awards, as well as information on awards tenable at institutions outside Canada, from the agency’s website.

² As defined by [subsection 95\(2\) of Canada’s Immigration and Refugee Protection Act](#).

- have completed **no more than 24 months** of full-time study in their doctoral program or the PhD portion of their joint professional undergraduate/PhD program (such as MD/PhD), by December 31, 2024 if previously enrolled in a graduate program
- have completed **no more than 36 months** of full-time study in their doctoral program by December 31, 2024 if enrolled directly from a bachelor's to a PhD program (without having completed or enrolled in another graduate program). This is called direct entry. Direct-entry applicants must be enrolled in their doctoral program at the time of application to the CGS-D competition.
- have completed **no more than 36 months** of full-time study in the PhD portion of their joint professional undergraduate/PhD program (such as MD/PhD) by December 31, 2024 if they have not previously enrolled in another graduate program. If applicants have not previously completed or enrolled in another graduate program, they must be enrolled in the joint MD/PhD program at the time of application to the CGS-D competition.

Eligibility for CGS-D is based on the number of months of full-time study, including summer months, toward the degree for which the applicant is requesting funding, by December 31, 2024. Two terms of part-time study count as one term of full-time study.

The agencies count all months of previous and current doctoral level studies up to December 31, 2024, toward the eligibility limit, regardless of whether or not the doctoral studies:

- were completed and a degree was granted;
- were carried out the institution of the applicant's current doctoral studies, and
- were in a same subject/research area as that which the applicant will pursue or is currently pursuing.

The months of study completed are calculated starting from the date on which an applicant is officially registered in any doctoral program. This also applies to applicants who registered in a Master's program and subsequently transferred to a doctoral program without completing the Master's degree (fast-track, which we call promotion).

The exception is for applications who are registered in a joint program, and a Master's degree is **obtained** as part of the program (for example, MA/PhD). In this case the month of study are calculated starting from the date of official registration in the joint program and includes the months of the Master's portion of the program. Note that we do not have any joint Master's/PhD programs at Queen's.

Program of study eligibility: An eligible doctoral program must include a significant research component that leads to the completion of a thesis, major research project, dissertation, scholarly publication, performance, recital and/or exhibit that is merit/expert-reviewed at the institutional level as a requirement for completion of the program.

Joint programs with a professional degree (e.g., MD/PhD, DVM/PhD, JD/PhD, MBA/PhD) as well as clinically oriented programs of study, including clinical psychology, are eligible if they have a significant autonomous research component as described above.

Other restrictions:

- **An applicant can submit only ONE APPLICATION per academic year to either CIHR, NSERC or SSHRC.** If more than one application is submitted, the eligible application submitted first chronologically will be retained and the other application(s) will be removed from competition. Nominations to the [Vanier CGS](#) program and applications to the [Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships](#) program do not count toward this limit (other exceptions may apply to CIHR internships).
- An applicant cannot have already received a doctoral-level scholarship from CIHR, NSERC or SSHRC.
- An applicant cannot hold a tenure or tenure-track appointment concurrently with a CGS-D award.

***Special circumstances:** In this application section, applicants may choose to outline any special circumstances that they feel have had an effect on their performance and/or productivity. This includes delays due to health problems, family responsibilities, parental leave, trauma and loss, disabilities, social and economic issues, or other applicable circumstances. This section may also be used by the applicant to describe any special circumstances related to COVID-19 have delayed, altered or interrupted the applicant's studies or research, or otherwise affected their academic and/or research performance.

*For the SSHRC CGS-D and Doctoral Fellowships applications, any special circumstances are to be included in the *Allowable Inclusions* section.

Instructions: To complete the application process, applicants must refer to the appropriate agency's instructions.

[CIHR instructions](#)

[NSERC instructions](#)

[SSHRC instructions](#)

Where to submit the application: An applicant must apply through a Canadian university if they are eligible to do so, OR directly to the appropriate agency if they are not eligible to apply through a Canadian university. Failure to submit an application through the correct channel will result in an application being rejected from the competition.

This table clarifies the application process for some sample potential applicants:

Applicant's status at time of application (Fall 2024 term)	Where to submit application
Registered in any degree program at a Queen's University (including applicants on an approved leave of absence from Queen's at the time of application)	Queen's University. Even if you plan to register at a different university in 2025-26, you still submit your application through Queen's University, not the university you will attend in 2025-26, nor directly to the agency.
Not currently registered in a degree program at Queen's University but was registered in a degree program for any period of the calendar year 2024 (January 1-December 31, 2024)	Queen's University
Registered concurrently at Queen's University and at a foreign post-secondary institution (e.g., in a cotutelle, or on exchange).	Queen's University
Not registered at any time during the calendar year 2024 at Queen's University or any other Canadian university	Directly to the appropriate agency by the deadline of October 17, 2024.

Indigenous applicants: Universities may recommend applications from self-identified Indigenous applicants to the doctoral awards competition beyond their application quota. Each agency has its own process for applicants to self-identify as Indigenous, and for the applicant to agree to their personal information being used for this purpose. Any such applications will be evaluated through the regular adjudication processes and must meet all application and eligibility requirements in order to be considered in the university-level competition.

Self-identified Indigenous applicants who have to apply directly to the appropriate agency are automatically evaluated at the national competition.

Transcripts requirements: Transcripts are a mandatory requirement for the CGS-D application, and there are no exceptions.

The complete CGS-D application must include **up-to-date transcripts of all current and previous study**. Here are the rules about transcripts:

- a. **Up-to-date transcripts** are defined as official transcripts dated or issued in the Fall 2024 term (if currently registered) or after the last term completed (if not currently registered).
- b. **Official transcripts** are defined as transcripts issued by the Registrar's Office of the university. Transcripts from other sources, such as those printed from the student's SOLUS account (or equivalent) are not official.
- c. An official transcript includes one copy of the **transcript legend**. Without the legend, the transcript is considered incomplete and the application will be rejected.
- d. Transcripts from the student file in the department/program are not acceptable, unless the department/program has an up-to-date official transcript or transcripts that meet the requirements under a. and b. and c. above, to give back to the applicant for uploading to their CGS-D applications. Photocopies are not acceptable.
- e. ***SGSPA staff will not retrieve transcripts from a student file nor from the student's online application to graduate studies for the CGS- D application.*** An exception is made only for transcripts issued by universities outside of North America. Students who need those kinds of transcripts for the purpose of applying to the CGS-D competition should contact the School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (SGSPA) well in advance of the October 10, 2024 deadline. A small fee for copying the international transcript(s) may be charged.
- f. A transcript is required for all programs listed in the application, even if the program was not completed.
- g. **Applicants currently enrolled in a degree program at Queen's University as of Fall 2024 term must provide an up-to-date Queen's University transcript to demonstrate registration in the program, even if there are no grades on the up-to-date Queen's transcript.** This requirement also applies to students who **start** their programs of study in Fall 2024 at Queen's University, and even if there are no grades on the up-to-date Queen's transcript.
- h. Applicants registered in a degree program that does not have any course work, must still provide an up-to-date transcript to demonstrate registration in the program.
- i. If an applicant has transcripts written in a language other than English or French, the applicant must provide a certified English or French translation.
- j. Applicants should retain the paper copy(ies) of any uploaded transcripts, as they may be asked to provide these for verification purposes at any point in the process.
- k. **For each agency's application, applicants will be required to upload their own official transcripts to their online application.**

Complete instructions about eligible and required transcripts, are provided by each agency in the instructions. Applications with transcripts that do not respect the agency's requirements will be rejected. The applicant, not the university staff, is responsible for checking that their transcripts have been correctly uploaded to their application and that the transcripts and

legends are complete and legible once uploaded. The maximum size of the transcripts file is 10MB.

Reference requirements: 2 references are required for each agency’s CGS-D application. Detailed instructions for this part of the application have been provided by each agency in their instructions.

Selection criteria: The selection criteria for the CGS-D competitions are:

Criteria	Description	Weight
Research ability and potential	<p>Indicators of research ability and potential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ quality of research proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ specific, focused and feasible research question(s) and objective(s) ○ clear description of the proposed methodology ○ significance and expected contributions to research ○ relevant training, such as academic training, lived experience and traditional teachings ○ research experience and achievements relative to the applicant’s stage of study, lived experience and knowledge systems ○ quality of contributions and extent to which they advance the field of research—contributions may include publications, patents, reports, posters, abstracts, monographs, presentations, creative outputs, knowledge translation outputs, community products, etc. ○ demonstration of sound judgment and ability to think critically ○ demonstration of responsible and ethical research conduct, including honest and thoughtful inquiry, rigorous analysis, commitment to safety and to the dissemination of research results and adherence to the use of professional standards ○ enthusiasm for research, originality, initiative, autonomy, relevant community involvement and outreach ○ ability or potential to communicate theoretical, technical and/or scientific concepts clearly and logically in written and oral formats 	50%

Criteria	Description	Weight
Relevant experience and achievements obtained within and beyond academia	<p>Indicators of relevant experience and achievements obtained within and beyond academia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ scholarships, awards and distinctions (amount, duration and prestige) ○ academic record <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ transcripts ○ duration of previous studies ○ program requirements and courses pursued ○ course load ○ relative standing in program (if available) ○ professional, academic and extracurricular activities as well as collaborations with supervisors, colleagues, peers, students and members of the community, such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ teaching, mentoring, supervising and/or coaching ○ managing projects ○ participating in science and/or research promotion ○ participating in community outreach, volunteer work and/or civic engagement ○ chairing committees and/or organizing conferences and meetings ○ participating in departmental or institutional organizations, associations, societies and/or clubs 	50%

Queen’s University internal review processes: Note that we have an internal university level deadline only. SSHRC harmonized with CIHR and NSERC and ceased to require a department/program appraisal form or departmental ranking. This means, there does not have to be a department/program SSHRC deadline.

Also note that applications are submitted online by the applicant, checked online by staff at the SGSPA, reviewed electronically by the relevant SGSPA Fellowship/Awards subcommittee members (see below) and will be submitted online to each agency by the harmonized deadline of November 21, 2024 by the university’s Scholarships Liaison Officer (SLO). At Queen’s University, the SLO is the Director of Admissions and Student Services, Monica Corbett. Monica, and the SGSPA Awards Officers, Erfanieh (Erfan) Aghdasi, Tanya Broadfoot, and Loanne

Meldrum, are the only staff people with access to the agencies' online databases. Departments /programs will not be able to review their students' applications in the database. SGSPA staff will be able to save the applications as pdfs and send them the departments/programs. SGSPA would do that if there was something in an application that had to be clarified, such as the proposed research, or the eligibility of an applicant, etc.

Internal Selection Processes and Participants: The SGSPA at Queen's University is responsible for coordinating the internal selection process for the CGS-D applications. At Queen's members of the Graduate Councils'/Committees' Awards Subcommittees will normally review and rank the applications received from their Council/Committee. Normally the reviewers will be the elected/appointed members of the Graduate Council Award Subcommittees.

Reviewers from the Faculty of Health Sciences Graduate Council will review and adjudicate the CIHR CGS-D competition.

Reviewers from the Faculty of Arts and Science Graduate Council from graduate programs in the Humanities and Social Sciences, will review and adjudicate the SSHRC CGS-D competition. The SSHRC CGS-D applications and adjudication will be split between a Humanities CGS-D competition and a Social Sciences CGS-D competition. A reviewer or reviewers from the School of Business and/or the Faculty of Education and/or the Faculty of Law will be invited by SGSPA to participate in the adjudication of the SSHRC Social Sciences CGS-D competition.

Reviewers from the Faculty of Arts and Science Graduate Council from graduate programs in the Sciences will review and adjudicate the NSERC CGS-D competition from applicants in life sciences and physical sciences. The NSERC CGS-D applications and adjudication will be split between a Life Sciences CGS-D competition and a Physical Sciences CGS-D competition. A reviewer from a graduate program in the Health Sciences may be invited by SGSPA to participate in the adjudication of the NSERC Life Sciences CGS-D competition.

Reviewers from the Smith Engineering Graduate Council will review the NSERC CGS-D competition from applicants in engineering and applied sciences.

The task for these review committees is to select those applications that Queen's will forward to the national competitions in fulfilment of the university's quota, using the selection criteria shown above.

The SGSPA will notify all applicants of the outcome of the university's internal selection process. Departments/programs will also be informed of the internal results.

Notification of results: Applicants whose applications were submitted to the agencies, whether directly or via their institution, will be notified of results by the agencies in April 2025. The agencies will also publish the names (and other basic award information) of scholarship

recipients on their respective websites. For more information about this, see the [Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act](#).

Conditions of the award: Applicants and award holders must comply with the policies and guidelines set out in the [Tri-agency Research Training Award Holder's Guide](#) and in any other documents related to scholarship applications and awards. The agencies reserve the right to interpret and enforce the policies and guidelines for their funding opportunities set out in their published materials.

Award holders may be eligible to hold their awards part-time. Refer to the [Tri-agency Research Training Award Holder's Guide](#) for further information.

Related opportunities: CGS-D holders may be eligible for:

- [Canada Graduate Scholarships—Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplements Program](#)
- [Canada Graduate Scholarships to Honour Nelson Mandela](#)
- [SSHRC supplements and related initiatives](#)
- [NSERC supplements](#)
- [CIHR related initiatives](#)

Contact information for the agencies: For further information, contact the appropriate agency:

CIHR Contact Centre: support-soutien@cihr-irsc.gc.ca

NSERC: schol@nserc-crsng.gc.ca

SSHRC: fellowships@sshrc-crsh.gc.ca

Queen's SGSPA contacts: (via email is best):

CIHR: Loanne Meldrum (meldruml@queensu.ca)

NSERC: Tanya Broadfoot (tb120@queensu.ca)

SSHRC: Erfan Aghdasi (aghdasie@queensu.ca)

You can also contact me, Monica Corbett: corbettm@queensu.ca with any questions. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,



Monica Corbett

Director, Admissions and Student Services, SGSPA