Scholarships and Awards: when to start, where to start?

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The Graduate Awards Office (GAO) at the School of Graduate Studies provides administrative support for a wide range of scholarship and financial aid programs.

http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/Financing-Your-Graduate-Education.aspx

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**When to Start?**

Start looking and preparing now!

**Important Disclaimer!**
What is said (or not said) in this presentation does not supersede the material contained on official University of Toronto or funding agencies websites.

**Where to Look?**

- School of Graduate Studies website
- ULife [https://ulife.utoronto.ca/opportunities/list/type/award](https://ulife.utoronto.ca/opportunities/list/type/award)
- Granting Agency websites
- Talk to your graduate unit/supervisor/more senior students in your program
- Look for announcements through your graduate unit
- Ask your Grad Admin

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**Scholarships & Awards**

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**Doctoral Completion & Postdoctoral Awards**

Awards for student completing a degree of Ph.D. or equivalent or postdoctoral fellowship.

**External Awards**

Awards from sources outside U of T.

**Government Funded Awards**

Awards funded by the federal and provincial governments, including NSERC, SSHRC, and OGS and QEII-GSST.

**Internal Awards**

Awards from sources within U of T.

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**Managing Your Award**

- Accepting, activating, and cancelling your award
- Information Session

**Graduate Awards Eligibility Chart**

- Click below for full chart
- (click below for full chart)

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**Managing Your Award**

- Accepting, activating, and cancelling your award
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When to Apply?
Applications due in fall 2017 for funding the 2018-19 academic year:
• Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships (Sept)
• CGS-Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplement (Sept)
• CIHR/NSERC/SSHRC Doctoral Awards (Sept/Oct)
• SGS Conference Grant (Oct)
• CGS M - CIHR/NSERC/SSHRC Awards (Dec)
• Ontario Graduate Scholarships (OGS) (Starts Dec)
• Ontario Women’s Health Scholar Award (Dec)
• Delta Kappa Gamma World Fellowship (Dec)
• Master’s Completion Bursary (Jan/Apr)
• Adel S. Sedra Distinguished Graduate Award (Dec)

Common Eligibility Criteria
Are you a…
• Canadian, Permanent Resident, on International (Visa) student?
Do you have…
• Full-time or Part-time status?
Are you registered in an…
• eligible program?

What Makes a Great Merit Based Application?
Advice from Graduate Awards Office & Prof. Malcolm Campbell - Former Vice-Principal Research, UTSC

• Reviewers spend 6-8 minutes on each application. You have a short period of time to sell yourself on paper.
• When selection criteria is specified – make sure you hit them all.

Needs Based Applications
• OSAP/Government Loans
• UTAPS - University of Toronto Advance Planning for Students
http://www.future.utoronto.ca/finances/financial-aid
This is a program that fills the financial gap for full-time students who receive the maximum amount of government financial aid available but whose funding doesn’t cover all their university costs.
Common Application Components

- **Academic background**
  Transcript(s), academic achievements, lists of awards and fellowships, presentations, abstracts, etc.
- **Research Proposal / Plan of Study**
- **Reference Letters**
- **Leadership / Extracurricular Activities**
  CV, publications, presentations, volunteerism, abstracts, other artistic works.

CGS Specific Evaluation Criteria

- **Academic Excellence (50%)** - As demonstrated by past academic results, transcripts, awards and distinctions.
- **Research Potential (30%)** - As demonstrated by the applicant’s research history, his/her interest in discovery, the proposed research, its potential contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the field, and any anticipated outcomes.
- **Personal Characteristics and Interpersonal Skills (20%)** - As demonstrated by the applicant’s past professional and relevant extracurricular interactions and collaborations.

Academic Achievements

- Reviewers look heavily at PROGRESS. Ongoing awards look good. Publications, historical grade trends, and PRODUCTIVITY
- Your contributions/role in a project, impact of the work, awards, presentations, research background, communication achievements, leadership roles (volunteer, elected positions, clubs, sports, etc.)
- Limit to university level achievements
- Current and/or recent accolades

Research Proposal / Plan of Study

- Write a clear and concise research proposal that an educated non-expert could understand
- Give your proposal to as many people as possible to review – ideally a professor/ senior graduate student
- Read the proposal out loud to yourself and others. If it doesn’t sound natural, then it needs more work
- Engage reviewers as advocates of your application/work
- Clarify the importance/Significance of your proposal
**Writing Style / Formatting**

- Make it easy for the reviewer to find key information
- Use headings
- Apply boldface or underlined text *strategically*
- Be clear, succinct, scholarly but understandable
- Be straightforward, emphasize strengths, not a time to be shy
- FOLLOW FORMATTING STANDARDS

**Referees**

- Contact referees familiar with you and your potential to inquire about a positive reference;
- Ask your referees early – give them plenty of time
- Feel free to remind them of your contributions and information you would like to have in the letter (CV, copy of research proposal, highlights);
- Send request as soon as you begin your application;
- Follow-up prior to the deadline; and
- Remember to give them a big thank you.

**Your Reference Letters**

- Must be very strong
- Be enthusiastic
- Provide additional information (skills and past achievements) and demonstrate how your attributes and qualifications surpass selection criteria & worthy of the award

**Writing Support**

- The following departments/faculties offer writing support through one-on-one consultations: Architecture, OISE, Dentistry, Nursing, Pharmacy, Physical Education and Social Work.
- If you are not part of these departments, you may visit the Graduate Centre for Academic Communication at SGS.
  [http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/GCAC.aspx](http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/GCAC.aspx)
Upcoming Graduate Centre for Academic Communication (GCAC) writing intensives:

- Writing SSHRC Proposals: August 30 - 31, 2017
- Writing NSERC Proposals: August 30 - 31, 2017

http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/GCAC-Boot-Camps-and-Writing-Intensives.aspx

Details for Research Stream Programs:
http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/gradfunding/Pages/default.aspx

- Funding Package – For those in a funded cohort, contact home graduate unit for a "breakdown" of this funding including composition, method and schedule of distribution, and impact if taking a LOA.
- Scholarships/Awards general – graduate unit, SGS, supervisor, peers (within same dept), internet
- Scholarships/Awards administered through SGS – consult Awards Chart
- Teaching Assistantships (TA) – graduate unit
- RA/Research Stipends – supervisor/graduate unit
- U of T Fellowships – graduate unit
- OSAP/UTAPs/government loans – Enrolment Services Office
- On campus employment: https://cln.utoronto.ca/home.htm
- Off campus employment – networking, walk-in, internet
- Issues with tuition fee payments/service charges – Student Accounts
- SGS Emergency Funding – SGS Graduate Awards Office
  - Emergency Grant and Loan Programs, Accessibility Grant, Parental Grant, Master's Completion Bursary, and the Summer Gym Bursary (doctoral stream only)
SGS Leave Policy

- Graduate students whose programs require continuous registration may apply to their Graduate Coordinator for a one-session to three-session leave during their program of study for:
  - 1. serious health or personal problems which temporarily make it impossible to continue in the program; or
  - 2. parental leave by either parent at the time of pregnancy, birth or adoption, and/or to provide full-time care during the child’s first year. Parental leave must be completed within 12 months of the date of birth or custody.

- **SGS Leave of Absence Form**

**Parental Leave Funding Options Through External Awards**

- Federal agency (CIHR/NSERC/SSHRC) scholarship parental leave supplements
  - Equal to one installment for one session leave;
  - Equal to 1.5 installments for two session leave;
  - Submit Request for Interruption of NSERC/SSHRC Form.

- Parental leave supplements through supervisor’s Tri-agency grant
  - Apply through supervisor and Research Services Office

- Most awards e.g. OGS/QEII-GSST do not provide parental leave supplements
  - Check award holder’s guide/terms and conditions or directly with granting agency to see if your award has a parental leave supplement

**SGS Parental Grant**

- The **SGS Parental Grant** program is new!

  (starting Fall 2017)

- It aims to provide financial support to research-stream doctoral students within the funded cohort who experience a loss or reduction in funding as the result of taking an approved parental leave of absence at the time of birth or adoption in order to provide full-time care during a child’s first year.

- **SGS Parental Grant (cont’d)**

  - The total amount of the Parental Grant will be calculated based on other non-employment related supplemental funding the student may have available.
  - Students are eligible to receive a Parental Grant of up to $4,000. Birth mothers are eligible to receive a second grant payment of up to $4,000.
  - For further details: **SGS Leave of Absence Policy**.
Financial Aid

SGS Emergency Grants
- For Emergencies only, to cover unanticipated financial need;
- Will not cover tuition;
- Students can apply at any time;
- Normally beyond the funded cohort.

Financial Aid

Emergency Loans
- alleviates temporary cash flow problems;
- Repayable up to 120 days;
- 2 day turn around time;
- for students who are expecting the release of funds in the near future;
- Value is normally up to $1500 but can vary.

Financial Aid

SGS Accessibility Grant
- Programs and awards for students with accessibility issues;
- Students must be registered with Accessibility Services;
- Normally to cover the cost of adaptive technologies, equipment and therapies not covered under other plans.

Financial Aid

SGS Summer Gym Bursary
- Full-time doctoral-stream;
- Registered for the full Summer session;
- Up to 100% of the fees are paid by reimbursement;
- Participating gyms include the Hart House Fitness Centre and Kinesiology & Physical Education (KPE) athletic facilities.
Financial Aid

Master's Completion Bursary (MCB)

- Eligibility: students who are beyond their program length, with a minimal amount of work remaining due to unanticipated factors beyond their control.

Doctoral Completion Awards (DCA)

- Each department runs its own DCA competition, check in with your unit.
- Eligible students must be beyond the funded cohort.
- 15% of DCA Recipients should be OSOTF/OSAP Eligible, and demonstrate financial need.

Financial Advising

- It’s best for you to seek help early so your problems don’t get out of control, so reach out!
- Financial Advising is available in person, via email, or over the telephone from 10 am to 4 pm, Monday to Friday.
- SGS Financial Advisor: Michelle Ekuban 416-978-0808

Questions?

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