

# SGS Award Announcement

**To:** Graduate Deans; Graduate Chairs/Directors; Graduate Coordinators; Graduate Administrators  
**From:** Debbie Chau, Graduate Awards Officer  
**CC:** Joshua Barker, Dean, School of Graduate Studies, and Vice-Provost, Graduate Research & Education; John Peever, Vice-Dean, Students; Laura Stathopoulos, Director, Graduate Awards & Financial Aid, Lindsay DeClou, Associate Director, Graduate Awards Operations & Postdoctoral Affairs  
**Date:** December 12, 2024  
**Re:** **2025-2026 Connaught International Scholarship for Doctoral Students**

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This announcement is for internal purposes only and should not be posted on websites external to the University.

## Award Overview

**Graduate Unit Deadline to SGS:** February 7, 2025  
**Value/Duration:** Connaught - \$10,000 top-up (renewable for a total of 4-5 years\*)  
**Level of Study:** Doctoral  
**Required Legal Status:** International (at time of registration)  
**Results:** Early March 2025 to graduate units

## Purpose

The **Connaught International Scholarship for Doctoral Students** is a cost-sharing initiative designed to assist graduate units in recruiting and supporting top international students by providing a top-up scholarship to each recipient, which will be paid in addition to the program's normal funding package provided by the graduate unit.

## Value and Duration

- The scholarship is provided as a \$10,000 top-up, in addition to the program's normal funding package (base amount + tuition and fees), to a combined total of no less than \$50,000 annually;
- The graduate unit is responsible for providing recipients with the normal level of program funding, which may consist of various internal and external funding sources, including awards such as a University of Toronto Fellowship (UTF) or departmental endowed award, on-campus employment such as teaching assistantships and/or research assistantships;

- The cost of UHIP (University Health Insurance Plan) coverage is in addition to the cost of tuition and incidental fees and should be factored into the program's funding for Connaught Scholars; and
- The Connaught is renewable on an annual basis in accordance with the program's normal period of funding (i.e., for a total of 4-5 years\*, up to a maximum of 5 years) provided the student remains eligible, in good academic standing, and meets the terms and conditions of the award.  
\*A 5<sup>th</sup> year is available for programs that have a 5-year funding commitment.

## Eligibility

Nominees must:

- Be international applicants\* (Citizens and permanent residents of Canada are ineligible);
- Not be currently registered in a degree program at the University of Toronto;
- Have been or will be offered admission to a full-time doctoral program\* with a funding commitment beginning September 2025; and
- Have achieved an A- average in each of the last two years of full-time study.

\* Successful nominees must remain an international student when the first instalment of funding is distributed; recipients transitioning to permanent residency after the first instalment of funding will continue to be eligible for the balance of their renewable scholarship.

+ Units who do not admit successful applicants directly to the doctoral program (or doctoral direct entry) and require the applicants to first register as master's students and then subsequently transfer to the doctoral (without obtaining the master's degree), may submit a request for these candidates to be considered eligible for this competition. If granted, the students must transfer to the graduate units' doctoral program within the program's standard reclassification time period (max. 24 months).

## Nomination Process

Each graduate unit is invited to submit nominations based on their number of international doctoral admissions applications. All eligible nominees will be considered for the Connaught Scholarship. Graduate units should nominate applicants to whom they have *provided or expect to provide an offer of admission for September 2025*.

**Number of International doctoral admissions applications received for 2025-26** (by the SGS Connaught nomination deadline or the unit's admission deadline):

|                   |               |
|-------------------|---------------|
| <b>1 to 20:</b>   | 1 nomination  |
| <b>21 to 74:</b>  | 2 nominations |
| <b>75 to 149:</b> | 3 nominations |
| <b>150 plus:</b>  | 4 nominations |

## Nomination Package

**NEW:** Graduate Units submit their Connaught Scholarship nomination(s) online via the [Connaught Scholarship-SGS Nomination Form](#).

The nomination package for each nominee should be scanned as a single PDF-file, containing all application materials in the order listed below.

A complete nomination package includes:

- A nominating letter from the graduate unit highlighting the strengths of the nominee (1-2 pages; [template provided by SGS](#)). This letter will be used in conjunction with the other materials to assess the application. Using strong and positive language, this letter should focus on:
  - Information relevant to the field of study, degree or culture of the department (e.g., publishing norms, degree requirements, grading practices at specific international universities, unusual accomplishments) that would otherwise not be known outside the discipline; and
  - Factors used to determine why the student is deserving of this scholarship. Clearly articulate the excellence of the candidate according to the selection criteria of academic excellence, and research, communication, interpersonal and leadership abilities (potential and demonstrated)
- Copies (both sides) of all academic transcripts – legend must be included (may be from the candidate’s admission file);
- Letter of Intent or Research Proposal (may be from the candidate’s admission file);
- Two letters of reference (letters may be from the candidate’s admission file); and
- Nominee’s C.V. (no page restriction).

## Submission to SGS

Upload the following items to the new [Connaught Scholarship-SGS Nomination Form \(MS Form\)](#):

1. Completed [Connaught Nomination Spreadsheet](#) (downloadable link); and
2. Scanned/combined nomination package for each nominee as a single PDF using file naming convention of: “Lastname, Firstname\_Connaught2025”.

**NEW:** The Graduate Awards Office will no longer provide a separate email confirmation that your nomination has been received as submission is confirmed through the online form. Please be sure to follow-up with the designated Graduate Awards Officer should you have any updates to your unit’s nomination.

## Results

Shortly after communicating the first round of results to units in early March:

- SGS will provide the graduate unit with an official award offer addressed to the successful candidate, including the terms and conditions of the scholarship for distribution to the applicant;
- To accept the scholarship, the candidates must provide to the graduate unit **written acceptance** of both the units’ offer of admission and of the scholarship **within two weeks** of the award offer letter date;
- The graduate unit will **notify SGS** of the applicants’ response (both accepted and declined offers); and
- If award offers are declined, SGS will make offers to the next highest eligible ranked candidate on the SGS reversion list (i.e., graduate units may not reallocate an offer within their own department)

## Contacts & Resources

Please direct all questions regarding the competition or nomination process to:

Debbie Chau, Graduate Awards Officer  
 Graduate Awards Office  
 School of Graduate Studies  
[debbie.chau@utoronto.ca](mailto:debbie.chau@utoronto.ca)