

SGS Award Announcement

To: Graduate Deans; Graduate Chairs/Directors; Graduate Coordinators; Graduate Administrators
From: Fong Di Caterina, Manager, Graduate Awards
CC: Joshua Barker Dean, School of Graduate Studies and Vice-Provost, Graduate Research and Education; John Peever, Vice-Dean, Students; Laura Stathopoulos, Director, Graduate Awards and Financial Aid
Date: August 16, 2024
Re: **2025-2026 CGS Doctoral (CIHR/ NSERC/ SSHRC) Competition**

When communicating this announcement to students, **please include information specific to your graduate unit's internal process** (e.g., internal deadline(s), contact information for the submission of the applications). Graduate unit instructions and quota information will be sent separately by mid-September.

Award Overview

Student submission deadline:	Date set by graduate unit
CIHR Application goes offline for applicants:	CIHR only*: October 1, 2024 (11:59 PM)
Graduate Unit deadline to SGS:	CIHR/ NSERC: October 2, 2024 SSHRC: October 9, 2024
Expected Value/Duration**:	CGS D - \$40,000 per year for 36 months NSERC PGS D - \$40,000 per year for 36 months SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship - \$40,000 per year for 12 to 36 months
Level of Study:	Doctoral
Required Legal Status:	Domestic (Canadian citizen or permanent resident) and Protected Persons
Results:	April 2025, directly from Tri-Agency

*Note: CIHR application on ResearchNet will go offline for University of Toronto applicants on October 1st; however, the NSERC and SSHRC application systems will remain open. Applicants must submit their application by the graduate unit deadline.

**Although the Tri-Agency still has established amounts posted on their websites, as a result of [Budget 2024](#), funding levels are expected to be increased on the Tri-Agency websites in the coming months.

Purpose

The Canada Graduate Scholarships — Doctoral (CGS D) program is a federal program of scholarships administered by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). Scholarships are awarded through national competitions by these three granting agencies.

The CGS D program supports and promotes research excellence in a wide variety of disciplines and broad fields of natural sciences and engineering, health and social sciences and humanities, including interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research. This support allows scholars to concentrate on their doctoral studies more fully, 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.

Eligibility to Apply

Please refer to the [Tri-Agency CGS D website](#) for complete eligibility requirements and the [new doctoral eligibility flowchart](#) to determine eligibility window.

Applicants must:

- be a Canadian citizen, a permanent resident of Canada, or a Protected Person under subsection 95(2) of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (Canada) as of the application deadline;
- 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, JD/PhD, DVM/PhD) by December 31 of the calendar year of application 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 of the calendar year of application if enrolled directly from a bachelor's to a PhD program (without having completed or enrolled in another graduate program);
 - **REVISED** direct-entry applicants who are not enrolled in their doctoral program should contact the appropriate agency for further guidance.
 - students registered in a "Direct Entry PhD" program at U of T who previously completed or were enrolled in any graduate degree program belong in the 24-month category
- 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, JD/PhD, DVM/PhD) by December 31 of the calendar year of application if they have not previously enrolled in another graduate program;
 - **REVISED** applicants who have not previously completed or enrolled in another graduate program must be enrolled in their joint MD/PhD program at the time of application
- have completed **no more than 36 months** of full-time study in their [joint program](#) by December 31 of the calendar year of application if enrolled in a joint graduate program (such as, MA/PhD, MSc/PhD, MBA/PhD)
 - applicants who fall into this category have access to the 36-month window whether or not they were previously enrolled in a master's program;
- **Note for SSHRC:** SSHRC applicants who are beyond the eligible months of study for the CGS D, may continue to apply up until their 48th month of study (as of December 31st) and will be considered for a [SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship](#).
- submit a maximum of one scholarship (master's or doctoral) or fellowship application per academic year to either CIHR, NSERC or SSHRC. Should more than one application be submitted, the eligible application submitted first chronologically will be retained. 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);
- not have already received a doctoral-level scholarship or fellowship from CIHR, NSERC or SSHRC (does not apply to CIHR Fellowships); and
- **REVISED** not hold a tenure or tenure-track (faculty) appointment or be on leave from such an appointment concurrently with a CGS D award.

Reminder – first-class average in each of the last two years of completed study is no longer an eligibility criterion. Universities are to continue to recommend the top-ranked applications to the Tri-Agency.

Please refer to the appropriate literature for [CIHR](#), [NSERC](#) and [SSHRC](#) for further details on the agency specific doctoral awards as eligibility requirements may vary, e.g. tenable at foreign institutions, months of study.

Number of months

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 of the calendar year of application. Two terms of part-time study count as one term of full-time study.

Note: The agencies count all studies toward the doctoral degree for which funding is requested, whether or not they were completed at the degree-granting institution.

Undergraduate students applying to a direct entry doctoral program (i.e., never enrolled in a master's program) are encouraged to apply for a CGS M to hold in their first year in order to maximize their potential period of funding.

Fast-track and joint programs:

- For applicants who were registered in a master's program and subsequently transferred to a doctoral program (fast-track), the months of study completed are calculated starting from the date an applicant transferred into and registered in the doctoral program. Note: if the successful transfer exam occurs after the beginning of the session, and doctoral registration is applied retroactively to the beginning of the session, the months of study completed are calculated starting from the doctoral registration date (i.e., beginning of the session).
- For applicants registered in a joint program and a master's degree is obtained as part of the program (e.g., MA/PhD, MSc/PhD), the months of study are calculated starting from the date on which an applicant is officially registered in either portion of the joint program (including the master's portion of the program).
- For applicants who are registered in a **joint professional undergraduate/PhD program** (such as MD/PhD, JD/PhD, DVM/PhD), only the months of study in the PhD portion will be counted.

Subject Matter Eligibility

NSERC applicants whose subject matter has an overlap or future application to health (in particular drug discovery, disease diagnosis, treatment/prevention, development of medical devices, collaboration with pharmaceutical companies, disease population, therapy or health systems), should email [NSERC](#) with a one page summary of their research proposal well in advance of submitting an application to seek clarification or a ruling. NSERC typically responds to these types of inquiries within 3-4 business days.

Applicants working in research areas where boundaries overlap or are interdisciplinary are strongly advised to complete the *Justification for eligibility of proposed research attachment*. This optional attachment provides applicants with the opportunity to explain in plain language why they have chosen to apply to NSERC as opposed to one of the other federal granting agencies (CIHR or SSHRC). Applicants must describe the natural sciences or engineering (NSE) research challenges of the project on which they propose to work during the tenure of their scholarship and explain why their proposed research is predominantly NSE and should be considered eligible under NSERC's mandate. This document should be approximately a quarter to a half of a page. It is used only by NSERC staff to determine eligibility of subject matter and is not seen or evaluated by the review committee.

NSERC applicants are strongly encouraged to consult the [Addendum to the guidelines for the eligibility of applications related to health](#), which has additional information and specific examples relating to subject matter eligibility.

Selection Criteria

The evaluation of CGS D applications is based on the following criteria:

- 50% for research ability and potential
- 50% relevant experiences and achievements obtained within and beyond academia

For full description, refer to the [CGS D website](#).

Note: Indigenous SSHRC applicants are encouraged to complete the "[Allowable Inclusion](#)" section of their application form to describe special circumstances that may have had an impact on their academic or career paths (e.g., cultural or community responsibilities, and/or challenging socio-economic contexts). This information should be taken into account by selection committee members.

Application Process

Students registered in a U of T degree program at **any time between January 1-December 31, 2024**, or on an approved leave of absence must complete the appropriate agency's online application form and submit through their current or proposed graduate program at the University of Toronto. Applicants are to contact the unit's graduate administrator directly regarding the submission deadline and process.

In addition to the CGS D, each agency offers its own doctoral awards. 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.

Applicants must access the online application through the respective granting agency's portal:

- CIHR CGS D: [ResearchNet](#); see [CIHR instructions](#).
- NSERC CGS D: [NSERC Online System](#); see [NSERC instructions](#).
- SSHRC CGS D: [SSHRC Online System](#); see [SSHRC instructions](#).

CIHR, NSERC, and SSHRC applicants are encouraged to email their graduate unit with a screenshot of their application status after they have submitted to ensure that their unit is aware of their submission.

Reminder NSERC applicants will scan & upload all transcripts required for their applications to the application system, i.e., graduate unit administrators will not receive an email from NSERC requesting them to upload the transcripts for students as the University designate.

Transcripts

The inclusion and completeness of up-to-date transcripts are essential for the Tri-Agency to determine eligibility/confirm current registration and is an integral part of the evaluation material reviewed by the selection committees. As such, in addition to the most up-to-date transcripts for **all** previous degree programs/courses (complete or incomplete), applicants must include their transcript for their current degree program dated in the fall session of the year of application (i.e., September 2024) even when no grades are available. Applicants should make sure that any older transcripts are indeed the most up-to-date version and no changes have occurred since the date of issue. It is applicants' responsibility to ensure that transcripts are complete and legible once uploaded.

While applications containing unofficial transcripts will be accepted, SGS strongly recommends that applicants submit official transcripts whenever possible as reviewers will find them easier to read, and their authenticity will not be questioned. **At minimum, unofficial transcripts must state the names of both the applicant and issuing institution.**

Applicants should note that submission of an application will continue to serve as a formal attestation that they provided true, complete, accurate information in the application and its related documents. The Tri-Agency may contact administrative staff at applicants' institutions or applicants directly in order to verify that the contents of the submitted transcripts are true, complete and accurate.

Indigenous applicants

First Nations (North American Indian - Status and Non-Status), Métis, or Inuit students are encouraged to self-identify their status and provide consent within the application form to share this information with their institutions and the Tri-Agency, as universities are permitted to recommend an unlimited number of self-identified Indigenous applicants above their application quota to the national competition. Self-identification data are not seen or used by Tri-Agency selection committee members or by the applicant's references.

Black student researchers

The Government of Canada has deployed additional funds to [increase direct support for Black student researchers](#). CGS D applicants who self-identify as Black are encouraged to provide consent to be considered for these additional funds in their application so that may be selected by the Tri-agency directly to receive this funding. For more information, consult the [Frequently asked questions about the new Black scholars funding](#).

Results

Graduate units will inform their internal applicants of the unit/departmental competition results. The SGS Graduate Awards Office will notify those who were forwarded to SGS of the University competition results in late November. The results of the national competition are communicated directly by the Tri-Agency in April 2025.

Contacts & Resources

For more information, visit the [Canada Graduate Scholarships - Doctoral Program Website](#)

(housed on the NSERC website), and/or contact appropriate Awards Officer at the SGS Graduate Awards Office:

CIHR CGS D

Janine Harper
Graduate Awards Officer
P: 416-987-3555
janine.harper@utoronto.ca

NSERC CGS D

Margaret Meaney
Acting Graduate Awards Officer
P: 416-978-2205
margaret.meaney@utoronto.ca

SSHRC CGS D

Graduate Awards Office
P: 416-978-2150
graduate.awards@utoronto.ca

CIHR:

support-soutien@cihr-irsc.gc.ca
[CIHR Doctoral Research Award Programs Website](#)

NSERC:

schol@nserc-crsng.gc.ca
[NSERC PGS D Website](#)

SSHRC:

fellowships@sshrc-crsh.gc.ca
[SSHRC Doctoral Awards Website](#)

