Important Disclaimer!
What is said (or not said) at this info session does not supersede the material contained in the agencies’ guidelines or application packages.
STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL LAND

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates.

For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit River.

Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.
MS TEAMS - ASKING QUESTIONS

• We are recording this session to be uploaded to the SGS website

• Quick clarification questions on a particular slide may be entered in the “chat” section during the presentation

• Save all other questions to the end of the presentation

• Slides will be available on the SGS website on the specific award page under “Additional Information”
  • https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/awards/canada-graduate-scholarships-doctoral-cgs-d-program/
AGENDA

1. The Federal Tri-Agency Overview

2. NSERC Doctoral (PGS/CGS) Competition
   - Program Overview
   - Eligibility
   - Competition Evaluation Criteria & Weightings
   - Application Process & Components
   - Previous Results

3. Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplement

4. Additional Tips for Merit Based applications

5. Questions
FEDERAL TRI-AGENCY OVERVIEW

The federal Tri-Agency is the major federal source of funds for research and scholarship in academic institutions and is comprised of the 3 major research bodies:

• Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)
• Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC)
• Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)
NSERC BASIC CRITERIA

• The program of research must be primarily in the natural sciences and engineering; and the intended objectives of the research must be, primarily, to advance knowledge in one of the natural sciences or in engineering.

• Selecting the Appropriate Federal granting agency webpage: NSERC has clarified its section of the guidelines for Selecting the Appropriate Federal Granting Agency to help applicants better identify the appropriate agency when applying for funding.
  
  o https://www.science.gc.ca/eic/site/063.nsf/eng/h_FEE7261A.html

• Applicants with questions on subject matter eligibility or those whose subject matter has a link, overlap, or future application to health (in particular drug discovery, disease diagnosis or treatment/prevention, development of medical devices, and collaboration with pharmaceutical companies), should contact NSERC with a one page summary of their research proposal in advance of submitting an application to seek clarification or a ruling.

• The Addendum to the guidelines for the eligibility of applications related to health has additional information and specific examples relating to subject matter eligibility.
NSERC PGS-D/CGS-D PROGRAM OVERVIEW

• Award Types:
  • **PGS-D**: Post-Graduate Scholarship – Doctoral
    • $21,000 / year for 3 years
  • **CGS-D**: Canada Graduate Scholarship – Doctoral
    • $35,000 / year for 3 years

• One single application (Form 201) to be considered for both programs

• Highest ranked applicants will be offered a CGSD, the next highest ranked will be offered a PGSD

• PGSD can be held abroad if you hold a degree from a Canadian University, a CGSD cannot be held abroad

• **Application Deadline**: set by the graduate unit
To be eligible to apply, 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 by December 31 of the calendar year of application **if previously enrolled in a graduate program.** (Doctoral students who fast-tracked from a Master’s to a PhD program count their months of study from the session in which they transferred to the PhD program.)
  - **36 months** of full-time study in their joint program by December 31 of the calendar year of application **if enrolled in a joint program;** such as, MD/PhD, MA/PhD
    - Applicants that fall into this category, have access to the 36-month window whether or not they were previously enrolled in a master’s program
  - **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)
    - direct-entry applicants must be enrolled in their doctoral program at the time of application

**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. Doctoral students who fast-tracked from a Master’s to a PhD program count their months of study from the session in which they transferred to the PhD program.
NSERC PGS-D/CGS-D ELIGIBILITY: OTHER RESTRICTIONS

• You can submit a maximum of one scholarship 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).

• You cannot have already received a doctoral-level scholarship from CIHR, NSERC or SSHRC (does not apply to CIHR Fellowships).

• You cannot hold a tenure or tenure-track appointment concurrently with your CGS D award.

• Applicants are responsible for consulting the FULL eligibility requirements outlined by NSERC and available at: https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/PG-CS CGSD-BESCD_eng.asp

Note: To maximize your potential period of funding, you may be eligible to apply to the CGS M program for your first year of doctoral funding. You are responsible for choosing the type of award for which you apply.
## APPLICATION WEIGHTING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Selection Criteria</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Ability/Potential</strong></td>
<td>Indicators of research ability and potential:</td>
<td>50 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>• quality of research proposal</td>
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<td>• specific, focused and feasible research question(s) and objective(s)</td>
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<td>• clear description of the proposed methodology</td>
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<td>• significance and expected contributions to research</td>
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<td>• relevant training, such as academic training, lived experience and traditional teachings</td>
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<tr>
<td>• research experience and achievements relative to the applicant’s stage of study, lived experience and knowledge systems</td>
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<td>• 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.</td>
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<td>• demonstration of sound judgment and ability to think critically</td>
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<td>• 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</td>
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<td>• enthusiasm for research, originality, initiative, autonomy, relevant community involvement and outreach</td>
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<td>• ability or potential to communicate theoretical, technical and/or scientific concepts clearly and logically in written and oral formats</td>
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<td><strong>Relevant experience and achievements obtained within and beyond academia</strong></td>
<td>Indicators of relevant experience and achievements obtained within and beyond academia:</td>
<td>50 %</td>
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<td>• scholarships, awards and distinctions (amount, duration and prestige)</td>
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<td>• academic record</td>
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<td>• duration of previous studies</td>
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<td>• program requirements and courses pursued</td>
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<td>• course load</td>
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<td>• relative standing in program (if available)</td>
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<td>• professional, academic and extracurricular activities as well as collaborations with supervisors, colleagues, peers, students and members of the community, such as</td>
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<td>• teaching, mentoring, supervising and/or coaching</td>
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<td>• managing projects</td>
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<td>• participating in science and/or research promotion</td>
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<td>• participating in community outreach, volunteer work and/or civic engagement</td>
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<td>• chairing committees and/or organizing conferences and meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>• participating in departmental or institutional organizations, associations, societies and/or clubs</td>
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NSERC PGS-D/CGS-D APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Determine where to apply:
   - If you have been registered in a degree program at the University of Toronto at any time since January 2022, you should apply through a graduate unit at U of T.
   - [https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/_doc/Students-Etudiants/CGSDFlowchart_e.PDF](https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/_doc/Students-Etudiants/CGSDFlowchart_e.PDF)

2. If applying through U of T, consult your graduate unit regarding their application deadline and the method of submission.
NSERC ON-LINE SERVICES: REGISTER & ACCESS TO LOGIN PAGE

• The platform to apply is called “NSERC On-Line Services”

• Create an NSERC On-Line Services account at:
  o [https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/OnlineServices-ServicesEnLigne/Index_eng.asp](https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/OnlineServices-ServicesEnLigne/Index_eng.asp)
NSERC ON-LINE SERVICES: LOGIN PAGE
After logging in, users who have not filled out the EDI questions on their profile page, must complete the EDI questions before moving forward.
NSERC ON-LINE SERVICES: COLLECTION OF SELF-IDENTIFICATION DATA

Beginning in August 2018, NSERC (in coordination with SSHRC and CIHR) asked all applicants to self-identify with information on age, gender, Indigenous identity, disability and visible minority status.

A harmonized self-identification data collection process allows the granting agencies to monitor the equity performance of its programs and design new measures that achieve greater equity, diversity and inclusion in the research enterprise.

Completing the self-identification form is mandatory for applicants and co-applicants but for each category there is an option “I prefer not to answer.”
CREATING A NEW FORM 201: LANDING PAGE “ECONSOLE”

To create a brand new NSERC PGSD/CGSD application form (i.e., Form 201), on the eConsole page, under Forms Management select “Forms – Student” to go to your Portfolio.

![Screenshot of eConsole page with Forms Management menu highlighted]
CREATING A NEW FORM 201: PORTFOLIO PAGE

- On the Portfolio page, select Form 201 – (PGS D & PDF) from the drop down menu and click Create.
CREATING A NEW FORM 201:
SELECTING THE APPROPRIATE AWARD PROGRAM

- Select the (award) Program name but clicking the List... button, a pop-up window will appear
- On the pop-up window, select Postgraduate Scholarships – PGS D
CREATING A NEW FORM 201

- Enter a Title of Proposal (this can be modified later) and click Create
NSERC DOCTORAL APPLICATION: “FORM 201” SECTIONS

1. Application Profile
2. Person Profile
3. Addresses
4. Academic Background
5. Experience
6. Awards
7. Location of Tenure
8. S&F Information
9. Thesis
10. Key Words
11. Diversity in Research
12. Outline of Proposed Research
13. Bibliography
14. Justification for eligibility of Proposed Research
15. Contributions/Statements
16. Special Circumstances
17. Transcripts
18. Reports on the Applicant
19. University Comments
FORM 201: APPLICATION PROFILE

- This section is very important because the option selected for Current Status will determine where the application will be sent for review, either direct to NSERC or an institution with a quota.
FORM 201

- Before beginning to work on your Form 201 make sure you follow the “Presentation Standards” defined by NSERC – font size, etc. Presentation Standards can be found in the Form 201 Instructions

- Remember to click “Save” at the bottom of the page each time you complete a page before moving to the next section or leaving the application
**FORM 201: APPLICATION PROFILE – CURRENT STATUS**

- **Option A** = You are currently registered at an institution (Canadian or foreign) without a quota for NSERC.

- **Option B** = You were not registered at any time during the year of application in a degree program at any institution, with or without a quota for NSERC.

- **Option C** = You are currently registered in a degree program at a Canadian institution with a quota for NSERC, or are on an approved leave of absence from such a degree program.

- **Option D** = You are not currently registered in a degree program but were registered at any other time during the year of application in a degree program at a Canadian institution with a quota for NSERC.
FORM 201: APPLICATION PROFILE – SELECTING AN INSTITUTION/DEPT

- If Option C or Option D is selected for Current status, you must also indicate the name of the institution and department at which you are/were registered.

- If you do not select University of Toronto as their institution your application will not be viewable to U of T administrators thus will not be considered for the U of T's NSERC PGSD/CGSD competition.
FORM 201: APPLICATION PROFILE – SELECTING AN INSTITUTION/DEPT

• To select your institution & department, click the “List…” button & a pop-up window will appear.

• Select the 1. province where your institution is/was located, 2. the name of the institution, & 3. the department you were registered in.
FORM 201: PERSON PROFILE – MODIFYING NAME, EMAIL, NSERC PIN

- On your Person Profile page, you may notice you cannot edit/modify your name, NSERC PIN, or email address as they are pre-populated based on your NSERC On-Line Services account info.
FORM 201:
PERSON PROFILE – MODIFYING NAME, EMAIL, NSERC PIN

• To modify your name, email, or NSERC PIN return to the “eConsole” page and select “Maintain User Profile”

• Update the appropriate information on the Maintain User Profile page
FORM 201: PERSON PROFILE – SELF-IDENTIFICATION STATEMENTS

• Applicants who are Indigenous [First Nations (North American Indian - Status and Non-Status), Métis, or Inuit] are encouraged to self-identify their status on their Form 201 as universities are permitted to recommend an unlimited number of self-identified Indigenous applicants above their application quota to the national competition.

• Applicants who self-identify as part of an underrepresented group (on the EDI survey form) can consent to that information being used so that NSERC may increase equity and diversity among qualified applicants by giving award priority to meritorious applicants from underrepresented groups if sufficient funds become available.

• Self-identification data are not seen or used by NSERC’s selection committee members or by the applicant’s references.
FORM 201:
BRIEF OVERVIEW OF OTHER SECTIONS

• **Addresses:** Mailing address and Permanent address

• **Academic Background:** All degree studies including incomplete degrees. All programs of study listed in the application, even if not completed, must be accompanied by up-to-date transcripts.
  - College programs can be included under “Other” – transcripts not required even if they contain transfer credits

• **Experience:** Paid or unpaid work, research, projects, etc. Applicants must indicate if they gained the experience during the course of a program of study (if work contributed to their degree), up to 6 experiences

• **Awards:** Competitive (i.e., not needs based) can include Dean’s lists, and non-monetary awards, up to 10 awards
  - May use contributions statement section to describe significant but not-well known awards, or ask referees to mention the awards in their reports

• **Location of Tenure:** Must list at least one choice, up to three; (justification for PDF only, not required)
FORM 201:
SCHOLARSHIP & FELLOWSHIP (S&F) INFORMATION

- Months of graduate studies completed as of December 31 of the year of application in the program for which funding is being requested

- BE ACCURATE HERE, as this will help determine your months of study eligibility

- Example: If you are starting your program this September (2022), you would have 4 months of full-time studies as of December 31 of the year of application. All numbers should be multiples of four – 0, 4, 16, 28, etc
FORM 201: THESIS

- Information on theses completed or in progress (up to 2). For completed degrees, indicate the date by which you completed all degree requirements (not the convocation date). This includes your thesis defence, corrections, and deposition of thesis.

- Include a summary of thesis most recently completed or in progress. Do not duplicate info in Outline of Proposed Research
FORM 201: RESEARCH SUBJECT CODE & KEY WORDS

- **Research Subject Code** – determines the Selection Committee that will review your application if forwarded to NSERC – there are 106 research codes and each research code is associated with one of 14 NSERC selection committees

- **Key Words** – up to 10 to describe proposed area of research/research project – also important for specific committee member selection
NSERC SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS SELECTION COMMITTEES

- 168 – Geosciences (Competition 2022)
- 169 – Evolution and Ecology (Competition 2022)
- 177 – Mathematical Sciences (Competition 2022)
- 178 – Physics and Astronomy (Competition 2022)
- 179 – Chemistry (Competition 2022)
- 187 – Cellular and Molecular Biology (Competition 2022)
- 194 – Chemical, Biomedical and Materials Science Engineering (Competition 2022)
- 195 – Plant and Animal Biology (Competition 2022)
- 196 – Psychology (Competition 2022)
- 197 – Electrical Engineering (Competition 2022)
- 198 – Computing Sciences (Competition 2022)
- 201 – Civil and Industrial Engineering (Competition 2022)
- 202 – Mechanical Engineering (Competition 2022)
- 1078 – Collaborative Research and Training Experience Program (Competition 2022)

Each committee name above is a link to a webpage that lists the committee members for this year’s adjudication at NSERC

Full list of research subject codes and their associated committees can be found here: https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Help-Aide/ScholarshipCodes-CodesPourBourses_Eng.asp
FORM 201: KEY WORDS

• **Key Words** – up to 10 to describe proposed area of research/research project – also important for specific committee member selection

• New this year NSERC has created two supplement opportunities of $10,000
  - **Fisheries and Oceans Canada Aquatic Science supplements**
  - **Supplement for Research in the Field of Impact Assessment**
    - Eligible award holders will be identified based on the proposed research of their initial application (i.e., key words included in application title and listed in the key words section)
    - Be sure to review the specific supplement pages for a list of key words related to each supplement so that your application can be identified accordingly

• Other supplements:
  - Canadian Poultry Research Council postgraduate scholarship
  - Environment and Climate Change Canada Atmospheric and Meteorological graduate supplement
  - Systematics Research graduate supplement
    - Separate applications required in addition to PGS/CGS application
• Considering equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in the research process, where relevant, promotes research excellence by making it more relevant to society as a whole, more ethically sound, rigorous, reproducible and useful.

• NSERC acknowledges that EDI considerations may not be applicable in the context of some research projects, but nonetheless encourages you to fully consider their relevance, as they apply to more areas than one might think.

• Applicants should refer to the guidance document: NSERC guide on integrating equity, diversity and inclusion considerations in research for more information to understand how your application will be evaluated
FORM 201: UPDATED DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS IN RESEARCH DESIGN

Applicants must indicate if, “relevant equity, diversity and inclusion considerations have been taken into account at any of the stages of the research process for your proposed research?"

- If the applicant answers "yes", they must include the relevant equity, diversity and inclusion considerations in their proposal and use the text box below to explain their answer (max 750 characters)

- If the applicant answers "no", they must use the text box to explain why equity, diversity and inclusion considerations have not been taken into account (max 750 characters)

- For more information consult the NSERC guide on integrating equity, diversity and inclusion considerations in research.
In addition to NSERC’s website, NSERC recommends the website “Gendered Innovations in Science, Health & Medicine, Engineering, and Environment” (Available in English only).

https://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/

Website published by Stanford University where researchers can find multiple resources focusing on the development of practical methods of sex, gender and intersectional analysis for research in the sciences and engineering, as well as case studies highlighting how these kinds of analyses lead to innovation.
FORM 201: OUTLINE OF PROPOSED RESEARCH

PDF attachment - maximum 2 pages

• Provide a detailed yet concise description of proposed research project for the period during which the award will be held. Be as specific and enthusiastic as possible without being too jargon-laden

• NSERC online presentation and attachment standards must be followed

• Provide background information to position the proposed research within the context of the current knowledge in the field.

• State the significance of the proposed research to a field or fields in NSE.

• State the objectives and hypothesis, and outline the experimental or theoretical approach to be taken (citing literature pertinent to the proposal) and the methods and procedures to be used.

• Do not repeat information from Thesis section (you can refer to it)

FORM 201: BIBLIOGRAPHY

PDF attachment - maximum 5 pages

• You must properly reference ideas or texts belonging to others that are cited or directly relevant to your outline of proposed research

• You should not list additional or unnecessary references to fill up space

• Follow the citation conventions that are appropriate to your research discipline or field
COMMON MISTAKES WHEN WRITING PROPOSAL / CONTRIBUTIONS / STATEMENT (AS PER NSERC CMTS)

• Lack of focus or coherence
• Repetitiveness
• Failure to cite important & relevant work in the area
• Citing too many irrelevant articles
• Spelling or grammatical mistakes
• Too much detail on minor issues; too little detail on major issues
• Research contributions not properly highlighted (too modest)
• Impact / importance of research not explained
GRADUATE CENTRE FOR ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION

- Currently registered graduate students can get writing help from the Graduate Centre for Academic Communication (GCAC)

- GCAC offers bootcamp/intensive courses and workshops for proposal writing. They will also be offering one-on-one appointments to help with proposals

- [https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/resources-supports/gcac/](https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/resources-supports/gcac/)
FORM 201:
JUSTIFICATION FOR ELIGIBILITY OF PROPOSED RESEARCH

Optional PDF attachment - maximum 1 page

• Include if your research has any potential overlap with health or social sciences, you should complete this section

• This section is used by NSERC staff to determine the eligibility of your proposed research; it is not seen by the selection committees

• Use plain language to explain why you believe that your research is intended to advance knowledge in NSE.

• It should not be another description of your research project

• It should be a short explanation (a paragraph is fine, you do not need to use the whole page)

• Use examples from the Addendum to the guidelines for the eligibility of applications related to health to clarify that your research falls within NSERC

• NSERC online presentation and attachment standards must be followed
FORM 201: CONTRIBUTIONS & STATEMENTS

PDF attachment - maximum 2 pages

• **Part 1**: Articles published, accepted, submitted. Listed with most recent first.
  - Explain role and contribution(s) if not first author, do not include any articles that are currently in preparation or those on which you do not appear as an author

• **Part 2**: Most significant contributions to R&D
  - Comment on the importance of top three contributions to the research area.

• **Part 3**: Applicant’s statement, group comments under the following headings:
  - Research experience
  - Relevant activities (describe leadership role, not just position title, i.e., teaching, mentoring, managing, industrial work experience)

• No updates accepted once application is submitted to NSERC
FORM 201: TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER LETTER

• Many contributions to industry or other end-users take the form of technical or internal reports that are confidential, to protect proprietary information, or are subject to patent or copyright protection.

• If student record includes contributions of this kind, a one-page letter from an institution or company researcher involved with technology transfer should accompany application, and this letter should attest to the nature and significance of the contribution in as specific terms as possible. The letter should be emailed to your graduate unit, to be sent separately to SGS and NSERC if your application is forwarded. It will then be forwarded to the NSERC selection committee for consideration only if it clearly addresses and demonstrates the confidential or protected nature of the contribution.
FORM 201:
SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES (OPTIONAL)

- Text box, maximum 2300 characters

- Describe any special circumstances that have had an effect on performance or productivity, e.g., health problems, family responsibilities, parental leave, disabilities or other applicable circumstances.

- Explain any gaps in the chronology of your experience (including relevant employment).

- Do not be shy about describing delays and disruptions in this section.

- The selection committee members are asked to recognize delays and assess the quality of the applicant’s performance and productivity during their active period (that is, excluding the period of special circumstances).

- If the current or previous thesis supervisor is unable to provide a Report on the Applicant, applicants may use this section to provide an explanation. It would be considered normal to not have a new supervisor be a referee or for students just starting their program to not have a supervisor yet, but applicants can still explain here to minimize any doubts for the reviewers.

- This section can also be used to describe the impact of COVID-19 on any aspect of the application. Describe any special circumstances that may have delayed, disrupted or interrupted studies or research, or otherwise affected the performance on which the assessment for funding will be made. e.g., Delays in publications, data collection, and cancelled conferences.
FORM 201: TRANSCRIPTS – NEW

• **NEW** Applicants are responsible for uploading their transcripts, combined together into a single pdf file, to their own application
  - Graduate administrators will no longer be required to collect and upload transcripts for applicants

• One (black and white) PDF file and must include up-to-date transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate studies
  - Applicants registered in a degree program in the fall session of the year of application, must provide an up-to-date transcript that demonstrates registration in the degree program, even if there are no grades or courses
  - Exchange/transfer credits from university courses, where the grade is not present in the home institution transcript must be included.

• Up-to-date transcripts are defined as official transcripts dated or issued in the fall session of the year of application (if currently registered) or after the last term completed (if not currently registered)
  - Official transcripts are defined as transcripts issued by the institution’s registrar’s office. ACORN (or similar online academic history) print-outs are not acceptable
  - Official e-transcripts are acceptable but should be “printed to PDF” before uploading or combining with other transcripts to remove encryption (e.g., using web browser, Adobe Acrobat Reader, or freely available PDF software).
FORM 201: 
TRANSCRIPTS – NEW CONTINUED

• Transcripts from outside North America, certified copies are acceptable

• Transcripts written in a language other than English or French, must include a certified English or French translation

• Must include only one copy of the legend (for each transcript). Do not scan the legend multiple times

• Please review the full transcript guidelines on NSERC’s Form 201 instructions page
To upload the transcript enter text in the Document description field (i.e., combined transcripts)

Select the Browse... button and select the correct file from your computer

Once the file has been selected click the Attach button

Wait until the page refreshes
• Status should be updated to “Document has been attached”

• Be sure to click the Proofread button, to view the document that has been uploaded to ensure it is the correct pdf file, legible and complete (with no missing pages that has grades, registration, or degree status information).

• To upload a new file, first click the Delete button, then repeat the uploading steps
For the fall 2022 deadline, NSERC will not reject applications for including unofficial transcripts in lieu of official transcripts, **if an official transcript cannot be obtained**

- Applicants should first – check with their institution(s) to verify if an official transcript (printed or electronic) can be obtained

- If an official transcript cannot be obtained, the applicant should provide a letter from the institution’s transcript office which states that the institution is not able to provide an official transcript at this time along with an unofficial version of the transcript.

- While applications containing unofficial transcripts will be accepted, 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.
FORM 201: REPORTS ON THE APPLICANT (REFERENCES)

• Each application must be accompanied by **two reports** on the student. Students will invite reviewers through the online system.

• Reports required:
  - Report #1: From a person very familiar with applicant’s research and other abilities. Able to provide specific examples and knowledgeable in the proposed area of research. Usually the thesis supervisor.
  - Report #2: Person sufficiently familiar with applicant's research and other abilities to provide a meaningful commentary.

• Report should not be from proposed supervisor unless you have worked with them in the past.

• Can be your new supervisor if you do not have another person who can provide you with a better reference. It is important to pick the two people who can provide you with the best reference.

• Should be academic faculty members. Postdoctoral fellows or research associates should work with the supervising faculty member to submit the reference. Must not be from a fellow or senior PhD student.

• Ensure you set an early deadline for their report – do not list it as the day applications are due to your graduate unit.

• You will not have access to the reports, but will be able to see when it is completed, and have ability to “unlock” allowing referees to make amendments.
FORM 201: REPORTS ON THE APPLICANT (REFERENCES) CONTINUED

• Contact your proposed referees early to ensure they are willing to complete a positive & enthusiastic report for you.

• Feel free to remind them of your contributions and information you would like to have in the letter (screenshot of referee form available in this presentation);

• Referees are asked to review your Form 201 on the report so be sure to complete as much of it as you can before sending the reference request.

• Follow-up prior to the deadline (note you must have both references completed before you can submit your application); and

• Remember to give them a big thank you.
IMPLICIT OR UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

NSERC expects reviewers to consistently guard against the possibility of unconscious bias influencing the decision-making process, whether these biases are based on schools of thought, the perceived value of fundamental versus applied research, areas of research or research approaches (including emerging ones), size or reputation of an institution, age, gender, and/or other personal factors associated with the applicant. To assist members in recognizing potential bias, all members are asked to complete the Unconscious Bias in Peer Review online learning module. Members are also encouraged to complete one of the Sex and Gender training modules produced by CIHR.

NSERC strongly encourages the use of inclusive language (for example, “the applicant” or “they” instead of “he/she”). Any discussions should be free from words or sentences that reflect prejudiced, stereotyped, or discriminatory language of particular people, groups or their institution. Use of inclusive language has been shown to decrease unconscious bias during the review process. For further information on unconscious bias, consult the Gov. Of Canada Dept for Women and Gender Equality’s Unconscious Bias – Additional Resources webpage.

Encourage your supervisor and referees to also complete the Unconscious Bias in Peer Review online learning module so that they can be aware and minimize unconscious bias when writing reference reports, e.g., using different types of adjectives to describe male vs female applicants, such as outstanding male but hard-working female.
FORM 201: REPORTS ON THE APPLICANT – STUDENT VIEW

• You must enter the name, email address, and report due date for each referee
• Once the applicant saves the referees' information an email will be sent to the referee with a unique link to complete the “Report on the applicant”

• When the email has been sent, the status for the referee will update to “E-mail sent”

• When the referee has started the Report the status will update to “Document created”

• When the referee has completed and submitted the report the status will update to “Document completed”

• You also have the options to Delete (to enter a new referee), Resend, or Unlock (return for referee to edit) the referees’ reports
FORM 201: REPORTS ON THE APPLICANT – REFEREE VIEW

- On the Report on Applicant page, referees must select Yes from the drop-down menu for the field: “I have read the applicant’s Form 201”
COVID-19 EXCEPTIONS

The agencies request that institutions and selection committee members consider the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on course results when assessing the following:

• Transcripts
  - Some applicants may have difficulty obtaining official transcripts for their applications to the current competitions. Therefore, in order to provide flexibility to both institutions and applicants, the granting agencies will accept unofficial transcripts if official transcripts cannot be obtained.

• Academic record
  - Course results for the 2020 and 2021 semesters may need to be considered with special circumstances in mind for both format and level of success. Other indicators throughout the application may be used to assist in this evaluation such as previous semesters' results, scholarships, awards, etc.; these other sub-criteria can be found in the evaluation criteria of each program.

• Eligibility exceptions
  - Should institutions have special or exceptional cases that could warrant an exception to the CGS D program's eligibility window or cases where eligibility is uncertain, they are encouraged to contact the appropriate agency.
  - Students should be encouraged to use the special circumstances section of their applications to explain COVID-related delays, especially if their progress was disproportionately affected by the pandemic.
FORM 201: FINAL STEP – VERIFY & SUBMIT

- Once all sections of the application have been completed, including Reports (references), applicants must verify the application’s completeness by returning to the Portfolio page and clicking the **Verify** button for their application.
FORM 201: FINAL STEP – VERIFY & SUBMIT

• If any changes are made after the Verify button has been clicked, you must again verify

• Until you click Submit, you can edit and revise your application

• The submit button will only become available after all sections are completed and the application has been verified

• We recommend previewing the application before submitting in order to check that all the information is accurate and up to date

• You must click the Submit button in order for the application to be considered submitted and received by the institution for review
NSERC TUTORIAL VIDEOS

- Playlist - Scholarships & Fellowships program application videos, includes program updates, online system tutorials, and advice and tips for writing an application:

  English  https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL6ox0GB7vXYlhaAY7mEqwmMqYK9TG Cp1E

  French  https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLW6knVGZzKrsJ1il_nGLoZSQOUwO7ykXr
WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOU SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION?

1. **Graduate unit review** - graduate unit reviews all applications submitted to the unit and nominates a quota number of applications to SGS for review.

2. **SGS review** – SGS reviews all applications received from units for the university-wide competition. At SGS there are three NSERC doc sub-committees, which select the top applicants to forward to NSERC for the national competition. Each file is read by three committee members who are outside of the applicant’s department.

3. **NSERC review** – NSERC reviews all applications received for the national competition and selects the recipients of the 2023-24 NSERC CGS D and PGS D awards.

   - You should receive an email from your dept letting you know if your application was forwarded to SGS. If forwarded to SGS, we will also let you know whether your application is being forwarded to NSERC.
WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOU SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION?

NSERC staff verify eligibility → Members review and score applications → Final ranked list produced

Top-ranked applicants offered CGS D, next tier offered PGS D

Results announced in April
# NSERC RESULTS: U OF T

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applications Reviewed at SGS</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>321</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applications Forwarded to NSERC</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awards Received by U of T</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>102</td>
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<tr>
<td>U of T Success Rate</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>38%</td>
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# NSERC RESULTS: CANADA WIDE

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Forwarded</strong></td>
<td>1542</td>
<td>1687</td>
<td>1693</td>
<td>1878</td>
<td>1845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Awarded</strong></td>
<td>719</td>
<td>769</td>
<td>713</td>
<td>786</td>
<td>684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Success Rate</strong></td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>37%</td>
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MICHAEL SMITH FOREIGN STUDY SUPPLEMENT
OBJECTIVE & ELIGIBILITY

Objective - To support high-calibre graduate students in building global linkages and international networks through the pursuit of exceptional research experiences at research institutions outside of Canada.

• Available to active CGS Master’s, CGS Doctoral or eligible Vanier CGS holders

• Up to $6,000

Eligibility - Applicants must:

• hold an active CGS at the time your study period abroad starts;

• be registered full time in a graduate research studies program at a Canadian institution for the duration of the time abroad;

• take up the award within one year of receiving the notice of award for the CGS Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplement *some exceptions made due to COVID

• return to complete your degree in Canada.
MICHAEL SMITH FOREIGN STUDY SUPPLEMENT
KEY DATES

• Deadline for universities to submit applications to the granting agencies: June 10th and October 10th

• Students submit application and all required documents to the School of Graduate Studies for consideration by Monday, September 19, 2022
ADDITIONAL TIPS
WHAT MAKES A GREAT MERIT BASED APPLICATION?

Advice from Graduate Awards Office & Prof. Malcolm Campbell - Former Vice-Principal Research, UTSC

• Reviewers may spend as little as 6-8 minutes on each application. You have a short period of time to sell yourself on paper.

• Know the Selection/Evaluation Criteria – make sure you “hit” them all
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

• Reviewers look heavily at PROGRESS. Ongoing awards look good. Publications, historical grade trends, and PRODUCTIVITY are all important

• 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
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 who can critique it

• Read the proposal out loud to yourself and others. If it doesn’t sound natural, then it needs more work

• Engage the reviewer

• Importance/Significance – you want your reviewer to advocate for your application
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
QUESTIONS

Stacey Kwan
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School of Graduate Studies
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Telephone #: 416-978-2205