

To: Graduate Coordinators and Graduate Assistants
From: Monica Corbett
Date: July 27, 2025
RE: **2026-27 Canada Graduate Research Scholarships- Doctoral (CGRS D) competition**

APPLICATION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 1, 2025 @t 4:00 p.m. EST

COMPETITION DESCRIPTION AND WEBSITE

Effective as of the 2026-27 competition, the doctoral level funding from the 3 federal councils (also called the tri-councils, or tri-agencies), 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) has been revised and renamed as The Canada Graduate Research Scholarships- Doctoral (CGRS D). **The agency-specific doctoral level scholarships have been discontinued.** ¹

The CGRS D program recognizes and supports the next generation of outstanding innovators, knowledge workers, creative thinkers and researchers. By providing support for a high-quality research training experience to awardees, the program strives to foster impacts within and beyond the research environment.

The CGRS 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 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. Doctoral scholarships are awarded through a selection process and administered by the three granting agencies. The tri-councils have maintained the harmonization of the doctoral level scholarships across the three federal granting agencies for the new CGRS D, to maintain consistent processes across the three agencies.

¹ The following scholarships have been discontinued/replaced with CGRS D: CIHR Frederick Banting & Charles Best Canada Graduate Scholarships-Doctoral Awards (CGSD); CIHR Doctoral Foreign Study Awards (DFSA); NSERC Alexander Graham Bell Canada Graduate Scholarships-Doctoral Program (CGSD); NSERC Postgraduate Scholarships-Doctoral (PGSD); SSHRC Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarships-Doctoral Program (CGSD); and SSHRC Doctoral Fellowships. Also note that the Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship program has been discontinued.

This is the website for applicant (student) information about the harmonized CGRS D competition: https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/PG-CS/cgrsd-besrd_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 2026-27 CGRS 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 CGRS D

Currently there is NOT one harmonized CGRS D application or application portal. Each agency has maintained its own doctoral scholarship application on their agency-specific application portals. The agencies' application portals are all now open and applicants may begin preparing their applications.

DEADLINE

There IS a harmonized deadline, both at the university level and the Tri-council level. Queen's University internal deadline is **OCTOBER 1, 2025 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 **2026-27 CGRS D competition for departments/programs**.

Overview of CGRS 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 1, 2025
Results announced by agencies	April 2026

*** 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. Doctoral students can apply to the CGRS D (if eligible) or the post-doctoral award competition but not both.**

Online Applications: Each agency's CGRS 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, as well as complete instructions for applicants, are located as follows:

- CIHR: [ResearchNET](#) and [instructions](#)
- NSERC: [Online system](#) and [instructions](#)
- SSHRC: [Registration and login](#) and [instructions](#)

NEW: APPLICATIONS FROM ELIGIBLE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ARE NOW ACCEPTED!

At the national level up to 15% of these awards may be available to international applicants. International students must be enrolled in their doctoral program at Queen's University as of October 1, 2025, in order to apply through Queen's to the 2026-27 CGRS competition. Incoming international students (students who plan to start in 2026-27) or international students starting in Winter 2026 or Summer 2026, are not eligible to apply to the 2026-27 CGRS competition.

International students who are not enrolled at Queen's or any other university by the university's 2026-27 CGRS deadline, are not eligible to apply to the 2026-27 CGRS D competition.

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.

BLACK STUDENT RESEARCHERS: The Government of Canada has provided additional funds to increase direct support for Black student researchers. CGRS D applicants who self-identify as Black and provide consent to be considered for funds designated for specific groups may be selected to receive this funding. Each agency has up to 10 additional CGRS D awards reserved for Black student researchers.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION: The three agencies are acting on evidence that achieving a more equitable, diverse and inclusive Canadian research enterprise is essential to creating the excellent, innovative and impactful research necessary to advance knowledge and understanding and to respond to local, national and global challenges. This principle informs the commitments described in the *Tri-Agency Statement on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)* and is aligned with the objectives of the *Tri-Agency EDI Action Plan*. Self-identification data and

consent provided with applications may be used to determine eligibility for additional awards or priority funding opportunities designated for specific underrepresented groups.

VALUE AND DURATION: The CGRS D has value of \$40,000 per year and a maximum duration of 36 months (3 years) for all recipients, regardless of which tri council scholarship they hold. In particular note that the SSHRC Doctoral Fellowships of 12 or 24 months duration have been discontinued.

Some students might be eligible for the [Canada Graduate Research Scholarship - Master's \(CGRS M\)](#) program for 2026-27, instead of the CGRS D. Some restrictions apply. Applicants are responsible for choosing the award program to which they apply (Master's or Doctoral). International students cannot apply to CGRS M.

DEADLINE FOR DIRECT APPLICANTS: Applicants who are eligible for CGRS D funding, but who do not meet the criteria for applying through a university (see the CGRS website) have to apply directly to the appropriate agency using that agency's application, before 8:00 p.m. (ET) on October 17, 2025. 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.

NOTE: International applicants are not eligible to apply directly to the agencies.

Selecting the appropriate agency: Applicants must apply to the agency 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 2026-27 competition, our quotas are:

CIHR: 21
NSERC: 47
SSHRC: 68

Eligibility to apply: To be eligible to apply for CGRS D, an applicant must:

- be a Canadian citizen, a permanent resident of Canada or a Protected Person² in Canada, as of November 21, 2025; OR
- be an international student (any student who is not a Canadian citizen, permanent resident of Canada or Protected Person in Canada), AND be enrolled in their doctoral program here at Queen's University by Queen's application deadline of October 1, 2025 to be considered eligible.
- have **completed no more than 36 months** of full-time equivalent study in the doctoral program for which they are requesting funding by December 31, 2025.
- have **completed no more than 36 months** of full-time equivalent study in the PhD portion of the joint professional undergraduate/PhD program (such as MD/PhD) for which they are requesting funding by December 31, 2025.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the minimum eligibility criteria for this award are satisfied before they begin the application process. Interested applicants must review the eligibility and selection criteria on the official [CGRS D website](#) before beginning their application. Ineligible applicants will not be considered by Queen's University.

Eligibility for CGRS 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, 2025. 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, 2025, 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.

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

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 apply to CGRS M **OR** CGRS D, **OR** (for doctoral students) the Canada Postdoctoral Research Award (CPRA) per academic year to either CIHR, NSERC or SSHRC. If an applicant submits more than one application, only the eligible application submitted first will be retained and the other application(s) will be removed from competition.
- An applicant can apply a maximum of three times to CGRS D and must meet all eligibility requirements each time they apply.
- An applicant cannot have already received, or currently hold, a doctoral-level scholarship from CIHR, NSERC, or SSHRC (including a Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship).
- An applicant cannot hold a tenure or tenure-track appointment concurrently with a CGRS 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 CGRS D applications, any special circumstances are to be included in the *Allowable Inclusions* section.

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

The complete CGRS D application must include **up-to-date official 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 2025 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 CGRS 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, nor from previous tri council application, for the CGRS 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 CGRS D competition should contact the School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (SGSPA) well in advance of the October 1, 2025 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 2025 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 2025 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 CGRS D application. Detailed instructions for this part of the application have been provided by each agency in their instructions.

Selection criteria: The 2 selection criteria for the CGRS D competitions are:

Criteria	Description	Weight
1. 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
2. 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: Applications are submitted online by the applicant by our internal deadline, 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, 2025 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 CGRS 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 CGRS 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 CGRS D competition. The SSHRC CGRS D applications and adjudication will be split between a Humanities CGRS D competition and a Social Sciences CGRS D competition. A reviewer or reviewers from the Smith 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 CGRS D competition.

Reviewers from the Faculty of Arts and Science Graduate Council from graduate programs in the Sciences will review and adjudicate the NSERC CGRS D competition from applicants in life sciences and physical sciences. The NSERC CGRS D applications and adjudication will be split between a Life Sciences CGRS D competition and a Physical Sciences CGRS 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 CGRS D competition.

Reviewers from the Smith Engineering Graduate Council will review the NSERC CGRS 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 2026. The agencies will also publish the names (and other basic award information) of scholarship recipients on their websites (consult 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 information.

Joint initiatives and supplements: The three agencies may offer supplementary funding to award holders, some of which is offered through joint initiatives (collaborations with organizations from across the not-for-profit, private and public sectors to support and promote training, research and connection activities). Joint initiatives and supplements are designed to reflect the strategic objectives and mandates of each respective agency, inform decision-makers and, in certain cases, address specific needs of their partners. See the agency websites (CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC) for more information on related opportunities.

Related opportunities: CGRS D holders may be eligible for:

- [Canada Graduate Scholarships—Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplements Program](#)
- [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):

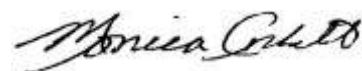
CIHR: Loanne Meldrum (meldruml@queensu.ca)

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