APPLYING SUCCESSFULLY FOR GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING

DR. JULIAN DIERKES, ASSOCIATE DEAN – FUNDING
BRENDAN MOREY, ASSISTANT DEAN, STUDENT ADMIN AND FUNDING

OCTOBER 30, 2018
CGSM Overview

- $17,500 stipend for one year
- Can hold only one CGSM award
- Apply up to three universities via single application
- Remember to apply for admission
Should I apply?

Eligibility

- Citizenship
- Research area
- Months of study
- First-class academic standing

Competitiveness

- Value of learning to apply
When and where do I submit?

Deadlines (are strict)

• For referees
  • It’s up to applicant to monitor and (gently) remind

• For applicants
  • 8:00pm EST on Monday 3 December 2018
  • Allow time for technical glitches (also known as don’t submit two minutes before the deadline)

Where to submit

• Online via Research Portal
Competition Overview

Research Portal

- UBC Graduate Program
  - Review apps for eligibility and completeness
  - Rank applications
  - Forward top applications

- University A
- University C

Grad + Postdoc Studies
Competition Overview

Grad + Postdoc Studies
- Review apps for eligibility and completeness
- Forward eligible apps to one of six adjudication committees

Master Ranking List

- Nat Sci & Eng 1
- Nat Sci & Eng 2
- Health Sci
- Soc Sci 1
- Soc Sci 2
- Hum
### Master Ranking List

1. Jones – SSHRC  
2. Singh - CIHR  
3. Cushan - NSERC  
4. Wong - NSERC  
5. Thompson - SSHRC  
6. Wright - CIHR  
7. Tennebrau - NSERC  
8. Lowrie - CIHR  

- **Top 66 NSERC apps offered CGSM**
- **Top 95 SSHRC apps offered CGSM**
- **Top 43 CIHR CGSM apps offered**
Competition Overview

1 April - CGSM offers to top-ranked applicants across Canada

Students have 21 days from the date of each offer of award to accept or decline

Offers declined / accepted from other universities

1 April – late summer - CGSM offers made to next-ranked applicants
Application Materials

- Application form
- CCV
- Research Proposal
- Transcript
- References
Application Materials

Application form

• Spell check content
• Follow the instructions
• Follow the instructions
• Follow the instructions
Application Materials

Canadian Common CV

- Select correct CCV type
Application Materials

Canadian Common CV

• Submitting, reference numbers and PDF
Transcripts

• All post-secondary studies
• Official vs. original transcripts
• Must be up-to-date
• Often need to show fall term registration
• Include transcript key
• Talk to your graduate program about which transcripts they can provide (don’t assume)
Ethics and Integrity

• Application must be an accurate picture of applicant
  – Beware of hyperbole and embellishment
  – Give credit where credit is due

• Who should write the research proposal?
  – Applicant alone?
  – Applicant together with supervisor?

• Consequences
APPLICATION AS LEARNING OPPORTUNITY

- Adjudication is what we do in science, parallel to peer review for publications, etc.
- Process designed to ensure fairness/consistency
- Selection of excellence from pool of eligible applicants
- Large pool of applicants, small number of recipients
INTERDISCIPLINARY/INTERCULTURAL

Expectations of excellence vary across disciplines
- Provide that context in applications
  E.g. conference invitations/proceedings vs journal publications

Expectations of excellence vary internationally
- Some markers of excellence do not translate well
  E.g. competition for entry into institutions, positions with public service

Language around excellence varies
- Excellence is described very differently, offer examples/metrics and encourage reference writers to do so
  E.g. US enthusiasm vs German and Japanese reticence
SELECTION CRITERIA

• Academic Excellence
• Research Ability / Potential
• Communication, interpersonal and leadership abilities

• Weightings vary by competition
FOLLOW GUIDELINES/SELECTION CRITERIA

• Instructions are carefully and deliberately worded
• If there is something you disagree with in instructions, ask questions, but follow guidelines
• If guidelines specify criteria, speak to all of these criteria in your application
PREPARING APPLICATIONS

• Think/plan ahead
• Work backward from deadlines to include
  • Time for references (if needed)
  • Feedback from peers
  • Considered revisions
• Share your drafts/ask for others’ applications
• Seek out feedback beyond your immediate specialization
• Does your application generate enthusiasm?
SPECIFIC ELEMENTS: PROPOSED RESEARCH

• **Must** be easy to read, including in its use of technical, (sub)discipline-specific terminology
• Clear discussion of objectives of research/hypotheses
• Highlights contributions to be made
• Must be do-able in terms of methods, time, other resources
• Detailed proposals beat out vague plans
• Will readers share your excitement about your research?
THINK ABOUT FORMATTING

Application forms specify formatting parameters, but
• Use (sub)headers to structure text
• Think about reminders to adjudicators when they review an application
• Consider some **bold** or *italics* to highlight aspects
• Be obvious by mirroring application instructions: If criterion is “Research”, why not have a subheader, “Research: [insert your topic here]”? 
SPECIFIC ELEMENTS: CV

• Think about narrative (selection of research topic, events/breaks in progress)
• Not all entries are automatically meaningful to all audiences
  Kinds of publications, rates of productivity, positions, incl academic positions, etc

• Define and highlight your personal contributions, esp in collaborations
  “I designed the experiment…”
  “While we designed the study jointly, I focused on identifying the research site…”
SPECIFIC ELEMENTS: REFERENCES

• Plan ahead
• Developing a “stable” of references vs not overburdening referees
• Be strategic in selection
• Give (gentle) instructions, including elements to highlight, address, etc.
• Do legwork for referees and provide them with complete information/drafts of application
OTHER CRITERIA

- What are selection criteria? Speak to them!
- Always be specific, give examples
- Let referees know about non-standard criteria
- Clarify role
  - In organizing grad conference, did you set the agenda, select papers, or handle logistics?
  - As a volunteer, what exactly did you do?
- If dissemination of results will rely on “a website” how will you find audience/audience find you?
Further Resources

www.grad.ubc.ca/awards

Resources for Award Applicants
Contact Info

Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
170 – 6371 Crescent Road
www.grad.ubc.ca/awards
graduate.awards@ubc.ca