APPLYING SUCCESSFULLY FOR GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING

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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

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 2 December 2019
  - Allow time for technical glitches (also known as don’t submit two minutes before the deadline)

Where to submit
- Online via Research Portal
Stress and Wellness

Competitiveness, deadlines, last-minute emergencies and details, details, details!

• Plan ahead
• Be methodical
• Don’t do it alone
  – Share the load with fellows students
  – Ask for help from supervisor and grad program
• Apprenticeship and skill development

Competition Overview

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

Grad + Postdoc Studies

University A

University C
Competition Overview

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


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 74 NSERC apps offered CGSM
Top 113 SSHRC apps offered CGSM
Top 56 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

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

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