UNIVERSITY
OF MANITOBA | Faculty of Graduate Studies

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September 18, 2012

To: NSERC-eligible departments

From: Greg Skazyk, Acting Awards Officer

Re: NSERC PGS/CGS Competition 2013-2014

Please find attached information from NSERC regarding the upcoming PGS/CGS competition as well as an FAQ document.

The application process for the PGS and CGS programs remains a fully electronic submission system for this year. Students will complete their application using NSERC's online application system and are not required to print and sign paper copies.

NSERC no longer requires departmental appraisals so it is not necessary for departments to review and rank applications prior to submission to FGS. However, departments are strongly encouraged to assist their students by reviewing applications and proposals before they are submitted so that the best possible application is forwarded.

Deadlines: applicants must submit official transcripts from all institutions attended in sealed envelopes to my attention at 500 University Centre by **October 3, 2012**. Deadline for students to submit their application electronically is **October 10, 2012**.

The above deadline information has previously been distributed to students via the FGS weekly awards email announcement and Facebook page on August 27, 2012. Please feel free to forward this information package to students and other contacts within your department, including fourth year undergraduate students.

Regards,

Greg

NSERC PGS Competition Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the University of Manitoba internal deadline for the NSERC PGS/CGS Competition?

A: The Faculty of Graduate Studies has two deadlines for the NSERC PGS/CGS competition; **October 3, 2012 is the deadline to submit original transcripts in sealed envelopes to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and October 10, 2012 is the deadline to submit your application electronically.** It should be noted that your application must be complete, your transcripts uploaded and two references provided before you can submit your application. Please note that some departments have set their own internal deadline to review applications prior to submission. Please check with your department office to see if they have an earlier deadline.

Q: Who is responsible for uploading transcripts? Do I need original transcripts?

A: The Awards Officer in FGS is responsible for uploading transcripts. Please use email address Greg.Skazyk@ad.umanitoba.ca in the appropriate space on the NSERC application. It should be noted that you must provide original transcripts from all institutions attended for your NSERC application. These transcripts must be submitted to Greg Skazyk at 500 University Centre by **October 3, 2012** to ensure that the transcripts are uploaded so that you can submit your application by October 10, 2012.

Q: Where should my referees send their letters of reference?

A: Referees must submit their letter of reference online. There is a space on the NSERC application form to indicate your referees and their email address. Completing this portion of the NSERC application will result in an email being sent to your referees along with a link to enable them to provide their reference for you. Please be sure to let your referees know that their reference should be completed well before our October 10, 2012 deadline, as the references must be submitted prior to your electronic submission.

Q: When I submit the application, am I submitting it directly to NSERC?

A: Your application may be submitted directly to NSERC or through a university as per your current student status. Please see the table below for details:

Registration Status at Time of Application	Where to Submit Application
You are currently registered at (or were registered at during the year of application), or are on an approved leave of	The Canadian university at which you are currently or were registered, or from which you have taken an approved leave of

absence from, a Canadian university in a degree program.	absence
You are currently registered at a foreign university.	Directly to NSERC
You are not currently registered at a university, or are registered but not in a degree program, and you graduated from a degree program from a Canadian university during the year of application.	The Canadian university from which you graduated in the last 12 months
(If none of the preceding options apply to you, only then may you consider the following.)	
You are not currently registered at a university, or are registered, but not in a degree program, and you last graduated from a degree program prior to January 2012.	Directly to NSERC

Applications that are submitted through a university go through a university wide competition to determine which applications will be submitted to NSERC's national competition.

Q: I have questions about the NSERC competition and the application process. Where can I get assistance with my questions?

A: NSERC has a very helpful online video tutorial. You may find that many of your questions are answered by viewing this video. The tutorial can be found at the following link: http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/Tutorial-Tutoriel/Tutorial-Tutoriel_eng.asp

If you review the tutorial and still have questions, contact Greg Skazyk at Greg.Skazyk@ad.umanitoba.ca or at 204 474-9836.

	Natural Sciences and Engineering	Conseil de recherches en sciences
	Research Council of Canada	naturelles et en génie du Canada

FROM: Serge Villemure, Director, Scholarships and Fellowships Division

TO: NSERC Scholarships Liaison Officers

C.C.:   Deans of Graduate Studies

DATE: September 10, 2012

SUBJECT: **2013 NSERC Scholarships and Fellowships Competition**

WHAT'S NEW IN THE SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS DIVISION

NSERC Postgraduate Scholarships (PGS) / Alexander Graham Bell Canada Graduate Scholarships (CGS) programs
There were no changes made to these programs. The updated program literature and forms are now available on the NSERC website.

NSERC Postdoctoral Fellowships (PDF) Program
Over the last ten years, the volume of applications to the NSERC PDF program has doubled to about 1,300, impacting the workload of volunteer selection committee members. A change to the eligibility rules for the PDF program was made to ensure that applicants' and reviewers' time was used productively.

The eligibility rules were changed to allow students to apply only once during the eligibility window. Please note that this change does not affect the budget for the PDF program or the number of awards.

As a transition measure, applications from individuals who have previously submitted an application for an NSERC PDF and who remain eligible to apply will be accepted. NSERC will also be taking measures to ensure that first-time applicants to this year's PDF competition are aware of the change in policy and are given the opportunity to withdraw their application if they deem that it would be more appropriate for them to wait and submit an application to a future competition (assuming they remain eligible to apply).

A reminder that the deadline for completing all requirements of the first doctoral degree is September 1 of the year of the award announcement. The date all requirements were met includes the successful defence and submission of the corrected copy of the thesis (in accordance with the university's regulations). It is not the conferred or convocation date.

Eligibility Criteria for Students and Fellows
Again this year, we urge universities and applicants to consult the Eligibility Criteria for Students and Fellows section of the program guide for important information on eligibility criteria pertaining to proposed program of study and research.

Applicants should also consult the tri-agency document Selecting the Appropriate Federal Granting Agency which contains important information, and guidelines of each agency, to help select the one best suited to consider their application.

Justification for Eligibility of Proposed Research
Applicants must complete this portion of the application if their research has any link with, or overlap or relevance to, health or social sciences and humanities. They 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 or fellowship. They must clearly explain why their proposed research should be considered research that is predominantly NSE and should be considered research that is directed to an NSE audience. This Justification will be used by NSERC when evaluating the eligibility of the proposed

research and must accompany the application at the time of submission. Applicants whose application is rejected because of ineligible subject matter will not be allowed to submit the Justification afterwards.

Transcripts for PGS Applications
The inclusion and completeness of each applicant's transcripts/proofs of registration is essential for NSERC staff to determine eligibility and is an integral part of the evaluation material reviewed by selection committees. **This includes transcripts for programs of study started in the fall session of the year of application.** If the university's policy is not to provide transcripts, then a letter bearing the official university seal/stamp or a letter signed by the Dean of Graduate Studies confirming i) the applicant's program of study and registration status and ii) that the university does not provide transcripts must be submitted in lieu of a transcript. Refer to the **Guidelines for the Verification of NSERC PGS M and PGS D Applications** for complete details.

We also urge you to verify the page orientation of uploaded transcripts in order to ensure that they can be easily viewed and assessed by committee members.

Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program
The 2012-2013 competition cycle for the program has been launched. The updated program literature and forms are now available on the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships website. The deadline for submitting applications is **November 1, 2012.**

Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships Program
Please consult the Vanier CGS website for information on program changes, and updated literature and forms, for the upcoming competition. The deadline for submitting nominations is **November 6, 2012**.

PROGRAM REMINDERS

1. **PGS Deadline Reminder:**
   - The deadline for universities to submit PGS M and PGS D applications to NSERC is **Monday, November 26, 2012, at 8:00 p.m., ET**.

   Note: The university is responsible for notifying all applicants of the outcome of the university's internal selection process.

   - For PGS applicants submitting directly to NSERC, the deadline is **Monday, October 15, 2012, at 8:00 p.m., ET**.

2. **Updated Literature Posted on the NSERC Website:** The 2012 *Program Guide for Students and Fellows* is now available on the NSERC website.

3. **On-line Submission Process and Form 201:** The *Application for a Postgraduate Scholarship or Postdoctoral Fellowship*, Form 201, has been updated and is available on the NSERC website. Please ensure that all applicants use the updated Form 201.

4. **Global Payments Guide for Universities:** An updated version of the *Canadian Universities Global Payments Guide* for students holding an NSERC PGS/CGS or a SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship or CGS was posted on the NSERC secure website in May 2012.

5. **Aboriginal Applicants:** NSERC is continuing to encourage Aboriginal students to pursue university studies in the natural sciences and engineering. Any Aboriginal student recommended by a Canadian university for an Undergraduate Student Research Award (USRA) or a PGS **will not be counted in that university's application quota.** All submitted applications from Aboriginal candidates must be identified on the 2013 Recommended PGS Applicants form.

6. **Summer Program in Japan or Taiwan:** Effective immediately, applications to the Summer Programs in Japan or Taiwan must be made through the Canada Graduate Scholarships – Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplements Program. Consequently, you must hold a Canada Graduate Scholarship

to be eligible. For more information, contact NSERC at Japan-Taiwan@nserc-crsng.gc.ca .

7. **JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowships:** NSERC will be accepting nominations for the JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowships Program. This program provides opportunities in universities or other research institutions in Japan for postdoctoral researchers to conduct, under the guidance of their hosts, cooperative research with leading research groups. The application deadline is January 25, 2013. For more information, contact NSERC at Japan-Taiwan@nserc-crsng.gc.ca .

PGS/CGS INFORMATION PACKAGE FOR Scholarship Liaison Officers (SLOs)

The information package for university SLOs for the 2013 PGS/CGS competition has been posted on NSERC's secure website. On this site you will find documents pertaining to the receipt, processing and review of NSERC PGS applications from your university. All documents are posted under **Documents common to all institutions – NSERC Scholarships**. Please follow the guidelines carefully and provide the information needed in the format requested. The quotas will soon be posted on NSERC's secure website. Please note that the quotas will be posted under **Documents common to all institutions – NSERC Scholarships,** rather than on the individual university sites.

The documents you should access are:

1. **Quota (to come):** Indicates the application quota for your university. This is a global quota and may be divided at your university between the PGS M and PGS D categories and the discipline groupings, as deemed appropriate.

2. **Table I:** Lists the selection criteria and where their indicators are found in the application form.

3. **Table II:** Lists the selection criteria and their relative weightings by program.

4. **SLO Responsibilities:** Summarizes the responsibilities of the SLOs in the administration of the PGS competition.

5. **Verification Guidelines:** Provides detailed information for verifying PGS applications.

6. **University Selection Committee Guidelines:** Provides detailed information and regulations for use by the university scholarships selection committee(s).

7. **2013 Recommended PGS Applicants form:** All universities must send NSERC an unranked list of the applicants that were forwarded (with Aboriginal applicants identified) by e-mail to Schol-SLO@nserc-crsng.gc.ca. If a university wishes to provide a justification for the submission of an applicant who does not meet the eligibility criterion of having obtained a first-class average in each of the last two completed years of study, they must do so in a separate document attached to this e-mail.

MEMO DISTRIBUTION AND THANKS

Please distribute this memo, along with the **Guidelines for the Verification of NSERC PGS M and PGS D Applications**, as widely as possible within the university to Department Chairs, faculty members and administrative staff responsible for processing NSERC PGS applications.

Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact our office at Schol-SLO@nserc-crsng.gc.ca. You can also search our staff directory.

On behalf of NSERC and the Scholarships and Fellowships team, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to you and your colleagues for your collaboration in promoting our programs and for your work in relation to the annual competition.

Guidelines for the Verification of NSERC PGS M and PGS D Applications for the 2013 Competition

> Please read the information section on Postgraduate Scholarships in the 2012 *Program Guide for Students and Fellows* (http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/ProgramGuide-GuideDesProgrammes_eng.asp).

Applicant Eligibility:

Ensure that the applicant:

- is eligible to apply as of November 26, 2012, as described in the 2012 *Program Guide for Students and Fellows*.
- is currently registered <u>full</u> or <u>part-time</u> at, or on an approved leave of absence from, your university, **or** is not registered and has completed all requirements for a degree from your university in 2012.
- is a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada as of November 26, 2012.
- has a first-class average in each of the last two completed years of study (full-time equivalent; 2 years of part-time study equals 1 year of full-time study).

Proposed research and program of study:

For each application, verify that:

- the research subject code corresponds to the applicant's **proposed** field of study (see Form 201).
- the proposed research is in an area of natural sciences or engineering supported by NSERC. Do not send an application to NSERC from an applicant who should be applying to CIHR or SSHRC**.** <u>You will not be able to replace this application if it is rejected by NSERC</u>. If in doubt, contact NSERC as soon as possible.
- the program of study the applicant is pursuing or intends to pursue is eligible for NSERC support. Clinically-oriented programs (e.g. clinical psychology) will be eligible only if the applicant proposes a research project deemed eligible to be funded by NSERC, and their proposed supervisor is a researcher holding an active NSERC Discovery Grant. Candidates proposing a clinically-oriented program of study must meet these two criteria at the time of application, otherwise they will not be eligible. Joint degree programs including a professional degree (e.g. MD/PhD) are not eligible. If in doubt, contact NSERC as soon as possible.
- Applicants must complete the Justification for Eligibility of Proposed Research if their research has any link with, or overlap or relevance to, health or social sciences and humanities. They 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 or fellowship. They must clearly explain why their proposed research should be considered research that is predominantly NSE and should be considered research that is directed to an NSE audience. **This document should not exceed one page and should not be evaluated by the university's internal selection committee(s).** The Justification will be used by NSERC when evaluating the subject matter of applications received and must accompany the application at the time of submission. Applicants whose application is rejected because of ineligible subject matter will not be allowed to submit the Justification afterwards.

Completeness:

Ensure that:

- the applicant used a font comparable to 12 point, Times New Roman regular for all free form attachments.
- two Reports on the Applicant have been completed.

Transcripts:

- Official* and up-to-date transcripts/proofs of registration for all undergraduate and graduate programs in the natural sciences and engineering must be scanned into a single PDF file and must include one copy of the university legend for each set of transcripts (do not scan the legend multiple times). It should be formatted as a black-and-white document and we urge you to verify the page orientation of uploaded transcripts in order to ensure that they can be easily viewed and assessed by committee members. Transferred courses taken at other universities must also be included. A transcript is required for all programs listed in the application.

  If the applicant is already registered in their program of study at the time of application, they must submit a transcript for this program regardless of the number of months completed in the program. This requirement also applies to programs of study started in the fall session of the year of application.

  Up-to-date transcripts are defined as transcripts which are dated/issued in the fall session of the year of application (if currently registered) or dated/issued after the last term completed (if not currently registered).

  If a university's policy is not to provide transcripts, then a letter bearing the official university seal/stamp or a letter signed by the Dean of Graduate Studies confirming i) the applicant's program of study and registration status and ii) that the university does not provide transcripts must be submitted in lieu of a transcript.

  The university designate(s), or the SLO must also ensure that the transcripts:

  - indicate any semesters when the applicant was not a full-time student or was registered even though no courses were taken;
  - provide the exact date when a student was transferred from a master's degree to a doctoral degree without having completed their Master's;
  - are translated and certified if the original is in a language other than English or French;
  - are legible when uploaded.

  If changes are to be made once the transcripts are uploaded, the university designate must communicate with the applicant using the comment box. The university designate must advise the applicant to delete and re-enter the information on the University-Transcripts page of their application. The university designate will then receive a new invitation email that can be used to upload the revised document.

  *Unofficial transcripts will be accepted ONLY from PGS applicants applying through their university AND ONLY for programs completed or in progress at the university submitting the application. **Transcripts generated from the applicant's personal account on the university website will not be accepted.** Certified copies will be accepted **only** for transcripts from foreign locations where official transcripts would be difficult to obtain.

Aboriginal Applicants:

A column exists in the SLO Portfolio which will show you who self-identified as Aboriginal in their application. Applications submitted by Aboriginal applicants will not be counted as part of the university quota. The university must indicate this information on the 2013 Recommended PGS Applicants form provided on the NSERC secure website.

Other:

Departments will be able to include additional comments to the process, such as justification for recommending an applicant who has not achieved a first-class average in each of the last two completed years of study, or a description of international degrees or diplomas used as a basis for the applicant's admission to the current program. Those comments should be written on separate sheets and forwarded to NSERC along with the 2013 Recommended PGS Applicants form at Schol-SLO@nserc-crsng.gc.ca.

For internal evaluation purposes universities may request that each department provide an evaluation for the applicants that they are recommending to the School of Graduate Studies. This information must not be included with the applications when submitted to NSERC.

Incomplete applications will be rejected by NSERC.

Guidelines for the University Scholarships Selection Committee(s)

Check the 2012 *Program Guide for Students and Fellows* for further information on the PGS program (http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/ProgramGuide-GuideDesProgrammes_eng.asp).

Background:

Each university is given an overall quota of applications that it may submit to NSERC. The University Scholarship Liaison Officer (SLO) will advise you of your university's quota. The university is free to determine how it will divide the quota between PGS M and PGS D applications. Please note that any application submitted by a self-identified Aboriginal student and recommended by your university to the PGS competition, will not be counted in your university's application quota.

When evaluating the Applicants:

- Evaluate together all currently registered students (full and part-time) and all non-registered applicants who will have completed their degree requirements in 2012. This should also include any self-identified Aboriginal students even though they are not part of the quota.
- When completing the evaluations, please consider all PGS M applicants together, regardless of whether they are undergraduate or graduate students.

Which Applicants to Recommend:

- Recommend the best applicants, regardless of their current status or proposed location of tenure.
- Recommend only applicants who have obtained an overall **first-class average** in each of the last two completed years (24 months) of study.
- Exceptions – Prepare a statement (one for each applicant) that will be sent to NSERC along with the 2013 Recommended PGS Applicants form. This statement should be used to:
  o specify the reasons that could offset a marginal academic record. Do not use this statement to indicate that the student is a self-identified Aboriginal student;
  o describe international degrees or diplomas used as a basis for the applicant's admission to the current program: and/or
  o address any unusual situation that you wish to communicate to NSERC.

For reference purposes, please consult:

- **Table I:** describes the selection criteria and their indicators in the application. It is used by the NSERC Scholarships and Fellowships Selection Committees.
- **Table II:** shows the relative weightings assigned to each criterion.

Table I: Selection Criteria and Indicators for PGS and PDF (FORM 201)

CRITERION	INDICATORS	EVIDENCE
Academic Excellence (PGS M 50%) (PGS D 30%) (PDF – N.A.)	Academic record	• University Transcripts
	Departmental/university comments (e.g. for justification of exceptions or to explain international degrees)	• Free-form document (maximum one page)
	Scholarships/awards (competitiveness, amount, duration and prestige)	• Page 4 - Scholarships and Other Awards Offered
	Duration of previous studies	• Page 1 - Academic Background • Page 5 - Thesis Completed or in Progress (**PGS D/PDF**)
Research Ability or Potential (PGS M 30%) (PGS D 50%) (PDF 70%)	Scholarships/awards (competitiveness, amount, duration and prestige)	• Page 4 - Scholarships and Other Awards Offered
	Duration of previous studies	• Page 1 - Academic Background • Page 5 - Thesis Completed or in Progress (**PGS D/PDF**)
	Academic training and relevant work experience (co-op included)	• Page 2 - Academic, Research and Other Relevant Work Experience • Contributions and Statements – Part III, Applicant's Statement • Report on the Applicant
	Justification for location of tenure (**PDF Only**)	• Page 6 - Justification for Location of Tenure (**PDF Only**)
	Contribution to research and development (publications, patents, reports, posters)	• Page 5 –Thesis Most Recently Completed or in Progress (**PGS D/PDF**) • Contributions and Statements – Part I, II, and III • Report on the Applicant
	Research proposal (feasibility, merit and significance)	• Outline of Proposed Research
	Critical thinking, application of knowledge, judgment, originality, initiative, autonomy, enthusiasm for research	• Contributions and Statements – Part III, Applicant's Statement • Report on the Applicant

CRITERION	INDICATORS	EVIDENCE
	Ability to complete projects within an appropriate time period	• Page 1 – Academic Background • Page 5 –Thesis Most Recently Completed or in Progress (**PGS D/PDF**) • Report on the Applicant
Communication, Interpersonal and Leadership Abilities (PGS 20%) (PDF 30%) ***Note***: *Consider length of time in Canada for applicants whose mother tongue is neither English nor French.*	Awards for papers, reports, posters or oral presentations	• Page 4- Scholarships and Other Awards Offered (e.g., best paper award at a conference)
	Quality of presentation of application	• Outline of Proposed Research • Page 6 - Justification for Location of Tenure **(PDF only)** • Contributions and Statements – Part III, Applicant's Statement
	Participation in publication writing (e.g., Contributions and Statements)	• Contributions and Statements – Part II, Most Significant Contributions to R&D • Report on the Applicant
	Rating and detailed evaluation of applicant	Report on the Applicant
	Professional and extra curricular interactions and collaborations with supervisors, colleagues, and peers (e.g. teaching, mentoring, supervising, project managing, chairing committees, organising conferences/meetings, elected positions and industrial work experience)	• Page 2 – Academic, Research and Other Relevant Work Experience • Contributions and Statements – Part III, Applicant's Statement • Report on the Applicant

Table II: Criteria and Relative Weightings

NSERC Postgraduate Scholarships and Postdoctoral Fellowships

Competition 2013

Criterion	Relative Weightings		
	PGS M	PGS D	PDF
Academic Excellence	50	30	N.A.
Research Ability/ Potential	30	50	70
Communication, Interpersonal & Leadership Abilities	20	20	30
Total	100	100	100