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September 19, 2013

To: All NSERC-eligible departments

From: Tracy Sobotkiewicz, Awards Office

Re: NSERC PGS/CGS Doctoral Competition 2014-2015

Please find attached information from NSERC regarding the upcoming PGS/CGS D competition as well as a FAQ document. Please note that this competition is for Doctoral-level students ONLY. See the "What's New" note below regarding the Master's competition.

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

NSERC no longer requires departmental appraisals; therefore it is not necessary for departments to review and rank applications prior to submission to Graduate Studies. 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.

Also note that NSERC has continued to allow us to permit online access to the NSERC applications to university representatives. Please contact me if you are interested in having one representative in your department provided with online access. Departments can use this access to ensure that their students' applications are complete, and to provide feedback.

WHAT'S NEW: Effective for the 2013 competition year, the 3 granting agencies (CIHR, SSHRC, and NSERC) have harmonized the Canada Graduate Scholarship—Master's competition as part of their project to modify and streamline the delivery and administration of the CGS Master's and Doctoral programs. The result is that students applying for funding for their Master's program will apply to the *Canada Graduate Scholarships-Master's* program. As part of the application process, applicants will be asked to categorize their proposed field of research (ie. health, natural sciences and engineering, and social sciences and humanities); universities will be responsible for approving this categorization based on the applicant's research subject matter. This has eliminated the need for students to apply for Master's funding directly through the respective granting agency as in past years. More information related to the Tri-Agency Harmonization of CGS-Master's will be forthcoming.

Deadlines: there are two deadlines to note for the NSERC PGS\CGS D competition; a transcript submission deadline and an on-line application submission deadline. Applicants must submit official transcripts from <u>all</u> institutions attended (including current registration) in sealed envelopes to my attention at 500 University Centre by **October 15, 2013**. This will provide me with time to upload transcripts so that students can submit their application electronically by our **October 21, 2013**. Refer to the [FGS awards database](#) for detailed instructions related to submitting transcripts.

The above deadline and information has been distributed to all graduate students in our weekly award announcement notice, but I would ask for your assistance in distributing our deadlines to students and all interested members in your department. Please feel free to forward this information package to students and other contacts within your department.

Thank you so much.

Regards,

Tracy Sobotkiewicz
Awards Office

NSERC PGS D Competition Frequently Asked Questions

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

A: The Faculty of Graduate Studies has two deadlines for the NSERC PGS/CGS D competition; **October 15, 2013 is the deadline to submit original transcripts in sealed envelopes to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and October 21, 2013 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 Tracy.Sobotkiewicz@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 Tracy Sobotkiewicz at 500 University Centre by **October 15, 2013** to ensure that the transcripts are uploaded so that you can submit your application by **October 21, 2013**.

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 21, 2013** 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 2013.	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 Tracy Sobotkiewicz at Tracy.Sobotkiewicz@umanitoba.ca.

FROM:	Serge Villemure, Director, Scholarships and Fellowships Division
TO:	NSERC Scholarships Liaison Officers
C.C.:	Deans of Graduate Studies
DATE:	September 12, 2013
SUBJECT:	**2014 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

The Harmonized *Canada Graduate Scholarships - Master's Program Description* is now available. The tri-agency staff is also working towards the opening of the Research Portal and the Canadian Common CV scheduled for later in the fall. Please visit the tri-agency CGS harmonization web page for more information. As a result of the harmonization of the CGS M, the NSERC PGS M program component, which represented about 10% of NSERC Masters' level awards, has been discontinued. NSERC has also discontinued the optional stipend increase for PGS M or CGS M award holders who transfer from a master's to a doctoral program. Details about how to access the Research Portal and the Canadian Common CV template will be shared in a separate e-mail, to follow in the coming days.

A disclaimer will be added to the tutorial videos to explain that references made to the PGS M and CGS M program components are no longer relevant.

Options for the Julie Payette-NSERC research scholarship and the André Hamer Postgraduate Prize-Master's level are currently being developed, the outcome of which will be communicated at a later date.

There are no changes to the NSERC CGS/PGS D programs. Up-to-date program literature and forms are now available on the NSERC website.

NSERC PGS D Application Quotas

Historically NSERC PGS / CGS application quotas included both M and D level applications. Following the adoption of the selection process of CGS Ms by the universities, the NSERC PGS / CGS D application quotas will be lower than in previous years because they will only include D level applications.

For most universities the calculated quota is a function of the average number of PGS and CGS awarded to students applying through the university, over the past three years, at the Masters **and** Doctoral levels. Those universities who qualify for a quota of two or fewer will receive a quota of two (2), the minimum.

NSERC Postdoctoral Fellowships (PDF) Program

A recent program evaluation of the PDF program has been completed (report available on the NSERC web site). Through recent consultations NSERC received feedback from the community regarding the advancement of award announcement, the value of awards, and how to address application pressure. NSERC will announce any decisions related to these issues before the 2015 competition.

NSERC is committed to advancing the timing of award notifications. We are working towards notifying PDF applicants of their results in mid-January. Such a change is expected to take effect in 2015.

A reminder that the eligibility rules allow candidates to apply only once during the eligibility window.

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 for 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 D Applications
Instructions for Form 201 concerning transcripts have been clarified. 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 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 2013-2014 competition cycle for the program has been launched. Updated program literature is now available on the [Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships](#) website. The deadline for submitting applications is **October 23, 2013.**

Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships Program

Please consult the [Vanier CGS](#) website for information on program changes, and updated literature for the upcoming competition. The deadline for submitting nominations is **November 6, 2013**.

PROGRAM REMINDERS

1. **PGS D Deadline Reminder:**
   - The deadline for universities to submit PGS D applications to NSERC is **Monday, November 25, 2013, 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 D applicants submitting directly to NSERC, the deadline is **Tuesday, October 15, 2013, at 8:00 p.m., ET**.

2. **Updated Literature Posted on the NSERC Website:** The 2013 *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 2013.

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 D **will not be counted in that university's application quota.** All submitted applications from Aboriginal candidates must be identified on the 2014 Recommended PGS D Applicants form. If an Aboriginal candidate is not identified on this list, they will be counted as part of your quota. NSERC will not accept a replacement application.

6. **Summer Program in Japan or Taiwan:** 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, 2014. For more information, contact NSERC at Japan-Taiwan@nserc-crsng.gc.ca .

PGS/CGS D INFORMATION PACKAGE FOR SCHOLARSHIP LIAISON OFFICERS (SLOs)

The information package for university SLOs for the 2014 PGS/CGS D 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 D 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 documents you should access are:

1. **Quota:** Indicates the application quota for your university. This is a global quota and may be divided at your university between disciplines 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

D competition.

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

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

7. **2014 Recommended PGS D 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.
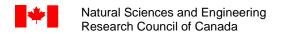
MEMO DISTRIBUTION AND THANKS

Please distribute this memo, along with the **Guidelines for the Verification of NSERC PGS 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 D Applications for the 2014 Competition

Please read the information section on Postgraduate Scholarships in the 2013 *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 25, 2013, as described in the 2013 *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 2013.
- is a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada as of November 25, 2013.
- 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 research subject code entered on the application will determine the selection committee in which the application will be evaluated.**
- 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, even if a program was not completed.

  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 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).

  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. 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 D 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 2014 Recommended PGS D Applicants form provided on the NSERC secure website. If an Aboriginal candidate is not identified on this list, they will be counted as part of your quota. NSERC will not accept a replacement application.

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 2014 Recommended PGS D 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.

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

CRITERION	INDICATORS	EVIDENCE
Academic Excellence (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
Research Ability or Potential (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
	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) • 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 • Report on the Applicant
Communication, Interpersonal and Leadership Abilities (PGS D 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 Doctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowships

Competition 2014

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