## Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships (CGS)

## Fall 2017 Administrative Guidelines

## Overview

The [Vanier CGS program](http://www.vanier.gc.ca/en/home-accueil.html) was created to strengthen Canada’s ability to retain and attract world-class doctoralstudents and establish Canada as a global center for excellence in research and higher learning. Vanier Scholars demonstrate leadership skills and a high standard of scholarly achievement in graduate studies in the social sciences and humanities, natural sciences and engineering, and health-related fields.

Eligible institutions are provided with a yearly quota of applications that can be forwarded for further consideration in the national competition. It is the most prestigious of the doctoral scholarships offered by the Federal Government. The program is administered and scholarship recipients selected by Canada’s three federal granting agencies: CIHR, NSERC, and SSHRC.

Without exception, the Vanier CGS can only be held at the institution that is providing the endorsement; students can only be nominated by one university. To support students in broadening their research horizons and seeking new challenges, the Vanier CGS program strongly encourages candidates to pursue their studies beyond the institution that granted their undergraduate and/or previous graduate degrees.

Eligible candidates may apply to both the Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship program and agency-specific (CIHR, NSERC, or SSHRC) doctoral-level scholarship/fellowships programs in the same academic year. Eligible candidates must submit Vanier and agency-specific applications to the same federal granting agency, and must meet all eligibility criteria to be considered.

## Value

The Vanier CGS is valued at $50,000 per year for up to three years

## Fall 2017 Nomination Quota

The Graduate Awards Committee will review all applications that have been endorsed by a department (letter of nomination required). The Graduate Awards Committee will select which applications will be forwarded for further consideration in the national competition based on the nomination quota each agency has provided us for the competition year.

CIHR: 1

NSERC: 6

SSHRC: 2

## Important Dates

**September 15, 2017**: The University of Guelph deadline for applicants to submit on ResearchNet

**September 20, 2017**: Vanier applications available to view on FilePro while departments prepare nomination letter(s)

**October 4, 2017**: The nomination letter is due electronically to the Graduate Awards Officers

**November 1, 2017**: Vanier CGS agency submission deadline

## Application Steps

1. Confirm Eligibility

Canadian citizens, permanent residents of Canada **and** foreign citizens may be nominated by the institution where they wish to pursue their doctoral studies or are currently pursuing their doctoral studies. Candidates should confirm that they satisfy all the [eligibility criteria](http://www.vanier.gc.ca/en/eligibility-admissibilite.html) before beginning the Vanier CGS application. Additionally, candidates are strongly encouraged to read the [selection criteria](http://www.vanier.gc.ca/en/selection_committee_guide-comite_selection_lignes.html#b0) prior to commencing their application. This guide lists the three evaluation criteria and has useful information on how the criteria are evaluated.

Vanier applicants must have achieved a first-class average, as determined by the nominating institution, in each of the last two years of full-time study or equivalent. The University of Guelph defines a first-class average as a minimum A- (80%). Applicants who have attended institutions outside of Canada are encouraged to refer to the [International Credential Evaluation](https://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/future/international/credential) page to determine how your international grades will equate to the Ontario grading scale, as this is the guide we will use to evaluate your grades.

Applicants may be pursuing their first doctoral degree or may be already enrolled in their doctoral studies but have not completed more than 20 months of doctoral studies as of May 1, 2018. See [calculating months of doctoral studies](http://www.vanier.gc.ca/en/eligibility-admissibilite.html#c1).

1. Contact the proposed nominating department

Candidates interested in applying should contact the proposed nominating [department](https://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/programs/list/byprogram) to seek endorsement. Only those candidates that are endorsed by a department at the University of Guelph will be considered by the Graduate Awards Committee. For those candidates that are endorsed, the department will be responsible for providing the Graduate Awards Officers with a nomination letter by October 4, 2017.

Candidates are encouraged to provide the proposed nominating department with the following:

* 1. expressed interest and intent to apply for a Vanier CGS;
  2. the name of the faculty member they are interested in working with;
  3. a copy of their CV and transcripts (copies will suffice at this point);
  4. a lay abstract of the proposed research (maximum one page).

1. Order Transcripts

If the nominating department agrees to endorse the application, the applicant should proceed with ordering official transcripts. Applicants who are currently registered at the University of Guelph may be able to order their University of Guelph [transcript free of charge](https://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/current/funding/tools). Applicants are responsible for ordering transcripts from all post-secondary institutions attended. Transcripts should be mailed directly to the [Graduate Awards Officers](https://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/about/contact-us) in the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies. Transcripts must be received by September 15, 2017.

1. Complete Application on ResearchNet

Applications are prepared by the student and submitted using the [ResearchNet](https://www.researchnet-recherchenet.ca/rnr16/LoginServlet) application system. Before beginning an application please read the application instructions carefully. It is the candidate’s responsibility to ensure that the application is complete, including referee assessments.

The University of Guelph deadline for applying to the Vanier CGS is September 15, 2017.

1. Selection Process

The Graduate Awards Committee will meet in October to select the applications that will be forwarded to the Vanier CGS agency for further consideration in the national competition. If the Graduate Awards Committee selects a candidate’s application, the Graduate Awards Officers will electronically approve and submit a nomination letter to the Vanier CGS program on their behalf. Acknowledgement of receipt by email will be sent shortly after the [agency deadline date](http://www.vanier.gc.ca/en/home-accueil.html). Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by the Graduate Awards Officers after the agency deadline.

## Information for a Department Nominating a Candidate

Candidates are encouraged to seek department endorsement prior to commencing the application process. The Vanier CGS is the most prestigious doctoral scholarship offered by the federal government so departments are strongly encouraged to endorse only those applicants that will be competitive. Given the limited quota, the selection process is rigorous and we are required to be strategic in determining the number of applicants selected for institutional endorsement.

The Graduate Awards Officers will make the applications available to the nominating departments via FilePro by September 20, 2017. The department will have two weeks to prepare a nomination letter.

Reminder: Students are strongly encouraged to pursue their studies at a university other than that (or those) which granted the undergraduate and previous graduate degrees. If a department choses to endorse a student who has previously completed a degree at the university, an explanation as to why it’s in the candidate’s best interest must be addressed in the nomination letter.

## Nomination Letter Requirements

The nomination letter is to be completed/signed by the Graduate Program Coordinator or Chair/Director of the department nomination the candidate and must be on the institutional letterhead. Please note if the Graduate Program Coordinator or another designate signs the letter on behalf of the Chair/Director, the Vanier Program is explicit that the letter must clearly indicate that the signee has authority to nominate candidates to the Vanier CGS program. If the candidate is selected by the Graduate Awards Committee, this letter of nomination will be uploaded to ResearchNet and will be forwarded to the Vanier CGS agency along with the application package.

**The nomination letter is due** electronically to the Graduate Awards Officers (grschol@uoguelph.ca) October 4, 2017.

The nomination letter should be a maximum of two pages in length, and is the Institution’s opportunity to outline for the selection committee what makes the nominee unique. It should give the committee context for the nominee’s achievements – outline how the nominee is exceptional and how the institution both fosters and benefits from the student’s research at the institution. Address the following points:

1. Rationale for the choice of candidate:
   * Highlight the factors used to determine why the student is deserving of a Vanier CGS. Clearly articulate the excellence of the candidate according to the three selection criteria: [academic excellence](http://www.vanier.gc.ca/en/selection_committee_guide-comite_selection_lignes.html#b01), [research potential](http://www.vanier.gc.ca/en/selection_committee_guide-comite_selection_lignes.html#b02) and [leadership (potential and demonstrated ability)](http://www.vanier.gc.ca/en/selection_committee_guide-comite_selection_lignes.html#b03). Ensure that the letters focus on leadership potential and demonstrated abilities.
2. Research training environment:
   * Elaborate on the appropriateness of the supervisor in terms of resources, funding, publications, their research and training environment. Elaborate on the funding, facilities/resources and personnel that will be made available to support the candidate as they carry out their proposed research and develop their leadership potential.
   * Discuss how the research interests/background of the student and supervisor align with the institution’s priorities (Ensure that claim about uniqueness of the research environment are accurate.)
   * Discuss how the supervisor’s commitment will be available to support the candidate in furthering their professional and leadership development.
   * If known, comment on the research group and/or faculty with whom the candidate will interact and how the Canadian institution will support the development of the candidate's leadership potential. If unknown, please address the reasons behind why the candidate has not selected a supervisor and research environment.
3. Rationale of recruiting the candidate:
   * Outline how the institution's research environment will foster the student’s research interest and Leadership skills.
   * Elaborate on the commitment from the department or university as to what kind of benefits they will offer the potential scholar.
4. Recruitment and student mobility:
   * Comment on how the institution’s nomination of the candidate promotes the recruitment of new foreign or Canadian candidates to Canadian institutions.
   * If the candidate has completed a previous degree within your institution, provide an explanation as to why it is in the candidate's best interest to stay at the same institution (i.e. research/paid institution (or its affiliate), supervisor or co-supervisor, availability of specialized equipment).

## Need Assistance?

Please email the Graduate Awards Officer in the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies at [grschol@uoguelph.ca](mailto:grschol@uoguelph.ca) or call Kristin Gibson at x.53481.