

NSERC Discovery Grant Information Session

Research Services Office Information Session

June 24, 2025



UNIVERSITY OF
GUELPH

What We'll Cover Today

- 1) Welcome
- 2) NSERC Discovery Grant program overview
- 3) Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Research and Training Plan
- 4) DG Evaluation Committee Panel Discussion
- 5) Q&A Session

Note: slides will be circulated after the webinar.



NSERC DG Upcoming Deadlines

Notice of Intent (NOI)

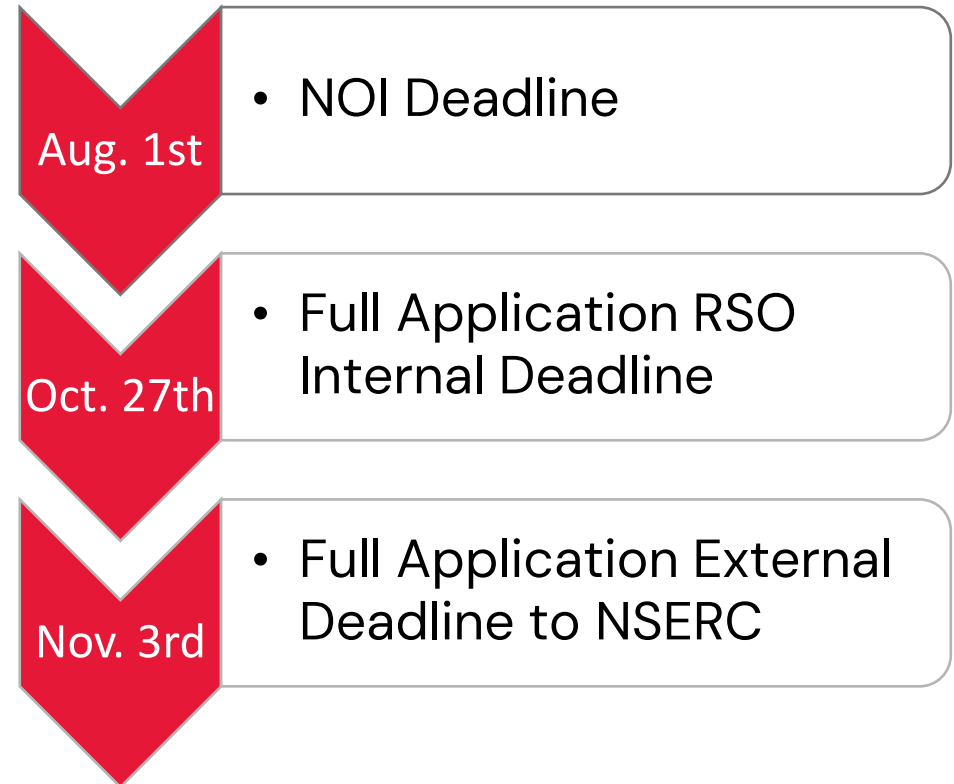
- External deadline: August 1, 2025
- Internal deadline: N/A
 - Faculty submit NOI directly to NSERC through the [Research Portal](#).
 - The NOI is mandatory when applying for a Discovery Grant. Applicants who do not submit an NOI cannot submit a full application.
 - For questions regarding eligibility to apply/hold Tri-Agency funding, please consult your CRM, who will engage with RSO, as needed, to verify eligibility.

*Please review the [Research Alert](#) for additional details.

NSERC DG Upcoming Deadlines

Full Application

- External deadline: November 3, 2025
- Internal deadline: October 27, 2025
 - Please consult with your CRM regarding any College-specific internal deadlines.
 - Faculty member submits a signed OR-5 to RSO and also clicks “submit” in the [Research Portal](#) so the Application appears on the research admin server.
 - RSO reviews the application and provides feedback to faculty member. Faculty members have the can make edits to the application and re-submit in a timely manner.
 - RSO formally submits to NSERC.



Program Eligibility

Subject matter eligibility and funding from other sources:

- Must be eligible under NSERC's mandate.
- Your DG research program must be distinct from research supported by CIHR or SSHRC.
- Other sources of funding for DG research should not overlap with CIHR or SSHRC funding.

Eligibility criteria for faculty:

- Must hold an academic appointment for the duration of the award.
- The position cannot be under the direction of another individual and must authorize the supervision of students.
- NEW since 2023 – [faculty cannot hold both a DH and DG at the same time](#).
- College Research Managers can be consulted for determining eligibility to apply.

Proposed expenditures:

- For full details on eligible expenses, please review the Tri-agency guide on Financial Administration.

For program eligibility criteria, please visit [Discovery Grants program webpage](#).

Research Security Considerations

Tri-agency guidance on the Policy on Sensitive Technology Research and Affiliations of Concern (STRAC Policy)

As of 2024, grant applications involving research that advances a sensitive technology research area will not be funded if any of the researchers involved in activities supported by the grant are currently affiliated with, or in receipt of funding or in-kind support from, a named research organization.

- Should you have any questions regarding the implementation of the STRAC Policy, please reach out to NSERC at the following email: researchsecurity@nserc-crsng.gc.ca.
- Internally, at the University of Guelph, if you require assistance in assessing if your research falls in an area aimed to advance a sensitive technology research area, please connect with our Research Security team at: research.security@uoguelph.ca.

Research Security Considerations

Sensitive Technology Research Areas

Will the proposed research activities supported by this grant aim to advance any of the listed sensitive technology research areas?(required) ☐ Yes ☒ No

Note: If you answered 'Yes' to the above question, you must complete and attach attestation forms to your grant application — in the STRAC Attestation Attachment section — to comply with the policy.

If you select Yes, you must complete and attach an [attestation form](#) to your grant application – in the STRAC Attestation Attachment section – to comply with the policy. In accordance with the [Policy on Sensitive Technology Research and Affiliations of Concern](#), all researchers involved in the activities supported by a research grant that aims to advance a Sensitive Technology Research Area (STRA) must review the [List of Named Research Organizations](#).

NSERC DG Application Overview

1. Summary of Proposal
2. Proposed Expenditures
3. Relationship to Other Research Support
4. HQP Training Plan
 - Training Philosophy, Research Training Plan
5. Past Contributions to HQP Training
 - Training Environment, HQP Awards & Research Contributions, Outcomes & Skills Gained by HQP
6. Most Significant Contributions (*up to 5 contributions*)
7. Additional Information on Contributions
8. Activity details
 - Certification requirements, impact assessment (research outdoors), Sensitive Technology Research Areas, Research subject codes, etc.
9. Eligibility Profile
10. Proposal (*5 pages maximum*)
 - Recent progress, Objectives, Literature Review, Methodology, Impact
 - For more details, see the [‘Attachments’ section on the NSERC webpage](#).
11. References (*2 pages maximum*)
12. Budget Justification (*2 pages maximum*)
13. Sample of Research Contributions (*maximum 4 contributions in last 6 years*)
14. NSERC CCV



Applicant Resources

The following resources can be utilized throughout the development of your application:

General Information

- [Discovery Grants Information Centre](#)
- [NSERC Live Q&A Sessions](#)
 - [Live Q&A session June 25, 2025 | 1 – 2:30 pm](#)
 - [Live Q&A session July 8, 2025 | 1 – 2:30 pm](#)
- [Instructions for Completing an Application](#)
- [Completing the NSERC Canadian Common CV \(CCV\)](#)
- [Resource videos for NOI & full application](#)
- [Guidelines on the assessment of contributions to research, training and mentoring](#)
- [Merit Indicators](#)
- [Peer Review Manual](#)
- [Policy and Guidelines on Contributions to Research and Training](#)





IEDI in Research

Joanne Garcia-Moores
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Presentation Outline

- I. Learning Outcomes
- II. Part 1: EDI in Research Practice
 - i. Training Philosophy & Research Training
 - ii. 5 Action Areas
- III. *Part 2: EDI in Research Design*
 - i. *Sex, Gender, Dimensions of Diversity*
 - ii. *Methodology – SAGER principles*
- IV. *Self-Directed Learning Resources*





Part 1: EDI in Research Practice



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Training Philosophy & Research Training

- EDI principles must be integrated into your training philosophy and planning
- You will describe your approach to training HQP, such as mentoring, and training and development opportunities provided
- Include an overview and examples of your understanding of some of the challenges and barriers faced by under-represented groups participating in your field of research
- Identify how your training philosophy and plans will help address these barriers
- Ex. Lack of diverse mentors can lead to a sense of not belonging for under-represented groups
 - actions could relate to proactive recruitment of post-doctoral scholars to help offer mentorship to students; offering additional one-to-one mentorship support to trainees and providing information about support services and affinity groups on campus

Training Philosophy & Research Training

- Build EDI into your philosophy and plan considering the following 5 action areas:
 1. Self-reflection
 2. Understanding Barriers to Equity
 3. Creating and Sustaining a Safe and Inclusive Culture
 4. Recruitment and Hiring
 5. Understanding Social Context and Social Issues
- Do not include any demographic information about your current or past HQP – instead describe your fair and equitable recruitment, hiring, onboarding and retention practices



Part 2: EDI in Research Design



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Key Definitions – Sex, Gender, Diversity

- **Sex** – Refers to a set of biological attributes in humans and animals. It is primarily associated with physical and physiological features including chromosomes, gene expression, hormone levels and function, and reproductive/sexual anatomy. Sex is usually categorized as female or male but there is variation in the biological attributes that comprise sex and how those attributes are expressed (CIHR 2019).
- **Gender** – Refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, expressions and identities of girls, women, boys, men, and gender diverse people. It influences how people perceive themselves and each other, how they act and interact, and the distribution of power and resources in society. Gender identity is not confined to a binary (girl/woman, boy/man) nor is it static; it exists along a continuum and can change over time. There is considerable diversity in how individuals and groups understand, experience and express gender through the roles they take on, the expectations placed on them, relations with others and the complex ways that gender is institutionalized in society (CIHR 2019).
- **Dimensions of diversity** include, but are not limited to: race, language, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, disability, neurodivergence, physical appearance, religious beliefs, political beliefs or other ideologies, ancestry, culture, geographic background

Methodology

- Follow the Sex and Gender Equity in Research (SAGER) Guidelines for research where research subjects are differentiated by sex and/or gender. Find a printable version here: [SAGER PRINCIPLES](#)
- The SAGER guidelines were first published in 2016 to address the fact that sex and gender differences are often overlooked in research design, study implementation and scientific reporting, as well as general science communication (Heidari et al., 2016).
- WHO adopted the SAGER guidelines in 2023 as reporting of sex and gender data has continued to be sporadic and suboptimal (Heidari et al., 2024).
- SAGER guidelines promote complete and routine reporting of disaggregated data and encourage the inclusion of sex and gender dimensions in research design, data collection, analysis, and publication.

EDI in Research: Key Self-Directed Learning Resources – Spring 2025

- [NSERC – NSERC guide on integrating equity, diversity and inclusion considerations in research](#)
 - *New* IEDI in Research CourseLink – self-directed learning and any “Action Tips”
 - Log in to [CourseLink](#)
 - Click the **Self Registration** link on the navbar and find the **IEDI for Researchers** link to register. After registering a tile for the course will appear under **My Courses** and it will be easy to exit and re-enter.
- [Main Webpage: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Research | Office of Research \(uoguelph.ca\)](#)
 - Key definitions, FAQs, Resources & Links
 - [Sex, Gender and Diversity – Research Design Questionnaire](#)
- [EDI Barriers in STEM: Resources List | Office of Research \(uoguelph.ca\)](#)
 - Annotated bibliography of references on EDI barriers in STEM
- Sex and Gender Equity in Research (SAGER) Guidelines where research subjects are differentiated by sex and/or gender. Find a printable version here: [SAGER PRINCIPLES](#)

IEDI CourseLink

CourseLink

[ePortfolio](#)[Locker](#)[Self Registration](#)[CourseLink Help](#)

GRRWT	Graduate Resources Research Writing Integrity
Gryphons_at_Work_HR_01	Gryphons at Work - Department Admin Training
Gryphons_at_Work_HR_02	Gryphons at Work - People Manager Training
Gryphons_at_Work_HR_03	Gryphons at Work - Recruiting and Onboarding Training
identity_unconscious_bias_internal	Identity and Unconscious Bias at Work
IEDI_Researchers	IEDI for Researchers
InnovationToolkit_Open	Innovation Toolkit
Introduction_to_Research_Security	Introduction to Research Security (Research Security Centre)
IP_Education_Program	Intellectual Property Education Program - Foundations



Panel Discussion

Panel Discussion

Our panel includes the following current DG Evaluation Group Committee Members:

- **Dr. Ian Tetlow, Professor, Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology**
 - 1502 – Biological Systems and Functions
- **Dr. Michele Oliver, Professor, School of Engineering**
 - 1509 – Civil, Industrial and Systems Engineering (Co-chair)
- **Dr. Asim Biswas, Professor and Canada Research Chair (T1), OAC Chair in Soils and Precision Agriculture, School of Environmental Sciences**
 - 1506 – Geosciences (Co-chair)

Moderator:

- **Dr. Monica Cojocaru, Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies, College of Engineering and Physical Sciences, & Professor, Department of Mathematics and Statistics**
 - 1508 – Mathematics and Statistics



RSO Contacts

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Please also consult your College Research Manager

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Thank You



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Q&A Session – Compiled notes

- Citing EDI references is now required by NSERC. Is this a type of support provided by RSO? For example, literature on female under-representation in Engineering and what approaches work. It would be very helpful if we could get expert advice on credible references.
 - [EDI Barriers in STEM: Resources List](#) Here is an annotated bibliography created that contains a useful set of literature that can be used to help support your analysis of general and group-specific barriers also with some discipline specific articles
- In relation to having particular HQP in mind and not contradicting HQP hiring practices, should an applicant highlight that an earlier version of their hiring practices helped recruit those HQP in mind, but they are now augmenting/improving their HQP hiring practices with what they learned.
 - If you already carried out your recruitment, why not talk about other elements of EDI practice? Practices of inclusion, for example, such as inclusive meeting protocols like making sure each trainee has an opportunity to contribute their insights. Including EDI in Research training as a part of the professional development of your trainee. For example, ask them to do the IEDI in Research CourseLink course and obtain the certificate. Then facilitate a team discussion to generate ideas related to both the way the team works together and the research design. You might come up with some innovative ideas that could contribute to the directions of your overall program.
- How are EDI practices in HQP training being assessed differently now compared to previous years? What constitutes an 'exceptional' EDI plan for training HQP in 2025 and beyond?
 - The merit indicator grid is a good point of reference for seeing what constitutes 'exceptional' in terms of HQP training and EDI: https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/doc/Professors-Professeurs/DG_Merit_Indicators_eng.pdf.
 - Here are some other resources with some great examples of best practices for EDI in training plans:
 - [FAQ on the evaluation of the HQP criterion](#).
 - The Canada Research Chairs' (CRC's) [Equity, diversity and inclusion: A best practices guide for recruitment, hiring and retention](#); and
 - NFRF's [Best practices in equity, diversity and inclusion in research](#).

Q&A Session – Compiled notes

- Should the summary in the NOI speak about skills and background? This is not mentioned in the instructions for writing the summary.
 - As the NOI is not adjudicated and used as a tool by NSERC to ensure your application falls within the correct evaluation group, (noting that the summary is also limited to 6,000 characters), we recommend focusing on the following for the summary of proposal in the NOI: 1) state the objectives of the proposed research program, 2) summarize the scientific approach, 3) highlight the novelty and expected significance of the work to a field(s) in the natural sciences and engineering. Should your proposed research program change substantially from the time you submit your NOI to the time you submit your application, please contact the program officer responsible for the evaluation group you have selected.
- I'm balancing two very separate programs - one with NSERC and one with CIHR. Can CIHR-related research be used to support the Merit of the Researcher section(s) in the NSERC renewal application?
 - If you hold CIHR funding, you will need to include it under Relationship to Other Research Support, and note it is conceptually different than your NSERC DG program (and also outline there is no budgetary overlap). You can speak to it to support merit of researcher, but it should not be the main focus and needs to be seen as completely distinct from your NSERC DG program. If you currently hold, or have applied for, research support from the [Canadian Institutes of Health Research](#) (CIHR) or the [Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada](#) (SSHRC), you must provide a summary page and budget page for each of these proposals. Failure to provide these documents will result in an incomplete application, which will be rejected.
 - From a previous review committee member: yes, you could highlight this as it goes to show overall, that your work is very important.
- Would you ever see anything other than a journal/book publication in the most significant contributions section? (in context of discussing alternate ways to show impact and significance of your work)
 - Yes, sometimes there could be a graduate text book filling in a gap in teaching knowledge in your niche area of research