Transcript: CGRS-M, Part 2

[Introduction]

Welcome to the Canada Graduate Research Scholarship – Master’s (CGRS-M) part 2 in our series: application advice and support.

Learn more in this 15-minute recording presented by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

While every effort has been made to provide accurate information, please refer to the CGRS-M program material as your primary source of information.

# Accessibility Statement

For a copy of these slides and a transcript of this recording, please visit the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) [Canada Graduate Scholarship – Master’s website](https://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/finances/search-funding/award-pages/canada-graduate-scholarships---masters.php). Content is available in Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Word, and other formats upon request.

I previously circulated a 10-minute recorded presentation called Learn about the scholarship: the images on this slide are screenshots of that presentation and the transcript which are on our website. If you haven’t already done so, please review that material before you submit your application.

If you experience barriers or would like to provide feedback, please email me at [lpender@uvic.ca](mailto:lpender@uvic.ca)

# What is the CGRS-M?

The CGRS-M is a $27,000 award offered by Canada’s research councils that are also known as the Tri-Councils or the Tri-Agencies.

* natural sciences and engineering research council (NSERC)
* social sciences and humanities research council (SSHRC)
* Canadian institutes of health research (CIHR)

# Am I eligible?

The award is open to:

* Domestic students: this means Canadian citizens, Permanent Residents, & Protected Persons
* You must have completed no more than 12 months of full time study in your master’s program as of December 31. Students usually apply in the last year of their undergraduate program or the first year of their master’s program.
* You may also be eligible if you are transferring from a master’s to a doctoral program, or if you enrolled in a doctoral program directly from a bachelor’s degree, or if you are nearing completion of your master’s and will continue on to a doctoral program: if you fall into any of those scenarios please contact us to confirm your eligibility

There are two aspects of your eligibility for which you may need to consult with the Graduate Advisor in your department. If you are in the early stages of applying for grad school you may not have been in touch with a Graduate Advisor yet. At UVic, just like each department has an undergraduate advisor, they also have a graduate advisor and you can find their contact information on each department’s website.

* Your master’s program must include a significant research component that leads to the completion of a thesis, dissertation, major research project, scholarly publication, performance, recital or exhibit. If you are in a non-thesis program or are otherwise unsure, please consult with your Graduate Advisor
* You must have a first class GPA in each of your last two years of full time study. At UVic, this means that your GPA for the last 2 years is 7.0 or higher. Any exception to this requirement will need the approval of your Graduate Advisor later on in the review process. Since the application will take up your time and energy, if your GPA is less than 7.0, you may want to consult with the Graduate Advisor to determine whether it’s a good investment of your time. Each department will be different: some may routinely support applications with lower GPAs and some may only do so in special circumstances. If you do have a special circumstance (e.g. your GPA is usually above 7 but you had a difficult year due to a health issue or family emergency), in a few minutes I’ll mention where you can note that in your application.

# How do I apply?

Follow the instructions for the application and for the Canadian Common CV which is a standardized academic resume. There are different versions of the Canadian Common CV, so ensure you select the CGRS-M version.

# What are the Selection Criteria?

Selection criteria are posted on the CGRS-M website. You should familiarize yourself with this information so that you are aware of how reviewers will evaluate your application:

Fifty per cent of your score is based on **academic excellence**. This includes your transcripts, GPA, and scholarships and awards.

Thirty per cent of your score is based on **research potential**. This includes your research proposal, and relevant experience and training.

Twenty per cent of your score is based on **personal characteristics and interpersonal skills**. This includes leadership and project involvement (such as helping to organize conferences and events), involvement in academic life, volunteerism and community engagement, and the ability to communicate theoretical or scientific concepts clearly, both verbally and in writing.

# Your Application Strategy

The diagram on this slide is a circular flowchart in which three sections labelled **selection criteria**, **your qualifications**, and **application, Canadian Common CV, and references** are in a continuous feedback loop.

As you prepare your application, I encourage you to think of it not just as filling in different section of a form, but as a way to tell your story. Work back and forth between the selection criteria, your qualifications, and the different sections of the application to ensure that all of your relevant qualifications and experiences are reflected somewhere in the application. Consult with your academic supervisor, your referees, and your coaches about how best to highlight your qualifications and which will have the greatest impact.

Remember that you are providing **evidence** to reviewers to demonstrate how you meet the selection criteria,

# Personal Data

At the beginning of the application are a series of self-identification questions. You must complete this section, but you may select “I prefer not to answer.” This information is not available to UVic staff, your referees, or to reviewers

The Tri-Agencies have two equity initiatives:

* The Indigenous Scholars Award and Supplement initiative provides funding as part of the Tri-Agency commitment to support research by and with Indigenous peoples.
* And to address the disproportionate under-funding of Black scholars, the Tri-Agencies have dedicated resources for awards for Black student researchers.

In order to be considered for these programs, students are invited to self-identify in the person profile section and to follow any additional instructions within the application.

Referees can view your application, you cannot view your reference assessments.

# Application

The CGRS-M program material provides step-by-step instructions so I’m not going to repeat information found on the website; instead I will identify a few things about the application that I would like to highlight:

* **Funding supplements**: are top-up funding, in addition to the $27,000. Some of these you apply for within the application form – you can read about these in the application instructions. For others, you are automatically considered based on the key words section of your application: to find a list, go to [postgraduate programs](https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/PG-CS/index_eng.asp) and scroll down to postgraduate supplements. Each supplement will provide a list of associated key words that you can list in your application, as relevant.
* **Special circumstances**. This is an optional section where you may describe any circumstances that have affected your academic performance (e.g. your GPA) or productivity. Be clear, brief, and provide a timeframe. This section should provide some additional context for your reviewers, but you don’t want it to become too detailed so that it becomes a distraction from the focus of your application which is your research proposal and CCV.
* **Outline of proposed research & bibliography**: these are attachments that you will upload separately. Your Outline of Proposed Research is the core of your application. This important information was addressed by the coaches during the workshops so I will just provide a few technical comments here.
  + The outline of proposed research is a maximum of one page. For this reason you may want to use a citation style that saves space (e.g. avoid long strings of in-text citations). Ensure you meet the presentation standards for things like font size and page margins.
  + For your bibliography you may use any style appropriate to your discipline, and remember that your bibliography is also an opportunity to demonstrate awareness of relevant literature.
  + Enhance readability with way-finding headings and use of bold and underlining, or numbering. Don’t provide your reviewers with a wall of text.
  + The outline of proposed research and bibliography are a maximum of one page each.
  + Remember to write for your audiences: your department (subject matter experts) and the multi-discliplinary campus-wide review committee. The campus review committee are multi-disciplinary, but they are organized around each research council: for example, if you submit an application to SSHRC, your reviewers will be UVic faculty members whose research falls within the SSHRC mandate.
* **Canadian Common CV**. You will populate the CCV with content from your resume to demonstrate how you meet the selection criteria. If there are section of the CCV that don’t apply to you, you can leave them blank. Be strategic and think about what you want to emphasize: don’t let your important qualifications get lost in a list of less-relevant activities. Record your CCV confirmation number and attach it to your application before you submit.
* **Reference Assessments**: You need two references: one should be from your academic supervisor and the other is typically from a previous instructor. If you would like advice about choosing your references, consult with your academic supervisor, the Graduate Advisor in your department, or one of our coaches.
* Contact your references early. Provide them with a copy of your draft application, your CCV, and the CGRS-M [instructions for referees](https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/ResearchPortal-PortailDeRecherche/Instructions-Instructions/CGSM_REF-BESCM_REF_eng.asp). The instructions are important because referees must provide their recommendation by filling in a form and responding to questions, not by uploading a letter in a style of their choosing.
* Think about working with your referees as a dialogue or a collaboration, not a one-time request. Consult with your referees about how best to highlight your qualifications.
* When you enter your referees contact information into the application, you will be asked to set a deadline for their reference assessments. It’s **very important** that you set a deadline well in advance of the December 1st deadline. You can’t submit your application unless both your references are complete – and technical problems do occur – so I recommend giving them a deadline of at least one week prior to December 1st. Consult with your referees about a deadline that works with their schedule and other commitments.

# Transcripts

It is very important that your transcripts meet both the CGRS-M requirements, and the requirements for the institution you are applying to. You can find the detailed instructions at the links provided on this slide.

If you are applying to hold your CGRS-M at another institution, or you have listed more than one institution in your application, you should review the transcript instructions at each university and meet the strictest requirements.

If you don’t meet the transcript requirements, you risk having your application disqualified: I can’t emphasize this enough. Please use the Transcript Checklist for UVic Applicants to help you meet the requirements.

Please contact our office with questions. We are also available to help you review your transcript package provided it is well in advance of the application deadline.

# Technical Advice

* Save your work frequently. Each section of the application will time out after 20 minutes even if you are actively typing.
* The portal will be slower near the deadline: remember this is a national portal with thousands of applications being submitted to universities across the country
* Technical support is through CGRS-M, not UVic. They advise that requests for support may take 48 hours or more. Technical problems occur every year. Note that the December 1st deadline is a Monday, so technical support may or may not be available on the 2 weekend days prior. For this reason, I recommend that you should aim to submit well in advance of the deadline.
* Contact information for the Accessibility help desk is posted in the application instructions available here at the link
* CIHR applicants will need a PIN: allow at least 1 business day for processing
* No changes can be made once you submit your application
  + Review the List for a complete application provided in the link: ensure your application is complete.
  + Review your transcripts and – if you are applying to hold your CGRS-M at UVic, use our transcript checklist.
* No extensions are possible. UVic has no ability to offer extensions: the portal is managed by the Tri-Agencies and will close at the deadline.

# Timeline

* You should be aiming to have a first draft of your application as soon as possible. You should also contact your referees and order official transcripts.
* Allow time for feedback, revisions, and carefully checking your transcripts.
* Submit by the deadline and note the time zone: 8:00pm Eastern is 5:00pm Pacific.

Campus review of applications will take place January to March: departments will review applications and nominate the strongest applications to move forward to campus-wide review by a multi-disciplinary committee.

Award offers will be made via the Research Portal on April 1st. If you listed more than one host institution in your application, you may receive more than one offer, but you can only accept one offer and you must hold the award at that institution.

You can choose a start date of May or Sept 2026 or Jan 2027 to begin receiving your scholarship payments.

# Contact and resources

The Faculty of Graduate Studies provides support throughout the application process, and your Coaches can provide advice and feedback.

The CGRS-M website includes instructions, tutorial videos, and a help desk for accessibility and technical support.

You can find details at the links provided.

# French Research Assistance Service

A new resource this year is support available through the French Research Assistance Service (SARF). If you are preparing a CGRS-M application in French and submitting to CIHR or SSHRC, please contact Donja Roberts [scholoff@uvic.ca](mailto:scholoff@uvic.ca) for information about receiving feedback in French from experienced reviewers. This service is not available to NSERC applicants this year.

# Coach presentations

Coach presentations at our workshops are not recorded, but the presentation slides from the October 7th workshop are available on the following pages. Please note there is no audio for these slides. This concludes the presentation. Thank you.