Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council Doctoral Scholarship Application Workshop September 4, 2019

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- Kathy McCarthy, Scholarship Officer
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One application, two awards

When you complete the SSHRC doctoral scholarship application you will be considered for:

- Joseph-Armand Bombardier CGS Doctoral Scholarship, $35,000 for up to 36 months; recipients must do a doctoral degree at a Canadian university

- SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship, $20,000 for up to 48 months; recipients may do a doctoral degree at an institution in Canada or go abroad as long as they have completed a BA or MA at a Canadian institution

Eligibility – Subject Matter

There are three federal research councils:

- Natural Sciences & Engineering Research Council (NSERC)
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)
- Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)

-You need to apply to the correct council which is determined by the subject matter of your research

-If you are not sure, talk to a Scholarship Officer

-No appeals based on subject matter

Eligibility – Applicant Criteria

To be eligible to apply, an applicant must:

- be a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada, as of the application deadline date;
- submit only one doctoral award application in a given academic year. Nominations to the Vanier CGS program do not count towards this limit;
- not have already received a doctoral-level scholarship or fellowship from CIHR, NSERC or SSHRC.
- For SSHRC CGSD ($35,000 PhD must be in Canada) have completed **no more than 24 months** of full-time study in their doctoral program by December 31 of the year of application (no more than 36 months if transferred directly from Bachelors to a PhD or enrolled in a joint program, e.g., MD/PhD, MA/PhD);
- For SSHRC Fellowship ($20,000 PhD can be done in Canada or abroad) have completed **no more than 48 months** of full-time study in their doctoral program by December 31 of the year of application.

Eligibility - A Few Notes

- You do not need a first class GPA to apply for a SSHRC doctoral scholarship
  - Grades are considered in the evaluation of applications but are not an eligibility requirement and is not the only measure of academic excellence
- An eligible doctoral program must include a significant, autonomous research component that leads to the completion of a thesis, major research project, dissertation, scholarly publication, performance, recital and/or exhibit that is merit/expert-reviewed at the institutional level as a requirement for completion of the program.
- Joint programs with a professional degree (e.g., MD/PhD, DVM/PhD, JD/PhD, MBA/PhD) as well as clinically oriented programs of study, including clinical psychology, are eligible if they have a significant autonomous research component as described above.

Selection Criteria

SSHRC Selection Criteria has changed

- Prior to 2019 SSHRC applications were assessed on the basis of academic merit but without weighted criteria.

New Criteria

50% - Research ability and potential

50% - Relevant experiences and achievements obtained within and beyond academia

Selection Criteria – Research Ability and Potential

- Quality of research proposal
  - specific, focused, and feasible research question(s) and objective(s)
  - clear description of the proposed methodology
  - significance and expected contributions to research
- Relevant training, such as academic training, lived experience and traditional teachings
- Research experience and achievements relative to the applicant's stage of study, lived experience and knowledge systems
- Quality of contributions and extent to which they advance the field of research. Contributions may include: publications, patents, reports, posters, abstracts, monographs, presentations, creative outputs, knowledge translation outputs, community products, etc.
- Demonstration of sound judgment and ability to think critically
- Demonstration of responsible and ethical research conduct, including honest and thoughtful inquiry, rigorous analysis, commitment to safety and to the dissemination of research results, and adherence to the use of professional standards
- Enthusiasm for research, originality, initiative, autonomy, relevant community involvement and outreach
- The ability or potential to communicate theoretical, technical and/or scientific concepts clearly and logically in written and oral formats

Selection Criteria – Relevant experience & achievements obtained within and beyond academia

- Scholarships, awards and distinctions (amount, duration and prestige)
- Academic record, such as:
  - Transcripts
  - Duration of previous studies
  - Program requirements and courses pursued
  - Course load
  - Relative standing in program (if available)
- Professional, academic, and extracurricular activities as well as collaborations with supervisors, colleagues, peers, students and members of the community, such as:
  - teaching, mentoring, supervising and/or coaching
  - managing projects
  - participating in science and/or research promotion
  - community outreach, volunteer work and/or civic engagement
  - chairing committees and/or organizing conferences and meetings
  - participating in departmental or institutional organizations, associations, societies and/or clubs

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion - EDI

- In 2018 federal councils began collecting demographic information about applicants. When you first apply for a SSRHC doctoral scholarship you will be asked to "…self-identify with information on age, gender, Indigenous identity, and status as a member of a visible minority group or person with a disability."
- This information is collected to guide federal councils EDI activities and is not visible on the application, nor is it made available to reviewers.
- Reviewers, at UVic or at federal level do not see personal information
- You may chose, "I prefer not to answer" for every question
- If you applied to SSHRC before you may not be asked to answer this again, but you can access your previous answers by clicking on My Account in the SSHRC On-line System

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion - EDI

- Indigenous students may self-identify, as well as indicate that they are willing to be included beyond UVic's quota of applications to be submitted to the national competition
- Must select Option for Self-Identified Indigenous Applicants, in the Application Profile section of the application
- If this section is checked FGS Scholarship Officers (SLO) will be able to see that and can therefore submit the application over and above UVic quota, but the information is not shared with reviewers
- Applications must still meet merit requirements

The Process

UVic's quota is 53 and we receive more applications than our quota

- On campus adjudication:
  - Students complete the application in the SSHRC On-line System including the application sections, attachments and the Curriculum Vitae and must submit the application electronically no later than **4:30 pm Wednesday October 2**
  - All applications submitted by the deadline will be accessed by FGS SLO through the SSHRC On-line System
  - FGS SLO will verify completeness, eligibility, of the applications and be in touch with you by email if there are things you need to correct (Oct. 2 – 16)
  - Applications are sent to academic units for review and ranking, and then returned to FGS – your department may withdraw your application if they think it is not competitive, they will notify you if that happens (Oct. 16 – 23)

The Process

- Applications are sorted into review groups and assigned to UVic faculty reviewers who read and score applications (Oct. 24 – Nov 8)
- A meeting will be held on November 18 to review faculty members' scores and select the final UVic nominees
- Top 53 will be submitted to SSHRC for federal level competition, a second multi-disciplinary committee of faculty from across Canada will select finalists.
- November 21 is the deadline for UVic to submit nominee applications for all three federal councils
- Results are announced by SSHRC in April 2020

How to Apply

- Application is through the SSHRC On-line System
- You need to register and then you can create, edit, and save your SSHRC application and your CV
- Remember your password
- Use the correct application form – if you are not sure contact a Scholarship Officer to verify
- Read the instructions completely and carefully
- Ask questions if you are not sure

References – Two Letters of Appraisal

- One referee should be very familiar with your research and abilities (i.e. current or previous research supervisor) and the other should be sufficiently familiar with your research and abilities to provide a meaningful commentary. If you are in a MA program now one letter should be from your MA supervisor
- If you are in a PhD program, one letter should be from PhD supervisor, and the second ideally from your MA supervisor
- Referee assessments must be done in the SSHRC On-line System
- Contact your referees early, and be very clear about what you need from them – you set a deadline in the SSHRC On-line System

References – Letter of Appraisal

Provide your referees with the following:

- a copy of your list of research contributions
- a copy of your program of study
- a one-page resume of awards, conferences, etc.
- The SSHRC selection criteria
- The date you need them to complete the assessment by

Research Proposal - Max 2 Pages

If you are not currently enrolled in a doctoral degree program – ensure your text includes these required elements:

- clearly state your current level of study;
- give the title and a brief description of your master's thesis or research project, if applicable;
- identify the degree program that you will pursue, including any relevant courses, and provide an explanation for your choice; and
- provide an outline of your doctoral thesis or research project, including the research question(s), context, objectives, methodology and significance and expected contribution to the advancement of knowledge, and your special interests in the proposed area of research.

Research Proposal - Max 2 Pages

If you are currently enrolled in a doctoral degree program - ensure your text includes these required elements:

- clearly state your current level of graduate study;
- indicate at what stage you are in your thesis/research project;
- provide the name of your supervisor of doctoral studies, if known;
- provide an outline of your thesis or research project, including, for example, the research question(s), context, objectives, methodology and significance and expected contribution to the advancement of knowledge; and
- describe what you hope to accomplish during the award tenure and what will remain to be done before you obtain your degree.

Research Proposal Practical Tips

AVOID:

- the use of discipline specific jargon, typos, run-on sentences, incomplete information, incorrect information
- editorializing, unduly negative criticism
- acronyms, unless you must refer to something multiple times, then spell it out the first time and use acronym to save space, for example,

  Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)
- highly technical terminology; if you use it you have to explain it and that will take up space
- remember that your proposal is being read by intelligent people who are not necessarily specialists in your area of study

Research Proposal - Make is Easy to Read (unlike this slide)

- Think about creative use of headlines, en-dots, subsections, **bold**, underlines, and *italics* – these make a page look attractive and create white space
- Adhere to the presentation standards established by SSHRC
- Don't be afraid to convey your enthusiasm for your research topic in your proposal; it can help make it polished and engaging
- Ask a friend who is not familiar with your research to read your proposal at a time when they really don't want to, and put a red X beside any sentence they had to read more than once
- Read your proposal out loud to yourself; if it doesn't "flow" when you read it, it will probably be difficult for someone else to read

Research Proposal – the Research Part

- State your research question clearly and early
- If your proposed research overlaps with areas funded by other granting agencies, justify your submission of this proposal to SSHRC (rather than to NSERC or CIHR),
- Explain why this matters to you and why it matters to your discipline, or beyond academia, explain how, policy implementations, social change, etc.
- Explain your research methods and your plan for implementing them
- If you are critiquing models and approaches in your discipline, be objective and respectful
- If you changed disciplines, or if your research has changed since your MA thesis, explain that and indicate that you are familiar with the new area
- If doing ‘research-creation” be sure to clearly describe the research component part of your project, applies primarily to Fine Arts PhD proposals
- Remember this is your research, not a summary of your supervisor’s work, or those who came before you

Research Proposal and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion - EDI

When writing your Research Proposal:

- If it is appropriate and true, indicate how your research addresses or examines elements of equity, diversity and inclusiveness
- Are they possible outcomes from your research that can support EDI
- If you can honestly include EDI elements, great but don’t force it

Bibliography & Citations – Max 5 Pages

- a bibliography for your proposed research (do not send publications or include endnotes)

- bibliographic details for all citations included in your program of study (ensure that these are clear and complete, to allow reviewers to locate the sources easily)

- Demonstrate that you are aware of foundational works in your area of research and study, while also up to date with current works

Research Contributions, Relevant Experience and Activities—maximum two pages

An attachment but with two parts:

- Research Contributions
- Applicant's Statement

These two categories relate directly to the Selection Criteria

- 50% - Research ability and potential
- 50% - Relevant experiences and achievements obtained within and beyond academia

Part I - Research Contributions

Be sure to refer to the SSHRC Instructions for appropriate headings for your research contributions, list your contributions as follows;

- In the left margin, identify refereed publications with an "R". A refereed work is assessed:
  - in its entirety—not merely an abstract or extract;
  - before publication; and
  - by appropriately independent, anonymous, qualified experts ("independent" in this context means at arm's length from the author).
- Specify your role in co-authored publications.
- For published contributions, provide complete bibliographic details as they appear in the original publication (including co-authors, title, publisher, journal, volume, date of publication, page numbers, number of pages, etc.).
- For publications in languages other than French or English, provide a translation of the title and the name of the publication.

Part II – Applicant's Statement

Relevant experience
Describe the research abilities that you have gained through your past research experience, including special projects, honours/master's thesis, co-op reports, etc. If you have relevant work experience, discuss the relevance of that experience to your proposed field of study/research and any benefits you gained from it.

This section may also be used to describe your training relative to your proposed research such as knowledge gained through lived experience and traditional teachings.

Relevant activities
Describe your participation in relevant professional, academic and extracurricular activities as well as collaborations with supervisors, colleagues, peers, students and members of the community, such as:

- teaching, mentoring, supervising and/or coaching
- managing projects
- participating in science and/or research promotion
- community outreach, volunteer work and/or civic engagement
- chairing committees and/or organizing conferences and meetings
- participating in departmental or institutional organizations, associations, societies and/or clubs

Allowable Inclusions – Max 1 page if applicable

- Explain gaps in your study, research, or professional life due to health, parental, career, family, or personal crisis
- Provide the relevant facts, and note how you have since moved forward
- Provide dates of any delays or interruptions
- Be “matter of fact” this is an explanation, not a plea for sympathy
- Reviewers will be asked to take allowable inclusions into consideration and so they will see this section

Supplements Justification & Joint/Special Initiatives – only if applicable

- Aileen D. Ross Fellowship
- Queen's Fellowship
- Department of National Defence MINDS Scholarship Initiative
- Sport Participation Research Initiative

Details on these are in the SSHRC instructions, if you qualify and are interested you will indicate so in the SSHRC application and must provide a one page justification per selection indicating how your research aligns with the supplement, joint/special initiative.

Presentation Standards –All Attachments

All attachments MUST adhere to SSHRC's general presentation standards:

- Body text in a minimum 12 pt Times New Roman font
- Single-spaced, with no more than 6 lines of type per inch
- All margins set at a minimum of 3/4 " or 1.87 cm

Pay attention to page limits, and electronic file attachment specifications noted in all relevant sections of the application

Transcripts

Up to date (meaning complete) official transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate studies must be uploaded including transcript that shows your current registration status – even if you are new and no grades are recorded yet

- Proves your months of study
- Proves your currents status
- Proves degrees completed

Transcripts in language other than English or French must be translated and a certified copy of the translation provided

You upload your transcripts; scan all transcripts into one PDF document, with one copy of the legend per transcript included

If you've taken a Leave of Absence or done Part Time Studies, it should show on your transcript and you need an official letter to confirm PT study or leaves, speak to SLO if you need a letter

Application Process and Deadline Section

- Applicants must click "Preview" and "Verify" for each page of their application as they complete it, and well in advance of the deadline (internal UVic deadline of October 2). SSHRC's online system will not accept applications that are incomplete (i.e., that contain unverified sections). If applicants make changes to a page, they must click "Verify" again for that page in order to confirm that SSHRC's online system will accept the new information when they submit their application. The criteria for final verification of the application as a whole may be stricter than for individual modules. Applicants may, therefore, need to adjust previously validated sections of the application. Note that validation only confirms that mandatory sections (including uploads and letters) have been completed; it does not validate application content.
- It is **the applicant's responsibility** to verify content and ensure all required application components (CV, two letters of appraisal, and all PDF attachments) have been submitted. All attachments, including letters of appraisal, must be provided in English or French only.

Use the Resources Available

- Scholarship Officers, Kathy McCarthy fgsaward@uvic.ca and Yvonne Rondeau scholoff@uvic.ca
- SSHRC Coaches: Dr. James Rowe, jkrowe@uvic.ca Dr. Adrienne Williams Boyarin, aboyarin@uvic.ca
- SSHRC Website – Application instructions, policy on subject matter eligibility, award holders guide
- Graduate Advisor in your academic unit