

To: Graduate Department/Program Heads, Graduate Coordinators,  
and Graduate Assistants  
From: Monica Corbett  
Date: August 31, 2012  
RE: **2013-2014 Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship (Vanier CGS) Competition**

**DEADLINE TO SGS:      OCTOBER 11, 2012**

The Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships (Vanier CGS) program is designed to attract and retain world-class doctoral students by offering them a significant financial award to assist them during their studies at Canadian universities. Vanier Scholars demonstrate leadership skills and a high standard of scholarly achievement in the social sciences and humanities, natural sciences and engineering, and health-related fields. Canadian and international students are eligible to be nominated for a Vanier CGS, which is valued at \$50,000 per year for up to three years.

The scholarships are administered by Canada's three federal granting agencies: the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (**CIHR**), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (**NSERC**) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (**SSHRC**). The three agencies have developed a joint, harmonized online application, application process and application deadline for applications to these scholarships.

The Vanier CGS can be held by doctoral students only. Applicants must be nominated by Queen's University to be sent forward to the national competitions. Only students who will have completed no more than 20 months of doctoral studies as of May 1, 2013 are eligible to apply. Both domestic and international students who meet all eligibility criteria may be considered. Nominees must have an overall average of at least A- or the equivalent in each of the last two years of full-time study or equivalent and must not have already received a doctoral-level scholarship or fellowship from CIHR, SSHRC or NSERC to undertake or complete a doctoral degree.

**REMINDERS AND REVISIONS:** Along with the details of this year's competition, universities have been asked to provide staff, faculty and applicants with the following new and revised information, and reminders about the competition.

**REVISION—Common CV section in ResearchNet**

The general appearance of the Vanier CV section (known as the Canadian Common CV), as well as the cv information requirements for applicants, has changed. For previous users of the Tri-Agencies' Canadian Common CV, some data may from previous cvs may appear. However applicants will require additional time for this important application section.

**REMINDER—The granting agencies' obligations under the Official Languages Act**

Under the *Official Languages Act*, federal institutions, including SSHRC, NSERC, and CIHR, must ensure respect for the rights of individual Canadians to receive services from federal institutions and organizations that provide services on their behalf, in the official language of their choice.

**REMINDER—International Recruitment**

The Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships program's aim is to attract students to Canada. Universities are encouraged to continue to use this opportunity to recruit new international doctoral students.

**REMINDER—Selecting the correct agency to apply to**

The candidate's proposed research project and doctoral program of study must be eligible within the mandate of the agency to which the nomination will be submitted. If in doubt, universities and applicants must consult with the agencies in advance of submitting the nomination. This particularly applies to nominations involving interdisciplinary fields of research, or research areas that span the mandates of two or more of the federal research granting agencies.

Information on CIHR's mandate and subject matter eligibility is available on CIHR's website:

<http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/22630.html>.

Information on NSERC's mandate and subject matter eligibility is available on NSERC's website:

[http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Eligibility-Admissibilite/students-etudiants\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Eligibility-Admissibilite/students-etudiants_eng.asp).

Information on SSHRC's mandate and subject matter eligibility is available on SSHRC's website:

[http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/apply-demande/background-reenseignements/selecting\\_agency-choisir\\_organisme\\_subventionnaire-eng.aspx](http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/apply-demande/background-reenseignements/selecting_agency-choisir_organisme_subventionnaire-eng.aspx).

Guidelines related to mandate are available on the following website:

<http://www.science.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=en&n=FEE7261A-1>.

**REMINDER—Current or Former Queen's University students**

Candidates who are nominated by a university at which they have completed a previous degree must provide a compelling rationale, in the *Special Circumstances* section, as to why they have chosen to remain or return.

In the *Institutional Nomination Letter*, the university is required to provide an explanation of how their choice of candidate respects the recruitment objectives of the Vanier CGS program. In the event that a university nominates a candidate who has completed a previous degree at their institution, the university must provide a rationale for why it is in the candidate's best interest to stay at or return to the same university.

**REVISION—University Allocations**

How the agencies determine each university's allocation (the number of nominations that can be sent forward each competition), is explained here:

[http://www.vanier.gc.ca/eng/allocations\\_by\\_university-liste\\_d\\_attributions.aspx](http://www.vanier.gc.ca/eng/allocations_by_university-liste_d_attributions.aspx)

The second set of the three-year allocations has been calculated for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 competitions (note the previous set of triennial allocations was calculated for the 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012 competitions).

**THIS YEAR'S COMPETITION:** Here are the details of the 2013-2014 competition and application processes.

**Online Application:** Applications to the Vanier CGS competition must be submitted online through *ResearchNet*. *ResearchNet* is an online system that provides a secure web portal to collect certain scholarship applications.

The online application to the 2013-2014 Vanier CGS competition is now available. To begin the process, applicants should go to the following website:

[http://www.vanier.gc.ca/eng/nomination\\_process-processus\\_de\\_mise\\_en\\_candidature.aspx#researchnet\\_instructions](http://www.vanier.gc.ca/eng/nomination_process-processus_de_mise_en_candidature.aspx#researchnet_instructions)

**Eligibility and Conditions:** For complete details on:

- who is eligible to apply,
- minimum academic eligibility standards for applicants,
- selecting the appropriate granting agency
- review process
- selection criteria
- all acceptance and eligibility conditions to **hold** a 2013-2014 Vanier CGS,

go here: <http://www.vanier.gc.ca/eng/eligibility-admissibilite.aspx>

## IMPORTANT NOTES

Applications submitted by candidates directly to one of the federal research granting agencies, instead of submitted through a Canadian university, will **not** be considered.

Only one university can submit a candidate's nomination to an agency. If more than one university is interested in nominating a particular candidate for an award, the candidate must choose the university that will submit his/her nomination. Multiple nominations will not be accepted and will be withdrawn from the competition. Additionally, nominations that are withdrawn will count towards the university's Vanier CGS allocation.

## DEPARTMENTAL INFORMATION, 2013-2014 VANIER CGS COMPETITION

**1. Queen's University Vanier CGS quota, 2013-2014:** This year, Queen's University will nominate the following number of applications, up to the maximum listed, to each agency's Vanier CGS competition:

NSERC Vanier CGS	CIHR Vanier CGS	SSHRC Vanier CGS
maximum of 7	maximum of 5	maximum of 7

Nationwide, only 167 Vanier CGS will be awarded between all 3 agencies in 2013-2014. This means the

competition will be intense. Department/programs should ensure that their most competitive, eligible student completes and submits their application, according to the required processes and deadlines.

For the 2013-2014 competition we will consider sending forward more than the maximum numbers of applications designated in the table above, if we receive applications from excellent candidates for the scholarship.

## **2. Minimum Academic Standards for Vanier CGS applicants:**

Applicants must have a first class average, that is, at least A-, or the equivalent, in EACH of the last two years of full time studies or equivalent. All studies counted toward the doctoral degree will be considered in the evaluation of eligibility. The granting agencies will count two months of part-time study as one month of full-time study. If the applicant was initially registered in a master's degree program and subsequently transfers via promotion to a doctoral degree program, or was admitted directly to the doctoral program, the agencies will not include the first 12 months of graduate study in the evaluation of eligibility.

**3. Selection Criteria:** As will be done at the national level, Queen's University's nominees for the national competition will be evaluated and selected based on the following 3 criteria, **which** will be weighted equally by the selection committees.

**1. Academic excellence**, as demonstrated by past academic results and by transcripts, awards and distinctions.

**2. Research potential**, as demonstrated by the candidate's research history, his/her interest in discovery, the proposed research and its potential contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the field, the potential benefit to Canadians, and any anticipated outcomes.

**3. Leadership** (potential and demonstrated ability), as defined by the following qualities:

i. Personal achievement:

- professional involvement in dance, arts, music, etc.;
- significant artistic achievement;
- recognized athletic achievement, especially in a leadership role;
- entrepreneurial achievement (startup company); and/or
- foreign travel and study.

ii. Involvement in academic life:

- mentoring/teaching;
- supervisory experience;
- involvement in student government and in the university community, including committees, teams, senate, boards, ethics committees, etc.;
- project management;
- roles in professional societies; and/or

- organization of conferences and meetings.

iii. Volunteerism/community outreach:

- community involvement in charity or not-for-profit organizations.

iv. Civic engagement:

- parliamentary page positions and internships;
- political activity; and/or
- elected positions.

v. Other

#### **4. Assessment of Leadership**

Leadership will be assessed against the following personal and social skills:

i. Goal achievement:

- has a clear vision of what he/she wants to accomplish;
- has developed his/her own vision for the future that defines a bold change for the community or a group, cause or organization; and
- strategizes how to achieve his/her desired outcomes and has specific, realistic and timely goals.

ii. Self-management:

- knows how to prioritize and complete tasks to reach his/her desired outcome, and is confident of success;
- establishes learning goals and tasks;
- reaches goals in an efficient, organized and innovative way; and
- is constantly working on self-improvement.

iii. Integrity:

- acts consistently with core ethical and personal values and convictions; and
- accepts personal accountability for the consequences of his/her actions and decisions.

iv. Other characteristics:

- is creative and takes initiative;
- is curious;
- deals well with complexity;
- has a strong sense of reality;
- is courageous;
- is strategic, a big-picture thinker;
- focuses on solutions, not problems;
- is capable of producing extraordinary results; and
- is able to solve real problems and create real products.

v. Social skills:

- knows how to develop positive relationships with a diverse range of people;
- cares about and listens to what others say, and gives feedback;
- knows how to motivate individuals;
- is persuasive;
- is supportive of his/her peers;
- is able to negotiate;

- is viewed as trustworthy, ethical and dependable;
- is well-respected; and
- displays mastery of presentation skills and public communications.

More information on leadership is available in the SSHRC-funded study, *Leadership at the Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Levels* ([http://www.vanier.gc.ca/eng/pdf/leadership\\_report\\_e.pdf](http://www.vanier.gc.ca/eng/pdf/leadership_report_e.pdf)).

## 5. Highlighting Leadership in a Vanier CGS Nomination

There are four opportunities in the nomination package for a Vanier CGS candidate to highlight their leadership potential:

1. Students must list their previous leadership activities/accomplishments according to the categories listed under “Selection Criteria” in the program description. Students are also asked to write a self-assessment detailing the impact of their activities and accomplishments, and how they judge themselves to be a potential Vanier CGS recipient and a leader in their research community.
2. The student’s referees are asked to comment on the student’s leadership potential and to elaborate on the impact of the activities and accomplishments mentioned in the self-assessment.
3. One of the three required letters of reference is to be a “leadership reference letter”. The leadership reference letter should be written by someone who knows the student in a non-academic capacity. It should describe how the student has demonstrated, and will potentially continue to demonstrate, leadership.
4. The Vanier nomination letter submitted by the university should also highlight the student’s leadership qualities—especially if the nominee is an international student, as some context may be required. The university must also address how it will support the nominee to help them fully develop their leadership potential.

**6. Letters of Reference:** Applicants identify the faculty members who will submit letters of reference on their behalf, via the process outlined in ResearchNet. The referees are contacted by ResearchNet, and submit their references online via ResearchNet. Helpful information for referees is available on the Vanier website here: [http://www.vanier.gc.ca/eng/referees\\_assessment-evaluations\\_des\\_repondants.aspx](http://www.vanier.gc.ca/eng/referees_assessment-evaluations_des_repondants.aspx)

**7. University’s Nomination Letter:** Along with the complete application, and transcripts, university must also provide a nomination letter for **each** student we nominate for a Vanier CGS. The letter must give a high-level rationale for why the university is nominating the student for a Vanier CGS. The letter is to be **two pages maximum**.

The Dean of Graduate Studies is required to sign the nomination letter. After October 11, 2012, the School of Graduate Studies will contact the departments/programs of the applicants, to request the required information for the nomination letter, for those applications being considered for nomination to the national competition. The department/program is to provide the required information as outlined below, upon submission of their

department/program nominee's or nominees' application(s), using the following headings:

**1. Rationale for the choice of nominee:**

-Highlight the factors used to determine why the student is potentially deserving of a Vanier scholarship.

-Include information that supports the three selection criteria: academic achievement, research potential and leadership qualities.

**2. Research training environment:**

-Highlight the key elements of the research training environment, such as research facilities and opportunities available to the nominee; and explain how the research interests of the student align with the university's priorities.

-If known, comment on the research group and/or faculty with whom the nominee will interact, and how the institution will support the development of the nominee's leadership potential.

**3. Potential benefits to the host institution of recruiting the nominee:**

-Comment on the incremental benefit the nominee will bring to the institution if awarded a Vanier scholarship (e.g., role model, networking, etc.).

**4. Recruitment and student mobility:**

-Comment on how the university's nomination of the candidate promotes the recruitment of new foreign or Canadian candidates to Canadian universities.

-If the candidate has completed a previous degree at Queen's, provide an explanation as to why the university believes it is in the candidate's best interest to stay at or return to the same university.

**8. Transcripts:** Applications must include ALL university transcripts. The agencies require original, official transcripts for all post secondary level studies. Universities are responsible for uploading the official transcripts of their nominees via ResearchNet. **Therefore the School of Graduate Studies must receive all transcripts of all students who submit a Vanier application, by October 11, 2012.**

**9. Adjudication Process:** Members of the School of Graduate Studies Fellowship Committee and/or Graduate Councils' Award Subcommittees will review and rank the applications received from their Council/Committee. Normally the reviewers will be the Graduate Council Chair, Associate Chair and the elected member to the Fellowship Committee and/or Award Subcommittees.

Then, the Associate Deans and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies will review the ranked applications and make the final decisions of which applications to send forward.

For details on how the applications are reviewed and adjudicated in the national competition, please go here: [http://www.vanier.gc.ca/eng/scholarship\\_details-renseignements\\_generaux.aspx](http://www.vanier.gc.ca/eng/scholarship_details-renseignements_generaux.aspx)

**10. Contact information:** The contact information for the Vanier CGS program is:

**Program information**

Tel.: 613-941-4644

Email: [info@vanier.gc.ca](mailto:info@vanier.gc.ca)

**ResearchNet technical support**

Tel.: 613-941-9080

Email: [support@researchnet-recherchenet.ca](mailto:support@researchnet-recherchenet.ca)

Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (eastern time).

Thank you for your continued cooperation and assistance with this important process. Please contact Lisa Marzano (ext. 77308, email [lisa.marzano@queensu.ca](mailto:lisa.marzano@queensu.ca)) or Leisa McDonald (ext. 77307, email [leisa.mcdonald@queensu.ca](mailto:leisa.mcdonald@queensu.ca)), or me (email [monica.corbett@queensu.ca](mailto:monica.corbett@queensu.ca)) if there are problems or questions.

Yours sincerely,

Monica Corbett

Director, Admissions and Student Services

School of Graduate Studies