

Major Graduate Student Funding Programs at UBC

Responsibilities of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (G+PS) and the Department of Educational Studies (EDST)

(REVISED March 2015)

The University of British Columbia offers and administers many programs that provide funding to graduate students. The Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (G+PS) is responsible for merit-based graduate awards. Some of the authority with respect to adjudication of these awards is delegated to the Department of Educational Studies (EDST), and thus all EDST awards are merit-based. The notes provided below relate to the role of EDST and do not supersede the policies and procedures of G+PS or the relevant external funding agencies.

The University has access to some funding that is needs-based; it is administered by Enrolment Services. They provide some bursaries that are non-repayable awards; these are designed to help fill unmet needs. To be eligible, however, one must be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident. In the event of a financial emergency, EDST has some funding to help. Students in need of assistance should contact the Graduate Advisor or Department Head. Similarly, enrolment services will schedule a confidential advising appointment to address a financial emergency; they also have some funding for this purpose. See: <http://www.students.ubc.ca/coursesreg/contact-us/>

Funding decisions in EDST, in keeping with G+PS guidelines, are merit-based. Within this merit-based system, we are committed to striking a balance between supporting outstanding students well and distributing support across the student body. EDST strives to offer competitive funding packages for doctoral and research-based master's students. The support is drawn from several sources including external awards, UBC awards, Faculty of Education awards, and employment-based funding that includes graduate academic assistantships, teaching assistantships, and graduate research assistantships with funding from professors' research grants. All students should visit both the Office of Graduate Programs and Research (OGPR) in the Faculty of Education and the G+PS websites for more information about funding opportunities for students beyond the major award programs discussed below (<http://ogpr.educ.ubc.ca/research/funding/> and <https://www.grad.ubc.ca/prospective-students/scholarships-awards-funding>).

This document first lays out three major funding programs adjudicated and administered by G+PS (and external agencies) with applicant ranking recommendations from EDST: The Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships Program, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Doctoral Awards, and the SSHRC Master's Awards. Next, two major funding programs allocated by G+PS and adjudicated by EDST, the entrance funding for outstanding PhD students, the Four-Year Doctoral Fellowships, and the Graduate Support Initiative (GSI) funding, are discussed.

The Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships Program

The Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships (Vanier CGS) program aims to attract and retain world-class doctoral students and helps establish Canada as a global centre of excellence in research and higher learning. To be considered for a Vanier Scholarship, a student must be nominated by UBC. Once the student has completed a Vanier application via ResearchNet, G+PS will provide a copy of the application to EDST. EDST is required to review and rank all applicants and submit the departmental nominees to G+PS (usually in early October). There is a quota system for the number of nominees that can be supported. The calculation is: over the past three competitions, the greatest number of Vanier nominations forwarded to SSHRC, following the G+PS adjudication, in a single competition, plus one. The minimum quota is two. In the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 competitions, EDST had a quota of three.

The selection criteria for the Vanier CGS include academic excellence, research potential, and leadership. Please see the website for further details (See: http://www.vanier.gc.ca/eng/selection_criteria-criteres_de_selection.aspx). Students applying for a Vanier CGS will be supported by their supervisor in developing their application. The Faculty of Education, Office of Graduate Programs and Research (OGPR) provides resources and support for applicants (see: <http://ogpr.educ.ubc.ca/grad/funding/resources/>). A series of videos with advice has been developed. The OGPR also hosts information workshops and sets relevant deadlines for the application process. Applications are initially appraised and ranked within EDST and the deadline for submission is typically set for mid-September.

Students receiving 36 months of a Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship will have received \$150,000. EDST students who receive a Vanier CGS are not eligible to hold GSI or 4YF funding.

SSHRC Doctoral Awards (Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarships Program Doctoral Scholarships and SSHRC Doctoral Fellowships)

The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) provides financial support to outstanding eligible students pursuing master's or doctoral studies in a Canadian university in social sciences or humanities. Students applying for a SSHRC doctoral award will be supported by their supervisor in developing their application. The Faculty of Education, Office of Graduate Programs and Research (OGPR) provides resources and support for applicants (see: <http://ogpr.educ.ubc.ca/grad/funding/resources/>). A series of videos with advice has been developed. The OGPR also hosts information workshops and sets relevant deadlines for the application process. Applications are initially appraised and ranked within EDST and the deadline for submission is typically set for mid-September.

EDST appraises and ranks the applications solely on their academic merit, measured by:

- past academic results, as demonstrated by transcripts, awards and distinctions;
- the program of study and its potential contribution to the advancement of knowledge;
- relevant professional and academic experience, including research training, as demonstrated by conference presentations and scholarly publications; and
- two written evaluations from referees.

EDST forwards a limited number of its top-ranked applicants to G+PS, which oversees a university-wide adjudication of all nominated applications. A UBC adjudication committee reviews and ranks the nominated applications and selects which applications will be forwarded to the national competition. SSHRC oversees the nation-wide competition that selects which SSHRC Doctoral Award applications will be funded.

Students receiving 36 months of a Joseph-Armand Bombardier CGS Doctoral Scholarship will have received \$105,000. Students receiving 48 months of a SSHRC doctoral fellowship will have received \$80,000. EDST students who receive a Joseph-Armand Bombardier CGS Doctoral Scholarship or SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship are not eligible to hold GSI or 4YF funding.

Canada Graduate Scholarships – Master’s Program

The objective of the Canada Graduate Scholarships-Master’s (CGS M) Program is to help develop research skills and assist in the training of highly qualified personnel by supporting students who demonstrate a high standard of achievement in undergraduate and early graduate studies.

MEd students are eligible if they have a demonstrated and significant research component. A significant research component is considered to be original, autonomous research that leads to the completion of a thesis, major research project, dissertation, scholarly publication, performance, recital or exhibit that is merit/expert reviewed at the institutional level as a requirement for completion of the program. Master’s programs that are based only on course work are not eligible since they do not include a significant research component.

Applications for Master’s funding are first reviewed and ranked by EDST. EDST then forwards its top-ranked applicants to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (G+PS), which oversees a university-wide adjudication of all nominated applications. Adjudication committees composed of UBC faculty members review and rank nominated applications and select which applications will be offered CGS M awards.

The evaluation criteria are:

- Academic excellence, as demonstrated by past academic results, transcripts, awards and distinctions (50% weighting)
 - Academic record (first class average)
 - Scholarships and awards held
 - Duration of previous studies
 - Type of program and courses pursued
 - Course load
 - Relative standing (if available)
- Research potential, as demonstrated by the applicant’s research history, his/her interest in discovery, the proposed research, its potential contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the field, and any anticipated outcomes (30% weighting)
 - Quality and originality of contributions to research and development
 - Relevance of work experience and academic training to field of proposed research
 - Significance, feasibility, and merit of proposed research
 - Judgment and ability to think critically
 - Ability to apply skills and knowledge
 - Initiative, autonomy and independence

- Research experience and achievements relative to expectations of someone with the candidate's academic experience
- Personal Characteristics and Interpersonal Skills (20% weighting)
 - Work experience
 - Leadership experience
 - Project management including organizing conferences and meetings
 - The ability or potential to communicate theoretical, technical and/or scientific concepts clearly and logically in written and oral formats
 - Involvement in academic life
 - Volunteerism/community outreach

Students receiving 12 months of a CGS M will have received \$17,500.

Four-Year Doctoral Fellowships

The Four Year Doctoral Fellowship (4YF) program will ensure UBC's best PhD students are provided with financial support of at least \$18,000 per year plus tuition for the first four years of their PhD studies. This program allows UBC to continue to attract and support outstanding domestic and international PhD students, and provide those students with stable, base-level funding for the first four years of their PhD studies and research.

4YF holders are required to apply for other funding to maintain their eligibility for 4YF funding (see: <https://www.grad.ubc.ca/awards/four-year-doctoral-fellowship-4yf>). Students offered both 4YF funding and external scholarship funding will be required to accept the external scholarship funding. If the value of the external scholarship funding is greater than the value of the 4YF stipend, the student must decline the 4YF stipend (only for the period when the student is receiving external scholarship funding). If the value of the external scholarship funding is less than the value of the 4YF stipend, the student will receive the difference between the 4YF stipend and the external scholarship funding. Students designated as 4YF holders will receive 4YF stipend funding once their external scholarship funding ends. EDST students who receive a 4YF are not eligible for GSI funding.

The evaluation criteria, applied by EDST, are:

- Academic excellence, as demonstrated by past academic results, transcripts, awards and distinctions
 - Academic record
 - Scholarships and awards held
- Research potential, as demonstrated by the applicant's research history, his/her interest in discovery, the proposed research, its potential contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the field, and any anticipated outcomes
 - Quality and originality of contributions to research and development
 - Relevance of work experience and academic training to field of proposed research
 - Significance, feasibility, and merit of proposed research
 - Judgment and ability to think critically
 - Ability to apply skills and knowledge
 - Initiative, autonomy and independence

- Research experience and achievements relative to expectations of someone with the candidate's academic experience

Students receiving 48 months of a 4YF will have received \$72,000 plus full tuition coverage.

Aboriginal students may qualify for a separate 4YF dedicated to Aboriginal students administered through G+PS and the First Nations House of Learning. For more information, see <https://www.grad.ubc.ca/awards/aboriginal-graduate-fellowships>

Associated Aboriginal Graduate Fellowship Bridge funding program available for eligible students. More information is available at <https://www.grad.ubc.ca/awards/aboriginal-graduate-fellowship-bridge-funding>

Graduate Support Initiative (GSI) Funding

The Graduate Support Initiative is distributed by G+PS and is a system for funding graduate students through various mechanisms including entrance scholarships, multi-year funding packages, tuition awards and scholarship top-ups. Funding is available to both international and domestic students.

In EDST, this funding is allocated as entrance scholarships for the purposes of recruiting outstanding PhD and Master's students. If students meeting the eligibility criteria are fully funded and funds remain unspent, competitions may be held to support students in years two through four of the doctoral program. 30% of GSI funding will go to MA students, 70% to PhD students, with each of the committees (PhD and MSA Management and Admissions Committees) deciding how its share of the GSI funds is allocated. The number of recipients will vary from year to year. Both the PhD and the MA committee may decide to use up to 10% of their funding for "recruitment incentive funding," that is, funding to top up other funding already received by or assigned to top-ranked students (domestic or international).

Students offered both GSI funding and external scholarship funding will be required to accept the external scholarship funding. If the value of the external scholarship funding is greater than the value of the GSI award, the student must decline the GSI award. If the value of the external scholarship funding is less than the value of the GSI award, the student will receive the difference between the GSI award and the external scholarship funding.

The evaluation criteria, applied by EDST, are:

- Academic excellence, as demonstrated by past academic results, transcripts, awards and distinctions
 - Academic record
 - Scholarships and awards held
- Research potential, as demonstrated by the applicant's research history, his/her interest in discovery, the proposed research, its potential contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the field, and any anticipated outcomes
 - Quality and originality of contributions to research and development
 - Relevance of work experience and academic training to field of proposed research
 - Significance, feasibility, and merit of proposed research

- Judgment and ability to think critically
- Ability to apply skills and knowledge
- Initiative, autonomy and independence
- Research experience and achievements relative to expectations of someone with the candidate's academic experience

Faculty of Education PhD Funding

The Faculty of Education PhD Award will be allocated in the same fashion as GSI funding. That is, these funds are committed to entrance scholarships for the purposes of recruiting outstanding PhD students.

Travel and Conference Fee Funding

G+PS has a Graduate Student Travel Fund to allow students to participate in conferences related to their research. Each award is worth \$500 and students are eligible once per degree program. See the G+PS Awards page for instructions and forms: <https://www.grad.ubc.ca/awards/graduate-student-travel-fund>

OGPR has a Graduate Student Conference Travel Grant with a different maximum value per conference depending on the kind of conference to a maximum of \$750 per student per degree program. See <http://ogpr.educ.ubc.ca/grad/funding/opportunities>.

EDST also offers travel and conference funding. Students enrolled full-time in an EDST graduate degree program are eligible for reimbursement from the *EDST Graduate Student Travel and Conference Fund* once per fiscal year, three times per degree program. The Travel Fund supports to a maximum of \$2,000.00 per graduate student per degree program. Students who hold major funding awards that include a dedicated travel budget are not eligible to apply. Please see the EDST website for more information or contact Shermila Salgadoe, Administrative Manager.

Employment Opportunities

Graduate Academic Assistantships (GAAs) and Graduate Research Assistantships (GRAs)

EDST has funding provided to employ students in various positions, guided by the policies of UBC Finance. (For more information see Student Appointment guidelines from UBC Finance's website here: <http://finance.ubc.ca/payroll/administrators/hiring/managing-students/student-appointments>.) The Department employs several graduate academic assistants; currently there are two peer advisors, a computer lab GAA, and two academic research and publication assistants. The stipend is not considered a scholarship.

The evaluation of applications is limited to the selection criteria provided by UBC Finance guidelines, department needs, and preferred competencies. The only factors considered will be the application documents (application form, resume, and cover letter). Graduate students may hold a GAA for two consecutive years. Preference will be given to incumbents assuming that they performed their duties well.

In addition to the GAAs, individual faculty members receive research funding and may employ graduate research assistants from time to time. Some faculty members will have more resources than other members at any given time.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs) and Sessional Employment

EDST offers various other opportunities for employment, most commonly for teaching in the teacher education program. In cases where multiple sections of an EDST course in the teacher education program are pooled into a large lecture format, the Associate Dean of Teacher Education may authorize the hiring of a GTA (1 credit or 64 hours) to assist the instructor. Full-time PhD candidates who are making satisfactory progress toward degree completion are eligible to apply. Preference is given to those with qualifications relevant to the position available, including academic background and K-12 teaching experience. GTAs assisting with three-credit courses are not instructors in their own right; they are working with support from the course coordinator/faculty mentor and, the informal mentorship of their research supervisor.

After a period of formal mentorship, it is possible for doctoral candidates to teach courses independently. To do this, they must apply as Sessional Lecturers and will need to compete with other Sessional Lecturers for these positions. All aspects of the advertising, hiring, and descriptions for Sessional Lecturer positions in EDST are done in accordance with UBC Faculty Association Agreement on Conditions of Appointment of Sessional Faculty Members. See Part 7, "Conditions of Appointment for Sessional Faculty Members" in the UBC Faculty Association Collective Agreement:

<http://www.facultyassociation.ubc.ca/collectiveagreement.php#cas>

Postings for both GTA and Sessional Lecturer positions are co-ordinated by Shermila Salgadoe, EDST Administrative Manager.