

# **VANIER CANADA GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS (VANIER CGS) INFORMATION SESSION**

**AUGUST 4, 2023 – WE WILL START AT 2:30PM NDT**



# INTRODUCTION

## Host

Kelley Bromley-Brits, PhD

Special Projects Coordinator, School of Graduate Studies

Memorial University of Newfoundland

[kbromley@mun.ca](mailto:kbromley@mun.ca)



# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

## A moment to reflect

- In the spirit of Truth and Reconciliation
- As part of Indigenization of the University
- To bring our attention to Indigenous peoples as we begin a conversation of research which may involve or impact them

*We acknowledge that the lands on which Memorial University's campuses are situated are in the traditional territories of diverse Indigenous groups, and we acknowledge with respect the diverse histories and cultures of the Beothuk, Mi'kmaq, Innu, and Inuit of this province.*

# WHAT TO EXPECT IN THIS SESSION

- Award details
- Introduction to Canada's Research Councils
- Eligibility, and the possibility of window extension
- Overview of the application contents
- Details on transcript requirements
- Overview of the selection criteria
- Important policies to be aware of
- How to apply
- Information on our next session

# THE AWARD - \$57,500 TO \$172,500

- The top doctoral fellowship offered by the tri-council
  - Meant to attract and retain world-class doctoral students who demonstrate leadership and a high standard of scholarly achievement
  - 166 awards available (~55 per council)
- Award details
  - \$50,000/yr stipend for up to 3 years from the tri-council
  - \$7,500/yr Dean's Excellence Award for the duration of the Vanier
  - Can't be transferred somewhere else

# THE RESEARCH COUNCILS

Agency	Research subject matter	Primary objectives are to....
<b>SSHRC</b>	Social sciences and humanities	Add to our understanding and knowledge of individuals, groups, and societies - what we think, how we live and how we interact with each other and the world around us.
<b>NSERC</b>	Natural sciences and engineering, other than the health sciences	Advance knowledge in one or more of the natural science or engineering disciplines.
<b>CIHR</b>	Health research in four broad themes: bio-medical research; clinical research; research respecting health systems and services; and research into the health of populations, societal and cultural dimensions of health, and environmental influences on health.	Improve or have an impact on health and/or produce more effective health services and products and/or strengthen the Canadian health care system.

# FAQ: SHOULD MY PROJECT GO TO CIHR OR SSHRC?

- First, see if your research falls under CIHR's mandate
  - Improve or have an impact on health and/or produce more effective health services and products and/or strengthen the Canadian health care system.
- If not, it could go to SSHRC if...
  - You're looking to understand what people think, how they live, and how they interact with others, but your findings aren't meant to show ways to improve health. But not eligible if it involves:
    - the treatment, prevention or diagnosis of a condition
    - the evaluation of the effectiveness of health programs
    - the development of health management systems
    - clinical trials

# FAQ: SHOULD MY PROJECT GO TO CIHR OR NSERC?

- NSERC if it's foundational research to understand fundamental processes in the healthy state, even if someday it might have future implications that improve health
- Disease related research
  - Eligible if using the disease state to understand the health state
  - Not eligible if the goal is to help with causes, diagnosis, treatment, or prevention
- Human performance research
  - Eligible if looking at the health state
  - Not eligible if looking at disease, injury, dysfunction (recovery, therapy, rehab)
- Pharmaceuticals, Nutraceuticals and Functional Foods
  - Eligible if coming up with new ways to synthesis substances, or seeing a substance's effect on physiological function
  - Not eligible if screening substances to determine bioavailability or safety



# ELIGIBILITY FOR HOLDING A VANIER AT MEMORIAL

- Canadian citizens, permanent residents, and foreign citizens
- Can only submit one application per competition year
  - But can apply for both the Vanier and a regular tri-council doctoral award (if you're eligible)
- Must have never held tri-council doctoral funding
- First doctoral degree
- Degree must have a significant research component
- Intend to be in the PhD by Spring 2024, Fall 2024, or Winter 2025

# ELIGIBILITY: GRADES

- Must have a first class average (GPA of 3.5/4.0 or higher) in each of your last 2-years of full-time study (2 PT semesters = 1 FT; 1 FTE = 2 FT (3+ courses) / 4 PT undergrad semesters or 3 FT / 6 PT grad semesters
- We go backwards in time from the most recent. See examples of how we would get year 1 (last year; blue) and year 2 (second last year; orange)

<b>Example 1 - Direct entry to PhD</b>	<b>Example 2 - 2nd year Master's student</b>	<b>Example 3 - 2nd year FT PhD student who did a PT Masters</b>	<b>Example 4 - 1st year PhD student who did a FT Master's several years ago</b>
2023-F – in progress	2023-F – in progress	2023-F – in progress	2023-F – in progress
2023-S – not registered	2023-S - FT / G	2023-S - FT / G	2023-S to 2018-F - not registered
2023-W – FT / UG	2023-W - FT / G	2023-W - FT / G	2018-S - FT / G
2022-F – FT / UG	2022-F - FT / G	2022-F - FT / G	2018-W - FT / G
2022-S – PT / UG	2022-S – not registered	2022-S – PT / G	2017-F - FT / G
2022-W – FT / UG	2022-W - FT / UG	2022-W - PT / G	2017-S - FT / G
2021-F – FT / UG	2021-F – FT / UG	2021-F – PT / G	2017-W - FT / G
2021-S – PT / UG	2021-S – PT / UG	2021-S – PT / G	2016-F - FT / G
2021-W - FT / UG	2021-W - FT / UG	2021-W - PT / G	2016-S - not registered
2020-F - FT / UG	2020-F - FT / UG	2020-F - LOA	2016-W - FT / UG
2020-S – not registered	2020-S – not registered	2020-S – LOA	2015-F - FT / UG
2020-W – PT / UG	2020-W – PT / UG	2020-W – LOA	2015-S - not registered
2019-F – PT / UG	2019-F – PT / UG	2019-F – PT / G	2015-W - FT/ UG

# ELIGIBILITY WINDOW

- Your program type will determine how to calculate your eligibility window
- Calculating FTE: 2 part-time semesters = 1 full-time semester; don't count official leaves of absence; 1 semester usually = 4 months
- If you have or will have a Master's...
  - Count from the start date of the PhD
  - Eligible if you've completed no more than **20 months FTE** of your PhD by May 1, 2024 (so started **Fall 2022** or later, if full-time)
- If you don't have a Master's...
  - Direct-entry from undergrad, or joint program: Count from PhD
  - Roll over Master's to PhD: Count from Master's start
  - Eligible if have completed no more than **32 months FTE** of your PhD by May 1, 2024 (so started **Fall 2021** or later, if full-time)

# ELIGIBILITY WINDOW EXTENSION

- If there were exceptional delays due to COVID-19 pandemic, we can present your case to the tricouncil for an extension
- SGS will provide timeline of all shutdowns/restrictions and the effect on research, K-12 school closures, and daycare closures; you must provide personal statement
  - Research impacts that affected your work in particular (eg. Couldn't work off-campus; supply issues, etc.)
  - Personal circumstances that made it harder for you (illness, family responsibilities, socioeconomic, etc.)
- If you want to present a case to the council, email us your statement and the agency you're applying to ASAP and I will advocate for you; must have Vanier secretariat decision by internal deadline

# THE APPLICATION

## Mandatory

- Application details (form)
- Canadian common CV (CCV)
- Transcripts (to us)
- Personal Leadership Statement (2 pages)
- Leadership Reference Letters (2 letters, 2 pages each)
- Research proposal (2 pages)
- Project references (5 pages)
- Research contributions (1 page)
- Referee assessments (2 assessments, online)

## If applicable

- Special circumstances (1 page)
- Voluntary self-identification form
- Part-time and joint research graduate program information
- MUN only: Agreement in Principle for work with Indigenous groups (more on this later)



# ABOUT TRANSCRIPTS

- Must be **official**
  - Transcripts printed from student accounts are not accepted
  - Written on every transcript (be it digital or paper) is a statement of what must be checked for the transcript to be considered official
  - Paper transcripts often mention an embossed seal and/or security paper; we need to have the physical copy.
  - Digital transcripts usually must be received directly from the issuing institution or through a link we receive directly from MyCreds; you cannot email us a PDF
- Must be **up-to-date**
  - “Up-to-date” means printed **as of Fall 2023**, or if not currently registered, after the last term completed
- Must **include everything**
  - All undergrad and grad studies; make sure everything in your CCV is captured
  - If you have transfer credits from somewhere, include the original transcript that shows the grades (except if CEGEP)
- If not in English or French, must provided certified translation

# ABOUT ATTACHMENTS

- Don't go over the page limit!!
- Pages must be 8 ½" x 11"
- Margins minimum of ¾" (1.87 cm);
- Single-spaced, with no more than 6 lines/inch;
  - Setting the line spacing in Word to "exactly 12pt" will give slightly tighter spacing than single spacing, but is still allowable
- All text must be in 12 pt, black Arial, Calibri or Times New Roman font;
  - Can be smaller in tables and figures, but will be clearly visible
  - Condensed fonts will not be accepted
- Attachments you prepare: Put your name and title of the attachment in top margin
- Number multi-page documents sequentially
- Photos, diagrams, tables, etc. all count toward the page limit
- Spell out abbreviations the first time you use them
- Do not upload password protected documents

# OVERVIEW OF THE SELECTION CRITERIA

3 multidisciplinary committees (CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC), which rank applications on 3 equally weighted criteria:

- 1) Academic Excellence
- 2) Research Potential
- 3) Leadership (Potential and Demonstrated Ability)

## For all:

- Relative to career stage/trajectory, personal circumstances / life trajectory
- Weighed according to the opportunities available (lack of opportunities due to socio-economic status, culturally different academic settings for students with foreign academic backgrounds, etc.)
- Describe the above in *Special Circumstances* and include *everything you can* in your CCV

# #1: ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

The candidate's academic history and their demonstrated excellence in academic achievement throughout the course of their scholarly career.

- Academic record
  - Transcripts
  - Duration of previous studies
  - Program requirements and courses pursued
  - Course load
  - Relative standing if available
  - *Personal Leadership Statement*
- Institutions comments (*Nomination Letter*)
- Scholarship/awards
  - Competitiveness, amount, duration, prestige (as shown in CCV)

# #2: RESEARCH POTENTIAL

## **Demonstrated by the candidate's...**

- research history
- interest in discovery
- proposed research and its potential contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the field
- anticipated outcomes

## **Sphere of influence relative to others**

- research program
- university
- research community
- international research community
- society at large

## **Training**

- Academic training and relevant work experience (co-op included)
- Lived experience and traditional teaching

## **Drive**

- Enthusiasm for research, originality, initiative, autonomy, relevant community involvement and outreach

## **Research contributions**

- publications, patents, reports, posters, abstracts, monographs, presentations, creative outputs, knowledge translation outputs, community products, etc.
- Not necessarily the number, but their impact and significance



# #2: RESEARCH POTENTIAL

## Research Proposal

- feasibility of the research
- merit
- significance and expected contributions to research

## Thinking & Communication

- Ability or potential to communicate theoretical, technical and/or scientific concepts clearly and logically in written and oral formats
- Demonstration of sound judgment and ability to think critically

## Research professionalism

- responsible and ethical research conduct
- honest and thoughtful inquiry
- rigorous analysis
- commitment to safety
- commitment to dissemination of research results
- adherence to the use of professional standards

# #3: LEADERSHIP (POTENTIAL AND DEMONSTRATED ABILITY)

Has gone above and beyond the expected norms to overcome obstacles, foster others, spearhead change, or otherwise demonstrate Leadership.

- Personal achievement
- Involvement in academic life
- Volunteering and community outreach
- Goal achievement
- Self-management
- Integrity
- Other characteristics
- Social skills

# HOW COMPETITIVE IS IT?

**166 awards available (~55 per council)**

## **Internally**

- Each university has a quota limiting our nominations.
- Our quota is 1 CIHR, 2-3 NSERC, and 2 SSHRC + unlimited Indigenous

## **Nationally**

- You compete in a national pool of ~550 students (about 91% of the 600 spots available for each council are submitted), of which ~55 will receive funding
- Applications are pre-scored; top 30 are given awards, leaving ~25 awards up for discussion
  - Top 31-70 (40 applications) are discussed at the committee; applications ranked #71 or lower are usually not discussed

# THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

- Research Impacting Indigenous Groups (RIIG)
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in Research / Sex and Gender Based Analysis Plus (SGBA+)
- These will be covered in more detail in the strategy session, but are important to start considering now.

# RESEARCH IMPACTING INDIGENOUS GROUPS (RIIG)

**All applications with RIIG must follow Memorial's RIIG policy**

Any form of research (both primary and secondary), regardless of discipline, that takes place on Indigenous land or uses Indigeneity as a category to recruit, gather or interpret data is Indigenous Research. For example:

- research conducted on First Nations, Inuit or Métis lands in Canada and Indigenous lands worldwide;
- recruitment criteria that include Indigenous identity as a factor for the entire study or for a subgroup in the study;
- research that seeks input from participants regarding a community's cultural heritage, artifacts, traditional knowledge or unique characteristics;
- research in which Indigenous identity or membership in an Indigenous community is used as a variable for the purpose of analysis of the research data or in the creation of survey tools
- interpretation of research results that will refer to Indigenous communities, peoples, language, history or culture.



# RESEARCH IMPACTING INDIGENOUS GROUPS (RIIG)

All applications with RIIG must follow Memorial's RIIG policy

Must have an AIP (Agreement in Principle – Concept Development Phase) in place.

- First step in a longer engagement
- Indicates that the principles, concepts, and premises of the research have been reviewed by appropriate representatives in an Indigenous group and the group agrees for the research to proceed to the next step (eg, submitting funding application, co-developing the research, moving to formal Indigenous Research Review, etc.)

Evidence that AIP has been obtained may be informal or formal and may take a variety of forms, including but not limited to:

- A text from relevant leaders
- A signature on a research agreement or form, collaboratively drafted
- Formal co-investigator or collaboration status of Indigenous leader(s) or official representative
- A formal letter of support
- A phone call, email, or letter from an Indigenous Group leader or official representative
- A document showing successful Research Review by the Indigenous Group

# RESEARCH INVOLVING INDIGENOUS GROUPS (RIIG)

## Within your application...

- Key concepts should be present in the proposal:
  - Established relationships
  - Indigenous or traditional knowledge
  - Reciprocity
  - Community
  - Respect, relevance and contribution

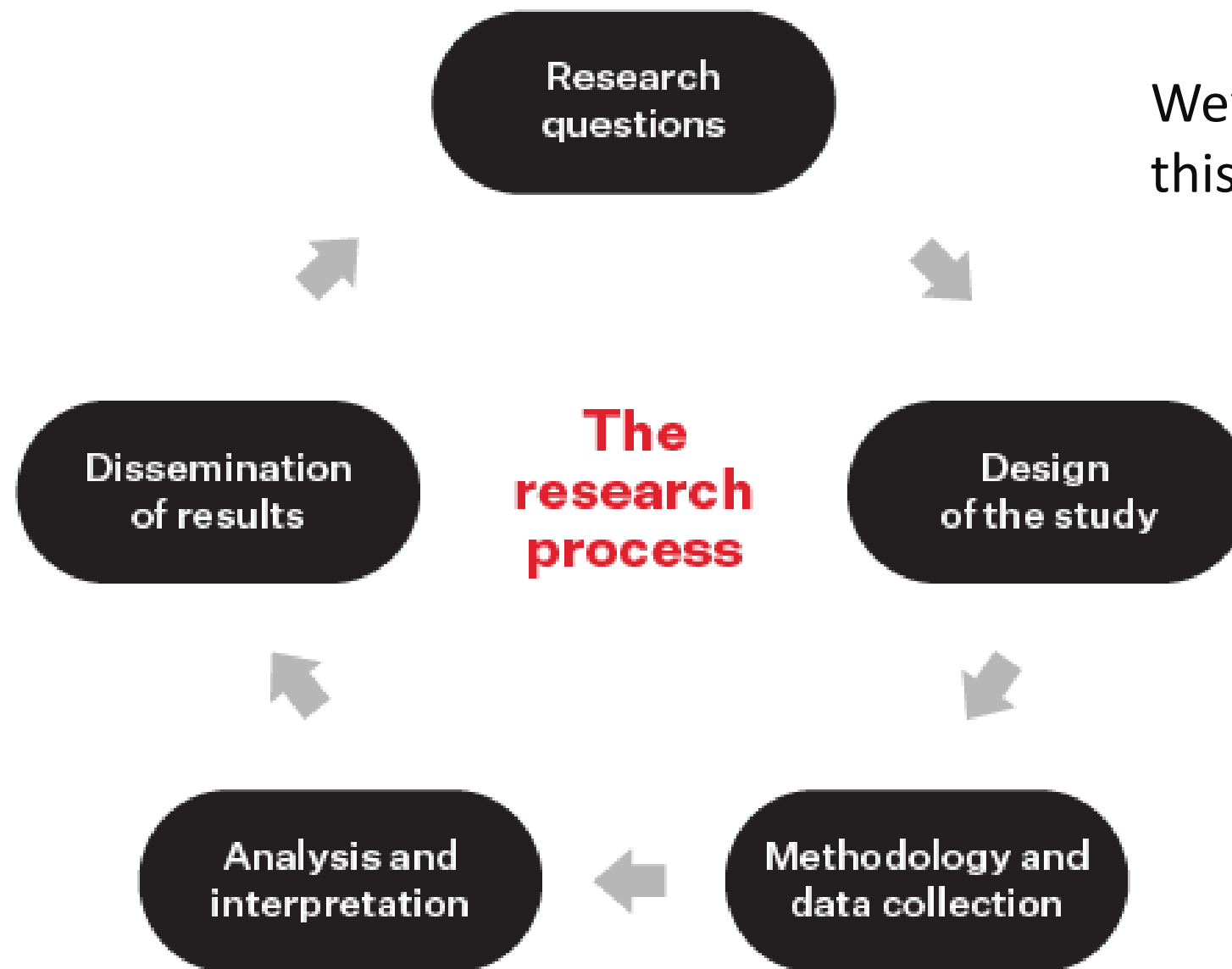
# SGBA+: PROMOTING EDI IN RESEARCH

## What is Sex and Gender Based Analysis Plus (SGBA+)?

- Analytical process used to systematically examine how differences in identity factors (eg., sex, gender expression and gender identity, race, ethnicity, religion, age, mental or physical disability, immigrant and newcomer status, Indigenous identity, language, neurodiversity, parental status/responsibility, place of origin, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, etc.) affect the outcomes of research and the impacts of research findings.
- Ensures sound EDI principles are applied to research design, methods, analysis and interpretation, and/or dissemination of research findings.
- Promotes rigorous research that considers identity factors so results are impactful and relevant to the diversity of the Canadian population.

# SGBA+: PROMOTING EDI IN RESEARCH

You should consider if it is applicable at every step in the research process



We'll talk more about this in our next session.

[https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Policies-Politiques/EDI\\_guidance-Conseils\\_EDI\\_eng.asp#a1](https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Policies-Politiques/EDI_guidance-Conseils_EDI_eng.asp#a1)

# HOW TO APPLY

- Applications submitted online through ResearchNet
- Review our step-by-step guide in our information package:  
[https://www.mun.ca/sgs/media/production/memorial/academic/school-of-graduate-studies/school-of-graduate-studies/media-library/current/scholarships/Vanier\\_Info\\_2023.pdf](https://www.mun.ca/sgs/media/production/memorial/academic/school-of-graduate-studies/school-of-graduate-studies/media-library/current/scholarships/Vanier_Info_2023.pdf)
- Start discussing with your potential supervisor
- Attend our application strategy session (Aug 17), and our adjudication panel discussion (TBD) – sign up to the mailing list for the links
- **You must submit to our internal competition through the online portal in ResearchNet by Sept 20 @ noon**



# QUESTIONS?