



**UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**  
FACULTY OF GRADUATE  
STUDIES & RESEARCH

**2019 SSHRC  
Doctoral  
Competition**

# Topics for today's presentation:

1. Funding Opportunities for Doctoral Students (for 2019-2020 academic year)
2. Applicant & Subject Matter Eligibility
3. The Application Process & Evaluation Criteria
4. Qualities of a good research proposal & what to avoid
5. SSHRC Resource Centre
6. Past Competition Results
7. Reference Letters – Dr. Pirkko Markula
8. Research Proposal – Dr. Michelle Meagher
9. Tips for Success – Will Schultz



# Funding Opportunities for Doctoral Students

For doctoral students, SSHRC offers 4 programs:

1) **Joseph Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarships - Doctoral (CGSD)**

(\$35,000/year for 36 months at Canadian universities)

2) **SSRHC Doctoral Fellowships**

(\$20,000/year for 12, 24, 36 or 48 months at Canadian or foreign universities)

3) **Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships**

(\$50,000/year for 3 years at Canadian universities)



# Continued:

## 4) Canada Graduate Scholarships – Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplements

(up to \$6,000 for 2-6 months research experience outside Canada for holders of Joseph-Armand Bombardier [SSHRC], Alexander Graham Bell [NSERC], Frederick Banting and Charles Best [CIHR], or Vanier)

SSHRC determines the value and duration of an award.

New: Some Canada Graduate Scholarship recipients may be considered for the honour of having their scholarship named a “Canada Graduate Scholarship to Honour Nelson Mandela” should SSHRC deem their application to be aligned with one of the five themes, e.g. freedom and human rights.



# Applicant Eligibility

You must be:

- a citizen or permanent resident of Canada for the Canada Graduate Scholarships and Doctoral Fellowships (citizens and foreign students are eligible for the Vanier)
- Be pursuing doctoral studies in the social sciences or humanities
- not have already received a doctoral scholarship or fellowship from SSHRC, NSERC or CIHR
- are not applying to NSERC or CIHR in the 2018-2019 academic year
- NEW\* The previous requirement for applicants to be pursuing their first PhD has been removed. Students may now apply for this competition, even if they have been conferred another doctoral degree.

For complete eligibility and to determine registration status at time of application submission, please see the [SSHRC website](#). (ex. In fall 2018, you are not registered in a degree program at a postsecondary institution, but intend to undertake doctoral studies, you must apply directly to SSHRC).



# Subject Matter Eligibility

All applications to SSHRC must meet the following two criteria:

- The program of research must be primarily in the social sciences and humanities (aligned with SSHRC's legislated mandate); and
- The intended outcome of the research must primarily be to 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.



# Health-related research

- Research primarily intended to improve health, produce more effective health services and products, and/or strengthen the Canadian health care system is not eligible for SSHRC support.
- CIHR provides funding opportunities for four themes of health research: biomedical, clinical, health systems services, and social, cultural, environmental and population health. Research eligible for funding by CIHR will not be considered by SSHRC.
- Applicants with research proposals related to health or in psychology, please be aware of the need to justify applying for SSHRC. Consult SSHRC well before deadlines.



# The Application Process

- Check with your department (or Faculty if non-departmentalized) as to their internal deadline for applications.
- FGSR Deadline to receive applications from departments is **October 31, 2018.**
- FGSR Graduate Scholarship Committee will review applications.
- Applications are also reviewed by a multidisciplinary university-wide Graduate Scholarships Committee to determine which will be sent to Ottawa.
- SSHRC expects to announce the results in Spring 2019.



# Application Package

A complete application consists of the following:

- Application for SSHRC Doctoral Awards completed using SSHRC web-based forms (including application checklist)
- Program of Study (two pages, plus bibliography – up to five pages)
- Research Contributions (one page maximum)
- Official Transcripts from all post-secondary institutions attended  
If FGSR has the official up-to-date transcripts (ex. from time of admission), these transcripts do not need to be submitted again. FGSR will generate a U of A transcript
- Two Letters of Appraisal
- Departmental Appraisal (to be submitted by your department)
- Consent to Disclosure of Personal Information Form.



# SSHRC Resource Centre

- The SSHRC website hosts a “Resource Centre” to provide applicants with further information and to answer frequently asked questions about the Canadian Common CV, the Research Portal, and eligibility of subject matter:

[http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/apply-demande/resource\\_centre-centre\\_de\\_ressources-eng.aspx](http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/apply-demande/resource_centre-centre_de_ressources-eng.aspx)

- SSHRC also suggests that doctoral award applicants may wish to consult its “Guidelines for Effective Research Training” while preparing their applications. Found here:

[http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/policies-politiques/effective\\_research\\_training-formation\\_en\\_recherche\\_efficace-eng.aspx](http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/policies-politiques/effective_research_training-formation_en_recherche_efficace-eng.aspx)



# 2018 Competition Results:

- University quota: 68
- Applications reviewed by FGSR Graduate Scholarship Committee: 92
- Canada Graduate Scholarship (CGSD) winners: 12
- Doctoral Fellowship winners: 13



# Reference Letters

Dr. Pirkko Markula

Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, & Recreation

Professor, SSHRC Adjudicator



# What Makes a Good Reference Letter?

- Why is a good reference letter important?
  - 2 reference assessments
- Who should I ask to provide a reference?
  - Individuals familiar enough with your research or other abilities to provide a meaningful commentary



# What Makes a Good Reference Letter?

- What should I provide for the reference?
  - Research achievements
  - Other experience?
- Your responsibility to ensure that the references complete and submit their assessments



# Research Proposal

Dr. Michelle Meagher

Department of Women's and Gender  
Studies

Associate Professor, SSHRC Adjudicator



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# Research Proposal: nuts and bolts

SSHRC requests that your proposal include: a research question, context, objectives, methodology, potential contribution

- Pose a ***question***
- Describe how you will ***find answers*** to this question
- Tell your readers ***why it's valuable*** to answer your specific research question



# Research Proposal: consider your audience

- Engage your readers by building a narrative around your research project – ***tell a story.***
- Be clear, succinct, straightforward, and stick to the page limit. Typos and contradictions will jump out at your readers – ***avoid them at all costs!***
- Get started now and share your proposal with a wide variety of readers, ***including your referees.***



# Tips for Success

Will Schultz

SSHRC CGSD Winner

Department of Sociology



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# SSHRC Hacks and Tips

## **BEFORE** you write:

1. Start early
2. Know your deadlines and requirements
3. Get help, and take advice seriously

## **WHEN** you write:

1. Tell a story, and make it interesting
2. Identify the gaps you're filling (show that you know your topic!)
3. Show why YOU are the person to do this research



# Hacks and Tips (continued)

AFTER you've written:

1. Set yourself an early deadline
2. Take time away from it, then re-read it (out loud is best!)
3. Get someone else to read it
  - If they don't understand something, it isn't clear.
4. Edit the heck out of it

Other points:

1. Structure is VITAL
2. The CCV isn't easy
3. Transcripts don't come overnight, and neither do reference letters
4. It's absolutely possible to win, if you put the work in



# Questions?

## **FGSR**

Email: [grad.awards@ualberta.ca](mailto:grad.awards@ualberta.ca)

Website: <https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/awards-and-funding/scholarships/tri-council-graduate-scholarships/sshrc-doctoral>

Tel.: 780-492-9460

## **SSHRC Doctoral Awards**

Email: [fellowships@sshrc-crsh.gc.ca](mailto:fellowships@sshrc-crsh.gc.ca)

Website: <http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/programmes-programmes/fellowships/doctoral-doctorat-eng.aspx>

Tel.: 613-943-7777

