Overview of Awards

• **Alexander Graham Bell Canada Graduate Scholarship**
  – Doctoral (CGSD): $35,000/year; 2 or 3 years

• **NSERC Postgraduate Scholarship**
  – Doctoral (PGSD): $21,000/year; 2 or 3 years

• **Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplement**
  – Up to $6,000 for a period of research study abroad

**Other NSERC Awards:**

• **Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship:** September 19 deadline
  – Doctoral: $50,000/year; 3 years
Eligibility Criteria

- Canadian Citizen or Permanent Resident of Canada
- Have at least an A- average in last two years of full time study.
- As of December 31, must have completed between 0-24 months in a doctoral program.
- Have not received any other Tri-council Doctoral Funding
- Research falls within the NSERC Mandate
- Are or will be registered in a full time Doctoral program
Selection Criteria for PGSD/CGSD

**Academic excellence**
- Grades, awards and distinctions
- Weight: 30%
- What helps: GPA of at least 3.5 in each of the past two years

**Research Ability or Potential**
- Potential contribution to advancement of knowledge
- Weight: 50%
- What helps: Research activity, well-written proposal

**Communication, interpersonal and leadership abilities**
- Scholarly presentations, professional and extracurricular activities
- Weight: 20%
- Evidence is required
Details of Selection Criteria for PGSD/CGSD cont’d

Research Ability or Potential
• Quality 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, and justification for location of tenure
• Ability to think critically
• Ability to apply skills and knowledge
• Judgment and Originality
• Initiative and autonomy
• Enthusiasm for research
Communication, interpersonal and leadership abilities

- The ability or potential to communicate scientific concepts clearly and logically in written and oral formats. Could be:
  - quality of the application's presentation;
  - participation in preparing publications; and
  - awards for oral presentations or papers.

- Professional and relevant extracurricular interactions and collaborations. Could be:
  - mentoring; teaching; supervisory experience;
  - project management;
  - chairing committees; organizing conferences and meetings; and
  - elected positions held.
Other Important Elements of the Application

• Research Statement/ Proposed Research

• Letters of Appraisal
Application Process: How to Apply?

• If not currently registered at U of A, or registered, but not in a degree program, and graduated from a U of A degree program prior to January 2016, apply directly to NSERC. **Deadline: October 17, 2016.**

• If currently registered in a degree program, or are on an approved leave:
  – U of A must nominate you. Follow the process on the next slide.
NSERC Doctoral Application Process – Before October 14, 2016

• Complete form 201 on-line and ensure we have your official and up-to-date transcripts. Consult your department for departmental deadline.

• Do not submit application online yet.

• Departments forward required transcripts and alphabetical list of selected applications to FGSR. FGSR Deadline - October 14.

• The FGSR will upload the transcripts for all applications sent to the FGSR by the departments. Use grad.awards@ualberta.ca for University Designate e-mail address.
Doctoral Application Process – After October 14, 2016

• After your transcripts have been uploaded by the FGSR, you will see your application status is complete, and you can submit your application online.

• Departments will be sent a reminder when the status of all applications are complete and ready for students submission.

• Graduate Scholarship Committee (GSC) selects applications to be forwarded to NSERC. **Deadline - November 25.**

• NSERC announces recipients of awards Late March, 2017.
Transcripts

- *Up-to-date official* transcripts from *ALL* institutions attended must be uploaded to your online application. This includes institutions where you have not completed a degree and may have only taken a few courses.

- *Up-to-date transcripts* are defined as transcripts dated or issued in the fall session of the year of application (if currently registered) or after the last term completed (if not currently registered).

- You do not need to provide University of Alberta transcripts and transcript from other institutions for which FGSR has *up-to-date and official* transcripts on file. FGSR is able to use those transcripts for your application and upload them into NSERC on-line system.
2016 NSERC: Research Statement

Dr Dominic Sauvageau, Assistant Professor
Department of Chemical & Materials Engineering
Member of the NSERC National Committee
READ THE INSTRUCTIONS/GUIDELINES
READ THE INSTRUCTIONS/GUIDELINES

Outline of Proposed Research Research (Attachment – One Page Maximum)

In the Outline of Proposed Research page of your application, provide the requested information according to the guidelines and format standards outlined in the NSERC Online Presentation and Attachment Standards.

Applicants must complete this section themselves.

Provide a detailed description of your proposed research project for the period during which you are to hold the award. Be as specific as possible. Provide background information to position your proposed research within the context of the current knowledge in the field. State the objectives and hypothesis, and outline the experimental or theoretical approach to be taken (citing literature pertinent to the proposal), and the methods and procedures to be used. **State the significance of the proposed research to a field or fields in the natural sciences and engineering (NSE).**

Your research must be part of an overall research program which lies in a field that NSERC supports. For awards held at universities, your research must be supervised by a faculty member whose own research program lies in a field that NSERC supports. In cases where the proposed research is deemed to fall within the mandate of either the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) or the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), NSERC will not accept the application. If you have received previous funding from NSERC, this does not mean that you are automatically deemed eligible for continued NSERC funding. As you advance in your studies, if the focus of your research changes from the natural sciences and engineering to the health or social sciences and humanities areas, you may no longer be eligible for NSERC support. For important information about the eligible fields of research, refer to the Eligibility Criteria for Students and Fellows.

**Note:** Proposals that include the use of methodologies, tools, techniques and knowledge from the NSE are not automatically considered eligible for NSERC support. The proposed research must clearly be intended to advance knowledge in the NSE.

In addition:
Information on the following slides were taken from examples shared within the session. These samples are not available for distribution.

The purpose of the following slides is to give you a framework of successful applicants.
Title: Nonlinear nanoplasmonic devices based on electron tunnelling

Paragraph 1

X, which has the property/function P, has been identified by an important source as potentially enabling an important step forward in the field of Y. These are the reasons this seems to be true. However, there are the challenges. Recent advances suggest a possible solution to these challenges. This possible solution has such-and-so features. Work to date makes this look promising. But there has been little research on a key aspect of this solution, which is essential to realizing the potential identified in sentence #1.
Paragraph 2 – high level approach

My research proposal is to examine this under-investigated element, with approach A. Approach A leverages the pre-established knowledge we have, as follows: <details provided, with a few citations>

“Putting the pieces together like this is evidence that the research agenda I propose is a well-founded, rationale way to proceed, and knowledge will be advanced”

Paragraph 3 – a bit more detailed

My plan will be steps A, B, and C. In executing some of these steps, I will be using unique elements of the UofA’s intellectual environment (facilities, local expertise, local connections). And these elements increase my likelihood of success in the following ways.”
Paragraph 4

Making progress on this matter is important. In the immediate term, the potential impact would be A, B, or C, which were mentioned or alluded to in the opening paragraph. Taking a longer term view, there are these other possibilities as well.
Example 2:

Paragraph 1

X, which can be understood in the following way, is used to advance knowledge of a particular type in field F. There is one class of X that has been shown to have an important relationship to a well-known piece of foundational theoretical knowledge. Interestingly, this sub-type of X has properties that is not predicted by this well-accepted theory.
Paragraph 2

I have already done some work on this sub-class of X on a problem type P, which has with these features. This work built on important foundational knowledge by others, and was itself important for the following reasons… From this past work, it appears that using X for this problem type P might have certain advantages, but the way it has been investigated to date fails address important assumptions.

Paragraph 3

My proposal is to investigate X for problem type P in a way that addresses this limitation. The methodologies to be used are the following, and the reasons that they are appropriate are such-and-so. Previous work generated certain results and effects. These effects are not accounted for a comprehensive theory. My work will advance the development of such theory.
Specifically, the recent work did advance knowledge on this matter in one way, but it did not address the limitations outlined above. The general paradigm I adopt to conduct this work has an important general characteristics, described as such-and-so. In practical terms, this means that this paradigm and methodology allows me to get to my goal [“advance the theory referenced at the end of paragraph 3”]
Why are these “good examples”? 

The writer knows that the reader must be convinced of the following:

1. I have thought about an issue and can argue for its importance in broader matters.
2. I have a general path forward to advance knowledge about this issue.
3. The specific steps of the path forward are sufficiently described so that the path really is related to the issue.
4. The resources at institution X will enable me to succeed and I’ve thought about that too....
Remember:

The [research statements] hang the discipline specific elements on really clear argument structures, across paragraphs, within paragraphs, and within a given sentence. It makes it easy for the reviewer and this is good thing.

The investment is in you, not in in your supervisor, or in the area or even the problem.
The Challenge

“Above the bar” does not equal “getting support”. You want to be recognized as someone to invest in, given limited resources. This applicant goes into the “definitely support” pile vs this applicant is above the bar -- goes into the “maybe support” pile

How to distinguish yourself?

Evidence of broad thinking -- perhaps outside the discipline

Engagement with the broader intellectual environment, centres, institutes, strategic priorities

Future-looking considerations

What not to do

Make it about your supervisor
## Important Considerations in Completing Forms

### The Student’s View

![Image of a form](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>The hypothesis that F73 MAPK participates in whole-body glucose homeostasis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>Dr. Andrea Karpf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>10-16-05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

*Image credit: University of Alberta, Faculty of Graduate Studies & Research*
Important Considerations in Completing Forms

The Reviewer’s View
Questions?

• Contact NSERC
  – On-line Services: webapp@nserc-crsng.gc.ca
  – Telephone: 613.995.4273
  – Email: schol@nserc-crsng.gc.ca

• Contact FGSR
  – Telephone: 780.492.9460
  – Email: grad.awards@ualberta.ca