Topics for today’s presentation:

1. Funding Opportunities for Doctoral Students
2. Applicant & Subject Matter Eligibility
3. The Application Process & Evaluation Criteria
4. Tips for Success
5. Qualities of a good research proposal & what to avoid
6. Past Competition Results
7. SSHRC Resource Centre
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 3-6 months research experience outside Canada for holders of Joseph-Armand Bombardier and Vanier CGS)

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)
• pursuing your first PhD (or equivalent) 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 2016-2017 academic year

If you have any concerns about your eligibility, consult the SSHRC website and contact 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

• Direct applications are due **November 4, 2016**.

• University applications (applicants registered in a degree program at, or an approved leave of absence from, a Canadian university with a quota) are due for receipt in Ottawa on **January 9, 2017**.

• Check with your department (or Faculty if non-departmentalized) as to the internal deadline for applications.

• FGSR Deadline to receive applications from departments is **October 31, 2016**.

• 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 2017.
Application Package

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 postsecondary institutions attended
- Two Letters of Appraisal
- Departmental Appraisal (to be completed by your department)
- Consent to Disclosure of Personal Information Form.
Selection based on academic merit

Selection committees will look at:

- past academic results, as demonstrated by transcripts, past history of scholarships and awards, other 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
Continued:

- Two written evaluations from referees (professors); and
- The department (or Faculty) appraisal for those registered at Canadian universities.

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

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:

Past competition results

In 2015, we were permitted to submit 76 applications to SSHRC in Ottawa. A total of 82 applications were reviewed by our internal Graduate Scholarships Committee. SSHRC awarded 10 Canada Graduate Scholarships Doctoral and 18 Doctoral Fellowships.
2017 SSHRC General Tips and Research Statement

Dr Bryan Hogeveen
Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
Tips for Success

• Review the SSHRC website to gain further information
• Find out and confirm all deadlines with your department and/or Faculty
• Discuss your application (including the research proposal) with your supervisor
• Make arrangements for securing two letters of appraisal (with one being from your supervisor). Referees like to be given a copy of your CV and a draft proposal.
Continued:

• Work on your SSHRC CV and your proposal. Write, rewrite, and rewrite again.
• Get feedback on your various drafts from others.
• Plan your timeline for getting all this done.
• Allow time for frustration with the SSHRC web-based application system.
• If at first you don’t succeed … try again. Build your CV with a view to submitting a stronger application next time.
Qualities of a good research proposal

• Proposed project has clear questions to be investigated and/or clear research objectives identified
• Project appears do-able in the time span of one’s graduate program
• Proposal answers the questions that are asked (e.g. why did you choose this program, etc.)
• The proposed project is interesting to the average professor and presented in a way to engage a curious intellect
Qualities continued

• Research proposals should be very easy to read and understand by any audience.

• Research proposals should explain why the U of A is the best place to conduct your research.
What to avoid

• A research proposal that rests on questions that are too grand or too amorphous; language is too vague; plans are too open (not specific enough)

• A research proposal that rests on goals that are too ambitious – Keep in mind the practicality of fitting in a proposal to the timeline of the degree program

• Proposed projects that appear to be already funded and are handed to a student by a professor likely don’t score highly with scholarship adjudicators
What to avoid

- A proposal that leads a reader to ask “So what?” in terms of its scientific or practical contribution
- A proposal that is excessive in terms of its references; but also want to avoid submitting a proposal that has too few references. (Note that there are space limitations; use the space effectively)
- Grammatical, spelling and typographical errors detract from a research proposal’s impact on a reader
What steps can I take to improve my chances?

• Read widely in the area in which you have a growing interest
• Look at examples of past successful SSHRC applications
• Ask questions before and as you write – ask questions of yourself, your supervisor, other graduate students
• Ask several professors and others who write for a living to review your proposal. Recognize the benefits of getting criticism.
Important Considerations in Completing Forms

The Student’s View
Important Considerations in Completing Forms

The Reviewer’s View
Questions?

Contact SSHRC

Doctoral Awards
Email: fellowships@sshrc-crsh.gc.ca
Website: http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/umbrella_programs-programme_cadre/talent-eng.aspx
Tel.: 613-943-7777

FGSR
Email: grad.awards@ualberta.ca
Tel.: 780-492-9460