UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

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Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council
Discovery Grants | Fall 2025 Competition

NSERC deadline: Nov 3rd, 2025.
RSO basic review deadline: Oct 29th, 2025, noon.

Contents

General Information

Objectives:

The [Discovery Grants Program](#) supports ongoing programs of research (with long-term goals) rather than a single short-term project or collection of projects in the natural sciences and engineering fields. These grants recognize the creativity and innovation that are at the heart of all research advance.

Award Amounts and Duration:
- No limits are set on amounts requested.
- Discovery Grants are awarded for one to five years, the normal duration being five years.

Eligibility:
- General rules of NSERC [eligibility](#) apply, see new updates below.
- Researchers can only apply for one Discovery Grant at a time; *team applications are not accepted.*
- Researchers who hold an individual Discovery Grant cannot reapply for another individual Discovery Grant until the last year of their current award, not counting the automatic 1 year extension for Use of Funds.
- The Notification of Intent (NOI) to Apply for a Discovery Grant is mandatory.
- Note on Early career researchers
    - Applicants who have an independent academic position for 5 years or less at the time of submitting the notification of intent (e.g., appointed on or after July 1, 2020, for the 2026 competition)
    - Five year window adjusted for any eligible delay in research
    - All eligible leaves taken (e.g., parental, bereavement, illness of applicant or family) will now be credited as twice the amount of time taken
    - ECRs need to self-identify on the Research Portal at the full application stage by completing the Applicant Category module

Key points and new updates:
- *Eligibility changes (2025 onwards)*
    - NSERC has replaced references to the term "faculty" with "individual" to expand access to funding for those who may not be considered researchers by Western standards and/or those who hold traditional knowledge.
    - NSERC has removed references to "academic" appointments to eliminate potential barriers for individuals with other types of appointments (e.g., Indigenous scholars). The specific requirements for conducting independent research and supervising students or postdoctoral fellows remain unchanged.
    - NSERC has separated the requirement to conduct research in the Natural Sciences and Engineering (NSE) from the eligibility requirement to conduct independent research. This change aims to remove barriers for interdisciplinary researchers, such as those applying for the Discovery Horizons grant. Conducting research to advance knowledge in NSE continues to be a requirement, verified by Program staff, and aligns with CIHR and SSHRC processes.

- o NSERC has removed the rule on the "contract duration of no less than three continuous years". An applicant's contract can now be of any duration.

- *Indigenous Research (2025 onwards)*
  - o Beginning in the 2026 competition year (fall 2025 deadline), applicants who indicate that their proposal involves Indigenous research (by checking the relevant box in the DG application) will be required to submit the NSERC Indigenous Community Engagement & Collaboration Agreement Template. If your DG proposal involves Indigenous research, please reach out to the [Indigenous Research Support Team (IRST)](#) at [irst@ucalgary.ca](#) as soon as possible.

- *Use of Artificial Intelligence in the preparation of grant applications (2025 onwards)*
  - o Applicants may use generative AI to help prepare grant applications, but they remain fully responsible for ensuring all submitted information is true, accurate, and complete. Additional information available [here](#).

- Individuals cannot hold both a Discovery Grant and a Discovery Horizons grant. This rule has been effective from the 2024 competition year onwards.

- *STRAC policy (2024 onwards)*
  - o On January 16, 2024, the Government of Canada published its [Policy on Sensitive Technology Research and Affiliations of Concern](#) (STRAC). This funding opportunity is in scope of this new policy, wherein grant applications that involve conducting research that aims to advance a sensitive technology research area will not be funded if any of the researchers involved in activities supported by the grant are currently affiliated with, or in receipt of funding or in-kind support from, a named research organization. The **Research Security Division** is available to assist researchers adhere to research security guidelines and policies, including STRAC. Visit the Research Security [website](#) to learn more or contact [researchsecurity@ucalgary.ca](#)

General Resources:
- [Program Guidelines](#)
- [Discovery Grant Merit Indicators](#)
- [Presentation and Attachment Standards](#)
- [Application Instructions](#)
- [Instructions for the NSERC Canadian Common CV](#)
- [Discovery Grants Peer Review Manuals](#)
- [Discovery Grants Information Centre](#)
- [Resource Videos](#)
- [NSERC Research Portal](#)
- [Competition Results and Statistics](#)

- Selecting the Appropriate Granting Agency
- Addendum to the guidelines for the eligibility of applications related to health

Contributions to Research and Training:
- NSERC's Policy and Guidelines on Contributions to Research and Training

EDI Resources:
- Guide for Applicants: Considering equity, diversity and inclusion in your application
- NFRF Best practices in EDI in Research
- CRC's Best Practices Guide for Recruitment, Hiring and Retention
- Frequently Asked Questions (2020) for the Evaluation of HQP Criterion

Application Deadline to Research Services Office:

Notice of Intent: Tuesday August 1, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. (MST)
The Notice of Intent is submitted directly to NSERC by the researcher

Deadline for the *optional* Detailed Review: October 16th at 4:00 p.m.

Final RSO Deadline: October 29th at 12:00 p.m.
NSERC Deadline: Tuesday November 3, 2025

For the full application:
This competition will be run through Research Management System (RMS).
- Do NOT complete the Research Funding Application Approvals (RFAA) form. Electronic approvals will be completed in RMS. Internal approvals for the full application stage will be done through the RMS system.
- Complete the Pre-Award record in RMS (login at https://research.ucalgary.ca/rms) and "Submit for academic approvals" (Under Save & Progress) in good time to allow for approvals from your Department Head and/or ADR prior to the Research Services deadline. Consult your department and faculty for more information on their approval processes and timelines. Ensure you receive all required approvals in advance of **noon on October 29th.**
- Hit "submit" in the Application Overview page in the NSERC Research Portal by noon October 29th (this sends it to RSO, not NSERC).
- **BOTH the completed RMS approvals record and the NSERC Research Portal application must be received by Research Services by noon, October 29th.**
- If you would like a detailed review, Research Services must receive your complete RMS approvals record and NSERC Research Portal application by **4pm on October 16th.**
  - The detailed administrative review includes checking for eligibility, UofC commitments and risk, compliance with program guidelines, completeness of application, and the opportunity for feedback.
  - The basic administrative review involves a minimal check for eligibility, UofC commitment and risk. Applications received after October 16th will receive a basic administrative review.

Guide to Applying

To apply, submit an [Application](#), and a [NSERC Common CV](#). Click [here](#) for full instructions.

A. Application Overview

1. Application Form
- ☐ Identification
- ☐ Summary of Proposal
- ☐ Proposed Expenditures
- ☐ Relationship to Other Research Support
- ☐ Highly Qualified Personnel Training Plan
- ☐ Past Contributions to Highly Qualified Personnel Training
- ☐ Most Significant Contributions
- ☐ Additional Information on Contributions
- ☐ Activity Details
- ☐ Eligibility Profile

2. Free Form Attachments
- ☐ Proposal
- ☐ Budget Justification
- ☐ Other Support Sources (REQUIRED if holding CIHR or SSHRC funding)
- ☐ List of References
- ☐ Sample of Research Contributions (up to 4 contributions)
- ☐ Attestation (Confidential Contributions)

3. Canadian Common CV

B. Create an Application

1. Sign in to the [Research Portal](#).
2. Select the Funding Opportunity and click Create.
3. Select your Notification of Intent to Apply (NOI); it will form the basis for your application.
4. Complete your Eligibility Profile and click on Validate.
5. Click on Continue and Create Application.
6. Under Applications, Open the application.
7. Click on Edit to complete the different sections.

Some fields are pre-populated based on the information provided in your NOI. You may edit these fields as needed.

C. Complete the Application

Identification

☐ Applicant

☐ Applicant Category

- o *Applicants are now required to self-select their [applicant category](#). If you selected the 'Early Career Researcher (ECR)' category, then in addition to explaining how you meet the ECR definition, you must list all positions, found in your CCV, that meet NSERC's requirements for an [independent academic position](#) (3000 characters).*

☐ Administering Organization

☐ Application

- o Application Title
- o Language of the Application
- o Suggested Evaluation Group (not editable)
  - *If the evaluation group is not what you had suggested or if your proposed research program has changed substantially from NOI stage, contact the [NSERC Discovery Grant Program Officer](#)*
- o Time to Be Devoted to Research/Activity: hours per month

☐ Self-identification Statements (optional)

☐ Supplements/Joint Initiatives (if applicable)

- o Indicate whether you wish to be considered for the:
  - ▪ [DND/NSERC Discovery Grant Supplement](#)
    - Indicate the DND Defense and Security Target Area(s) that your research proposal addresses – at least one is required, max 6.
    - *Statement of Relevance: Describe how your research fits within the selected Target Area(s)*
  - ▪ [Northern Research Supplement](#) (NRS).
    - Applicants who indicate their interest in the NRS will be given access to the NRS expenditures table, and two new attachments to their NRS budget justification and NRS proposal with list of references.

Summary

☐ Summary (text box – 3,000 characters)

- o The summary is intended to explain the proposal in language that the public can understand.
- o Indicate why and to whom the research is important, the anticipated outcomes, and how the research field and Canada will benefit.
- o Your proposed research program should not change significantly between submission of your NOI and submission of your full application. If a significant change is required, you should contact the evaluation group program officer as this may affect how your application should be reviewed.

☐ Second Official Language Translation (text box – 3000 characters)

- o If applicable

Proposed Expenditures

Before completing this page, read the instructions and consult the [Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide](#).

Note: You are required to validate your "Total amount requested from NSERC" by clicking the "Calculate Totals" button at the bottom of the page.

☐ Salaries and benefits
☐ Equipment or facility
  o *Equipment of any value can be purchased using a Discovery Grant, although the Research Tools and Instruments program is the primary funding program for equipment that costs more than $7,000*
☐ Materials and supplies
☐ Travel
☐ Dissemination
☐ Other expenses
☐ Cash contributions from other sources (if applicable)

Relationship to Other Research Support

☐ Relationship to other Research Support – Explanation (text box – 12,000 characters)
  o This section refers only to other research support that will or may be active within the funding period of the proposed Discovery Grant. Do <u>not</u> include information concerning previous applications or grants that ended or will end before the funding period of the proposed DG. Previously held DGs do not need to be discussed here.
    ▪ Some details on each source of support that you may wish to provide could include: the main objective; a brief outline of the methodology; budget details; and details on the support of HQP
  o Other sources of support include grants and contributions from funding agencies, organizations, the private sector, institution start-up funds, research chairs, the primary place of employment (for adjunct professors), and other institutional research support.
  o When research funding is held or applied for from **CIHR and/or SSHRC,** you must clearly explain:
    ▪ How the proposed ideas, objectives and expenditures of the Discovery Grant application are entirely distinct from those supported or applied for through CIHR and/or SSHRC.
    ▪ How the anticipated contributions to research resulting from the proposed Discovery Grant will be distinct from those resulting from CIHR and/or SSHRC support.
  o In addition, **if you hold or have applied for a CIHR Foundation Grant**, you must clearly explain why the Discovery Grant funds are essential to carry out the research proposed in the Discovery Grant application.
  o The consequence of not providing adequate information to assess the relationship to other research support may be a rating of insufficient for the merit of the proposal.
  o *Note: New Frontiers in Research Fund (NFRF) is a tri-agency initiative and is considered a source of support other than CIHR or SSHRC.*

Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP) Training Plan

The UCalgary's EDI in Research team have built an excellent guide for the DG HQP training sections: :
[UCalgary Guide to Effectively Addressing EDI in the NSERC Discovery Grant](#)

☐ HQP Training Plan (text box – 9,000 characters)
- o *The assessment of the HQP Training Plan includes two components, **Training Philosophy** and **Research Training Plan**. The "Past Contributions to HQP Training" section below allows you to provide information on your training.*
- o *Refer to [NSERC's Policy and Guidelines on the Assessment of Contributions to Research and Training](#) and the [Frequently Asked Questions for the Evaluation of HQP Criterion](#)*

<u>Describe:</u>
- o **Training Philosophy** should describe the applicant's approach to training HQP, detailing the mentoring approach and the type of research training and development opportunities provided.
  - ▪ Describe qualitatively any challenges or barriers encountered in ensuring an inclusive research and training environment.
  - ▪ Describe the planned approach to promoting participation from a diverse group of HQP, taking into account equity and inclusion in recruitment practices, mentorship approaches and initiatives aimed at ensuring an inclusive research and training environment and trainee growth.
  - ▪ Consider these resources: [guide for applicants](#), [EDI: best practices guide for recruitment](#) and [FAQ on the evaluation of training HQP](#)
- o **Research Training Plan** should outline how the research program and its anticipated projects are appropriate for HQP training in natural sciences and engineering. Applicants should:
  - ▪ Discuss the involvement of trainees in individual projects;
  - ▪ Provide details on the planned contributions to training in a co-supervisory or collaborative context, if appropriate;
  - ▪ Explain the planned future contributions to knowledge, and the expected training value of the proposed projects; and
  - ▪ Provide justification if limited training plans are provided.
- o *Applicants are expected to increase the inclusion and advancement of under-represented and disadvantaged groups in the natural sciences and engineering as one way to enhance excellence in research and training.*

Past Contributions to Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP) Training

☐ Past Contributions to HQP Training (text box – 6,000 characters)
- o *This information was formerly captured in the Form 100.*
- o Clarify your contributions to training of HQP over the **last six (6) years**.
- o The assessment of past contributions to HQP training focuses on the **quality and impact of training**, as demonstrated through three components. Each component should be supported by your CCV and/or application text:
  - ▪ **Training environment:** describe the research training and development opportunities provided for HQP (e.g., HQP science outreach and engagement, interdisciplinary research, collaborations, interaction with the private and public sectors). Describe specific actions implemented to support equity and inclusion in recruitment practices, mentorship approaches, and initiatives aimed at ensuring an inclusive research and training environment and trainee growth (if applicable).
  - ▪ **Important:** trainee demographic data is not requested, nor required to assess impacts resulting from consideration of equity, diversity and inclusion in the research and training environment.
  - ▪ **HQP awards and research contributions:** describe research contributions by HQP (e.g., publications, patents, key presentations) and highlight awards, scholarships and fellowships won by HQP.
  - ▪ **Outcomes and skills gained by HQP:** describe your most significant examples of HQP outcomes and explain how your training contributed to their success (e.g., skills and experiences gained, outcomes such as further studies or career). A successful outcome can be broadly defined as any outcome in which the HQP has an impact. This impact can be in natural sciences, engineering, or other fields, but it needs to be clear how the HQP is using the skills gained in the applicant's research training environment. Cases of HQP delays (e.g. parental or medical leaves) that are beyond your control can be considered. A pattern of prolonged periods of study/frequent student withdrawal from programs should be explained.
- o *Training supported by NSERC ranges from undergraduate theses and summer projects to postdoctoral levels, and includes technical and other research personnel.*

Most Significant Contributions to Research

☐ Most Significant Contributions to Research (text box – 9,000 characters)
- o *This information was formerly captured in the Form 100.*
- o Describe up to five (5) of your most significant contributions to research and/or to practical applications over the **last six (6) years**. Contributions made more than six (6) years ago but for which the impact is being felt now (e.g., exploitation of patent, inclusion in a code, etc.) may be included.
- o Applicants with eligible leaves of absence may include contributions from their most recent active research period prior to the last six years for a period equivalent to the duration of the leave.
- o For each, describe the significance in terms of influence on the direction of thought and activity in the target community and in terms of significance to, and use by, other researchers and end users. For collaborative contributions, describe your role.

- A contribution does not have to be a single publication or report. For example, a group of publications on a specific subject could be discussed as one contribution.
- Include the full reference to your contributions or provide the appropriate reference to your NSERC CCV. Applicants are asked to explain and give dates for any significant delays in the research activity or in the dissemination of research results in the NSERC CCV under the section Employment (leaves of absence/delays and their impact on research). Eligible leaves of absence (e.g., parental leave, medical leave, bereavement, extraordinary administrative duties) are those taken within the last six years. This attachment may also be used to list supplemental contributions to research and to training for a period equivalent to the duration of delays related to COVID-19.
  - Applicants who report an eligible leave of absence are entitled to a new attachment used to list supplemental contributions to research and to training beyond the last six years, for a period equivalent to the duration of the leave. Supplemental contributions must be taken from the most recent active research period prior to the last six years.

Additional Information on Contributions

☐ Additional Information on Contributions (text box – 3,000 characters)
- o Provide details, as appropriate, on the contributions listed in your NSERC CCV. Such details may include:
    - the nature of collaborations with other researchers;
    - the rationale or practice used for: the order of authors in the publications listed, and the inclusion of students in the list of authors;
    - your role in joint publications;
    - the reason for selecting certain venues (journals, conferences) for publications, particular features of the venues, e.g., target audiences, review procedures;
    - the impact or potential impact of patents and technology transfer;
    - the nature of industrially relevant R&D activities;
    - the significance of technical reports;
    - attestation to the nature and the significance of confidential technical and internal reports;
    - original research reported in books or technical reports.

You are encouraged to include other activities or information to help committees evaluate your contributions to and impact on science and engineering, including interdisciplinary research.

For more information, refer to the following

- NSERC's Guidelines on the assessment of contributions to research, training and mentoring

- Equity, diversity and inclusion considerations at each stage of the research process, and a new video series on Strengthening research by integrating equity, diversity and inclusion considerations in the research process

Activity Details

☐ Certification requirements
- o Indicate if your research will involve human subjects, pluripotent stem cells, animals, or biohazards.

☐ Environmental Impact
- o For more information, consult NSERC's guidelines on impact assessment.

☐ Sensitive Technology Research Areas: If you select *Yes*, you must complete and attach attestation forms to your grant application – in the STRAC Attestation Attachment section – to comply with the policy. In accordance with the Policy on Sensitive Technology Research and Affiliations of Concern, all researchers involved in the activities supported by a research grant that aims to advance a Sensitive Technology Research Area (STRA) must review the List of Named Research Organizations. Contact researchsecurity@ucalgary.ca if you have any questions.

☐ Research Subject Codes
- o Consult the Research Subject Codes. A primary research subject code is required.

☐ Area of Application Codes
- o Consult the Area of Application Codes. A primary area of application code is required.

☐ Keywords
- o Modify, as required, the keywords to best describe your proposal.

Eligibility Profile

☐ You must re-validate your eligibility profile. Click on Save and validate

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Formatting Attachments

You must prepare your attachments in a word processing program and follow these formatting standards:

1. Spell out all acronyms and abbreviations the first time they appear.
2. Use either letter-size pages (8.5 x 11 inches or 216 x 279 mm) or A4 pages (8.3 x 11.7 inches or 210 x 297 mm).
3. Use single spacing.
4. Use 12-point Times New Roman font for all text.*
5. Do not use condensed fonts; they will not be accepted.
6. Use black text only. Colour images are acceptable.**
7. Set all margins to at least ¾ inch (1.87 cm).
8. Do not include hyperlinks or bookmarks in your documents. Make sure the Create Bookmarks option in your software is turned off.
9. If any supporting document is in a language other than English or French, you must provide a certified translation.

* Font and size rules do not apply to text within tables and figures. However, the font must be clearly legible. NSERC may reject your application if this requirement is not met. Figures and tables count toward specified page limits.

** Using colour increases the file size of your application and may slow download and upload times.

Proposal (Required attachment)

☐ Proposal (maximum of 5 pages)

Addressing the points below, describe the proposed research to be supported. Images and graphics are included in the page limit.

- o Recent progress
    - Describe your recent progress in research activities related to the proposal and, in addition for renewals, the progress attributable to your previous DG.
- o Objectives
    - Define the short- and long-term objectives of your research program. Note that a research program should have a long-term vision that expands beyond the five years of the Discovery Grant. A single, short-term project or collection of projects does not constitute a research program.
- o Literature review
    - Discuss the literature pertinent to the proposal, placing the proposed research in the context of the state-of-the-art.
- o Methodology
    - Describe the methods and proposed approach, providing sufficient details to allow the reviewers to assess the feasibility of the research activities.
    - Considering equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in the research process promotes research excellence by making research outcomes more ethically sound, rigorous, reproducible, and useful. It is important to consider EDI through each stage of the research process, including, but not limited to, the research questions, design, methodology, analysis, interpretation and dissemination of results, and integrate these considerations where relevant. For more information, consult Equity, diversity and inclusion considerations at each stage of the research process, and a new video series on Strengthening research by integrating equity, diversity and inclusion considerations in the research process.
- o Impact
    - Explain the anticipated significance of the work.

Budget Justification (Required attachment)

☐ Budget Justification (maximum of 2 pages)

Before completing this page, read the instructions and consult the [Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide](#).

Provide a detailed explanation and justification for each budget item identified in the Proposed Expenditures page, following the same headings:

- o Salaries and benefits
    - ▪ Proposed salaries (including benefits benefits) of students, postdoctoral fellows and research staff should be mentioned.

        Please consult your department or faculty to confirm their standard graduate student stipend rates. While [Budget 2024](#) includes suggested stipend levels from the tri-agency—

        - • Master's: $27,000/year
        - • Doctoral: $40,000/year
        - • Postdoctoral: $70,000/year

        —these figures are based on cost-of-living estimates for individuals residing in high-cost urban centres and may not reflect local norms. <mark>These tri-agency rates are not mandatory</mark>.

    - ▪ Please note the minimum salaries for postdoc's at UCalgary, these are mandatory:
        - • $49,000/year effective July 1, 2025
        - • $51,000/year effective July 1, 2026
        - • $53,000/year effective July 1, 2027

- o Equipment or facility

    Note: While the Research Tools and Instruments grants program provides the primary avenue to obtain support for tools and instruments with a net cost between $7,001 and $250,000, equipment of any value can be purchased using a Discovery Grant.

- o Materials and supplies: Provide details of the budget requested for materials and supplies and explain major items.

- o Travel: Explain briefly how each travel activity relates to the proposed research program.

- o Dissemination: Provide details of publication costs, user workshops or other activities.

- o Other expenses: List all items not covered in previous categories and provide a brief explanation for major items.

- o Contributions from other sources (if applicable): If appropriate, explain any financial contributions from other sources.

Other Support Sources (Attachment)

☐ Other Support Sources (file size limit of 10 Mb)

☐ CIHR or SSHRC summary and budget pages
- o Applicants who currently hold, or have applied for, research support from CIHR or SSHRC **must** provide the summary and budget page of these proposals (these do not need to be reformatted). **Failure to provide these documents will result in an incomplete application.**
- o Do not include information concerning previous applications or grants that ended or will end before the funding period of the proposed DG.
- o However, a summary and budget page are not required if you hold, or have applied for, research support from sources other than CIHR and/or SSHRC.

List of References (Attachment)

☐ List of References (maximum of 2 pages)
- o Do not refer reviewers to web sites for additional information on your proposal.
- o Do not use hyperlinks or footnotes in your list of references

Samples of Research Contributions (Attachment)

☐ Samples of Research Contributions (up to 4 PDF attachments; file size maximum of 10 Mb/attachment)
- o *The samples of contributions will be used by reviewers to assess the quality of your work. These documents should be chosen to represent your most significant, recent contributions, or those most relevant to the proposed work in the **last six (6) years**.*
- o Submissions that are viewed as contributions primarily to health or social sciences will not be considered under the Excellence of the Researcher criterion.

Attestation - Confidential Contributions (Attachment)

☐ If applicable

STRAC Attestation Attachment (if applicable)

☐ If you selected Yes to the question regarding Sensitive Technology Research Areas (STRA) in the Activity Details section of your application, you must complete and attach an attestation form to your grant application to comply with the policy. By using the attestation form template, you certify that you have read, understood, and are compliant with this policy. The attestation form must include the current date, first and last name, primary affiliation (institution), email address, public profile link (optional) and attestation statement check.
- o Your response to the STRA question and your submitted attestation form are not accessible to, nor shared with, external reviewers and/or committee members.
- o Contact researchsecurity@ucalgary.ca if you have any questions.

Indigenous Research (if applicable)

☐ If you selected *Yes* to the question regarding Indigenous research in the Identification section of your application, you must complete and attach the Indigenous Engagement & Collaboration Agreement template. This agreement is a required part of the application and serves to demonstrate meaningful engagement and shared understanding between the applicant and Indigenous Nations, communities and/or organizations.

- The information provided will be shared with evaluation group members and external reviewers as part of the evaluation of the Discovery Grant application.
- NOTE: the Agreement will NOT be shared with NRS committee members.
- The template should be downloaded and completed by the applicant in collaboration with the Indigenous Nation, community and/or organization involved in the research.
- Please reach out to the Indigenous Research Support Team (IRST) at irst@ucalgary.ca as soon as possible.

[Leaves of absence (if applicable)](#)

☐ 2 pages max. If you have reported an eligible leave of absence or delay in your CCV, you are entitled to an attachment that must be used to list only supplemental contributions to research (list of presentations, interviews and media relations, publications, intellectual property and recognitions, etc.) and to training (list of supervisory activities) beyond the last six years, for a period equivalent to the duration of the leave or delay reported in your CCV. Supplemental contributions must be taken from the most recent active research period prior to the last six years and must be listed in the attachment along with dates (month and year).

If you are reporting a period of reduced research and training for an eligible reason, you must calculate and provide the full-time equivalent duration of the delay in the CCV: the affected time period and a percentage of reduction in time devoted to regular research and training activities.

Eligible leaves of absence and delays (e.g., maternity and parental leave, personal illness, chronic illness, mental illness, or disability associated with reduced research activity, leave taken for family-related illness, bereavement, extraordinary administrative duties) are those taken within the last six years. This attachment may also be used to list supplemental contributions to research and to training for a period equivalent to the duration of delays related to COVID-19. For further guidance on how to describe and consider the impacts of COVID-19 delays, refer to [Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on research: Guidelines for NSERC's community](#).

To access the *Leaves of absence* attachment, you must answer *Yes* to the question "I entered one or more eligible leaves of absence in my Canadian Common CV for this application," found on the Identification page of the application.

Examples of the use of the leaves of absence attachment

Leave of absence during period of assessment	For a four-month leave in the last six years (i.e., between January 1, 20 list supplemental contributions to research and training in the attachm immediately prior to the period of assessment (i.e., between Septemb
Leave of absence during period of assessment and immediately prior	For a four-month leave in the last six years (i.e., between January 1, 20 you were also on leave immediately prior to the period of assessment September 1, 2018, to January 1, 2019), you should list your contributi research immediately prior to the earlier leave (i.e., between May 1, 2
Period of reduced research and training	When reporting a loss of two-thirds of normal productivity for a year c entitled to list supplemental contributions in the attachment for a peri prior to the last six years (i.e., between May 1, 2018, and January 1, 20

D. Upload your NSERC Common CV

☐ To successfully upload your CCV, the first name and family name used to create your CCV site account must be identical to those used to create your Research Portal account. The email address used to create your Research Portal account must be identical to at least one of the emails you listed on the CCV site.

- In the *Application Overview* page, click *Attach*.
- Enter your CCV confirmation number (refer to the NSERC CCV [instructions](#) for professors for details on how to obtain your confirmation number).
- Click *Upload*.
- Click *Back to Application Overview.*
- Preview your CCV in the Research Portal and verify that it was uploaded correctly and that it contains all of the records that you wish to submit for peer review.
- Your CCV should be in the same language as your application.
- Note: While the [Canadian Common CV](#) website is bilingual, you can only save your NSERC CCV in one official language at a time. For example, to save a French version of your NSERC CCV, you must sign into your account using the French platform.

E. Submitting the Application to NSERC

☐ Complete the RMS record
- Complete the Pre-Award record in RMS (login at https://research.ucalgary.ca/rms) and submit for academic approvals. Ensure you receive all required approvals in advance of noon on October 29, 2025.
- The completed RMS record must be received by Research Services by **noon, October 29, 2025**.

☐ Submit your application to the UCalgary Research Services Office from the Application Overview page in the Research Portal. The Submit button will be displayed once you have validated all the sections and uploaded your NSERC CCV.
- If you would like a detailed review, Research Services must receive your complete application by 4pm on October 16, 2025
- The completed application must be submitted to the NSERC portal by **October 29, 2025 at noon**.

Review procedures and selection criteria

Applications are submitted to the Discovery Grants program and not to a particular evaluation group (EG). Applications are reviewed by EGs. Each EG comprises Canadian and international peers with diversified expertise in the areas of research covered by the EG. There may also be input on applications from external reviewers. NSERC assigns applications to EGs on the basis of the research topics, the objectives of the proposed research program and input from both applicants and EGs. At the NOI stage, applicants are asked to suggest which EG they believe to be the most appropriate to review their application. The final decision of EG assignment is made by NSERC.
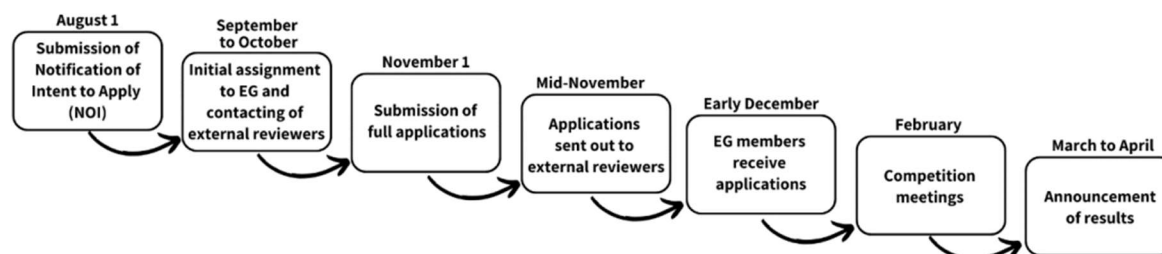
Source of image: Peer Review manual 2025-26

For interdisciplinary research, appropriate review of the application will be ensured by identifying appropriate EG members and external reviewers to review the application. Please see Guidelines for the preparation and review of applications in interdisciplinary research.

Applications are rated according to the following selection criteria. The onus is on applicants to address these explicitly in their application.

- **Excellence of the researcher** (see Policy and guidelines on contributions to research and training)
    - Knowledge, expertise, and experience of the researcher in the NSE.
    - quality of contributions to, and impact on, the proposed and other areas of research in the natural sciences and engineering
    - Importance of contributions to, and use by, other researchers and end-users (such as industry, partners, communities, including Indigenous communities, or the general public).
- **Merit of the proposal**
    - originality and innovation; extent to which the proposal suggests and explores novel or potentially transformative concepts and lines of inquiry
    - significance and expected contributions to research; potential for policy and/or technology related impact
    - clarity and scope of objectives (research program with long-term goals rather than a single short-term project or collection of projects)
    - clarity and appropriateness of methodology
    - feasibility
    - extent to which the scope of the proposal addresses all relevant issues, including the need for varied expertise within or across disciplines
    - Consideration of equity, diversity and inclusion in the research process

- o   appropriateness of, and justification for, the budget
- o   demonstration that the Discovery Grant proposal is conceptually distinct from research support held or applied for through CIHR and/or SSHRC
- **Contribution to the training of highly qualified personnel (HQP)** (see Policy and guidelines on contributions to research and training)
  - o   quality and impact of past training of HQP (e.g., postdoctoral fellows, graduate and undergraduate students, technicians), including
    - ▪   training environment provided for HQP
    - ▪   HQP awards and research contributions
    - ▪   outcomes and skills gained by HQP
  - o   quality, suitability and clarity of the planned training of HQP, including
    - ▪   overall training philosophy
    - ▪   research training plan for individual HQP
  - o   consideration of equity, diversity and inclusion in past and planned training of HQP

The overall merit assessment of each application is based on the combination of ratings by the EG for each selection criterion. The final rating assigned and the applicant category will determine the grant level.

Resources

- Discovery Grants information centre
- Memo to potential applicants
- Pre-recorded "how to apply" videos
- List of evaluation groups and research topics
- Discovery Grants – applicant categories
- Relationship between NSERC proposals and other sources of funds
- Peer review manual
- Selecting the appropriate federal granting agency

- Discovery Grants – Discovery Accelerator Supplements
- Discovery Grants – Discovery Launch Supplements
- Discovery Grants - Northern Research Supplements
- DND/NSERC Discovery Grant Supplements

- Discovery Grants merit indicators
- FAQ on the evaluation of the HQP criterion
- Instructions to external reviewers
- NSERC Discovery Grants process for decisions on mandate eligibility
- Primary caregivers who are eligible for but decline taking extended leave (maternity, parental or adoption) - NSERC Discovery Grant and Discovery Development Grant holders only (pilot)
- TCPS 2– Chapter 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples of Canada
- Setting new directions to support Indigenous research and research training in Canada
- SSHRC: Guidelines for the Merit Review of Indigenous Research
- FACETS: Towards reconciliation: 10 Calls to Action to natural scientists working in Canada
- Tri-agency guideline on remuneration for Indigenous people participating in funded projects