# Transcript: SSHRC CGSD, Part 2

[Introduction]

Welcome to the SSHRC CGSD, Part 2: Application advice and support.

- What are the selection criteria?
- How do I prepare an application?
- What support is available?
- What are my next steps?

While every effort has been made to provide accurate information, please refer to the SSHRC program material as your primary source of information.

## Accessibility Statement

For a copy of these slides and a transcript of this recording (including hyperlinks), please visit the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) Canada Graduate Scholarship – Doctoral website. Content is available in Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Word, and other formats upon request.

If you experience accessibility barriers with this presentation please contact fgsaward@uvic.ca.

## What are the Selection Criteria?

CGSD selection criteria:

Fifty per cent of your score is based on research ability and potential. This includes the quality of your research proposal.

- Is it specific, focused, and feasible?
- Is your methodology sound?
- What is the significance of your project and your expected contribution to research?
- Have you demonstrated the ability and potential to carry out the project?

The other fifty per cent of your score is based on relevant experience and achievements within and beyond academia, including scholarships and awards, transcripts, and activities such as teaching, mentoring, organizing conferences, community outreach, and participating in associations and clubs.

A complete description is available at the link.

# Indicators of Excellence

When you click on the hyperlink to find the selection criteria you will notice that the description refers to the examples as indicators.  Indicators are the evidence you will provide that demonstrates how you meet the selection criteria, so it's important to know what kind of evidence reviewers are looking for.

- The Guidelines on the assessment of contributions to research, training and mentoring describes how applications submitted to SSHRC funding opportunities are assessed during the merit review process.  This document applies to all SSHRC funding programs – including research grants for faculty members – so focus on the sections that are relevant for your application.  For example, contributions to research includes not only publications, but also creation of datasets, appropriate data stewardship, accessibility of research results, contributions to policy development, and communication of research results to non-specialist audiences.
- The Review committee guide for Postgraduate Scholarships – Doctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowships programs is the guide for SSHRC reviewers who will evaluate your application in the national competition.  This document is available to the public at the link provided.  Section 3.6 and Appendix A can provide insight into the evaluation process.
- The San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (known as DORA) is an initiative to promote best practices in the assessment of research contributions: specifically, to avoid over-reliance on journal publications as indicators of research output.
- SSHRC's Guide on integrating equity, diversity and inclusion considerations in research provides guidance on applying a critical EDI lens at different stages of the research process.

There is considerable overlap among these documents so you don't need to read them in their entirety, but you may find it helpful to look through the examples as you highlight the indicators, or evidence, that you want to present to reviewers.

# Your Application Strategy

The diagram on this slide is a circular flowchart in which three sections labelled selection criteria, your qualifications, and application sections are in a continuous feedback loop.

As you prepare your application, work back and forth between the selection criteria and indicators, your qualifications, and the different sections of the application to ensure that all of your relevant qualifications are reflected in the application.

Consult with your academic supervisor and references to identify which of your qualifications will have the greatest impact. Provide them with a draft copy of your Research proposal, your Contributions and statements, and your CV. Ask your references to include qualifications that may not be reflected in your application, such as a paper that has been submitted but not yet accepted.

## SSHRC Online Application

Navigate to the SSHRC application platform to create, edit, save and verify the various components of your doctoral awards program application form and SSHRC CV module . Consult the website to find detailed instructions for completing the application.

Be sure to follow the presentation & attachment standards specified in the instructions which covers things like font size and page numbering.

Initiate your application, then edit and save frequently. Don't wait until the last minute to initiate an application and upload your attachments. There are two reasons why this is helpful:

1. If you initiate an application, then send FGS an email, we can check the portal to ensure that we can see your application. This means you have selected the correct option to be in the UVic pool of applicants. If you don't select the correct options, SSHRC may disqualify your application.
2. In the event of a system-wide technical problem – which does happen from time to time – we will know that you are an applicant in this competition and we will be able to provide you with information and instructions.

SSHRC has a help desk for support with the portal's accessibility features.

And a reminder that technical support is through SSHRC, not UVic.

## Personal Data

SSHRC uses data from the **MY ACCOUNT** section to inform equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives. Information in this section is not available to UVic, your academic references, or reviewers. You must complete this section, but you may select "*I prefer not to answer.*"

Applicants who self-identify as Indigenous and consent in this section will be identified by FGS and SSHRC personnel for the purpose of forwarding applications to the national competition.

# Equity Initiatives

Indigenous student researchers. As part of the Tri-Agencies commitment to supporting research by and with Indigenous peoples, institutions may recommend an unlimited number of applications from Indigenous students to the national competition.

Black student researchers. The Tri-Agencies have dedicated resources to address the disproportionate underfunding of Black scholars. This support will help strengthen efforts to address inequities, making Canada's research culture more equitable, diverse, and inclusive.

In order to be considered for these initiatives, students are invited to self-identify in the "My Account" section of the online application.

# Funds Eligibility

Here are a few tips for the basic eligibility sections of your application.

Program information: choose the correct option that reflects your current status (options A to D). Refer to the section of the instructions titled Program information if you are unsure.

Canada Graduate Scholarship or Fellowship eligibility - the months of study completed in your doctoral program determines your eligibility for one or the other. Either way, there's only the one application, the **Doctoral Awards Program application form** to complete.

Review the list of funding supplements described in the previous recording **or** within the application instructions. If you are eligible for a funding Supplement, ensure that you select those that are applicable from the Supplements drop down menu in the "Application Profile" section.

Justification for eligibility of proposed research: If your research project overlaps with the NSERC or CIHR mandate you will need to prepare a justification for submission of your application to SSHRC. This section of the application will be reviewed by SSHRC to determine your eligibility, but will not be evaluated by reviewers.

If you are in the position of preparing a justification, it is advisable to contact SSHRC to confirm the eligibility of your project well in advance of the application deadline. Please contact the Faculty of Graduate Studies at fgsaward@uvic.ca for more information.

# Transcripts

It is very important that your transcripts meet both the SSHRC requirements, and UVic requirements or you risk having your application disqualified.

- Your transcripts must be complete.  You must have transcripts for all post-secondary studies including transfer credit, study abroad, and programs not completed.  If you participated in international exchange and those courses are listed in your home institution's transcript, it must include a letter grade or score, not just a complete or incomplete designation.  If a score isn't included you will need an official transcript from the host institution.
- Your transcripts must be up-to-date including fall 2024 registration.  This is important for proof of registration and the months of study eligibility requirement.
- Transcripts from other institutions: must be official.
- Transcripts from UVic:  official is preferred but unofficial is accepted.  You can access an unofficial transcript through your Online Tools.
- Include one copy of the legend for each transcript, including the UVic transcript.
- Your transcript must be in English, French, or accompanied by a certified translation.
- When ordering transcripts, request that they be sent to you, not FGS.

See complete instructions on the [FGS CGSD](#) website under the Application Procedures section.

# The Core Content of Your Application

Your Research proposal, Contributions and statements, and Letter of Appraisal forms represent the core of your application.  This important information is addressed by the SSHRC Coaches during the in-person workshop so I will just provide a few technical comments here.  If you did not attend the in-person workshop, please contact the SSHRC Coaches for support.  Contact information will be provided later in this presentation.

Outline of proposed research:  use a citation style that saves space (such as numerical references in superscript) and enhance readability with way-finding headings.

Contributions and statements:  use the headings, sub-headings, and format provided in the detailed application instructions.

The two Letter of Appraisal forms:  this is an online form that needs to be completed by two academic references (also called Referees), one of which should be from your

academic supervisor.  If your academic supervisor cannot complete the form, you should provide a rationale in the Allowable Inclusions attachment for the application.

Provide your references with a copy of your draft application, CV, and [Letter of Appraisal form—Instructions for referees](#).  Enter their contact information into the online form:  this will generate an email with a link they can use to upload their form.  I recommend that you set an earlier deadline with your referees, as **you will not be able to submit your application** until they have submitted their forms.

Your Letter of Appraisal references may choose to share the comments they submitted, but you cannot view the appraisal forms in the application portal.

# Support your narrative & highlight successes

Think of your application not as a series of separate components, but as a single cohesive document. Here are some examples of what I mean.  Use the following sections of your application to reinforce the narrative in your three core areas.

SSHRC CV section: let the reviewers know what choices you've made in terms of employment and volunteerism that exemplify your commitment to gaining skill sets that support and enhance your academic path. List any recognitions and awards you've received within and beyond academia.

Bibliography:  Your bibliography is an opportunity to demonstrate awareness of foundational and relevant works in your research area.  However, don't list unnecessary references just to fill up the available space.  You can use any citation style appropriate to your discipline.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Considerations in Research:  The EDI section is an opportunity to demonstrate that you have applied a critical EDI lens at different stages of the research process.  It is also extra space, if applicable, (beyond the 2-page maximum for your Research proposal) to expand on these aspects of your project.

Allowable Inclusions:  This is an optional section you can use to identify challenges or delays, or provide necessary context or clarification.  Be clear and concise and avoid identifying other individuals (for example, do not describe a particular relative's health details).  This section of the application can be viewed by FGS, your referees, and by UVic and SSHRC reviewers.

# What Support is Available?

The Faculty of Graduate Studies provides support throughout the application process. My contact information is provided here: Kathy McCarthy, Scholarship Officer, email fgsaward@uvic.ca.

Your SSHRC Coaches: Dr. Mary Elizabeth Leighton's email mleighto@uvic.ca and Dr. James Rowe jkrowe@uvic.ca can provide advice and feedback on your application, particularly your outline of proposed research and your application strategy.

Additional writing support is available through UVic's Centre for Academic Communication (CAC) located in the Library. You can book individual appointments or you can upload your writing to their online portal to receive feedback. While the CAC can't advise on the technical aspects of your proposal, they can help you polish your writing into a compelling argument.

Finally, please keep in mind that your technical support is through SSHRC, not UVic, so allow extra time for any technical issues that may arise (for example, difficulty uploading your transcripts or a forgotten password).

# What Are My Next Steps?

1. If you haven't already done so, contact your two academic references.
2. Order your official transcripts.
3. Set yourself a schedule to meet the deadline that allows time for feedback, particularly on the Outline of Proposed Research and the Contributions and Statements sections of your application. Ask for feedback from one or both of the SSHRC Coaches, your academic supervisor, your committee, the graduate advisor in your program, the CAC, and your peers.
4. Submit your application in the portal by the UVic internal deadline: Thursday, October 3rd, noon Pacific time.
5. In the weeks following the internal deadline, FGS will conduct a technical review of your application. Should your application require minor edits, we will return your application, electronically, in the portal then contact you with feedback as well as a time period during which you may make revisions. Once completed then re-submit your application in the portal. We will send our feedback to the preferred email address you have provided in your UVic Online Tools.

Campus review and selection for the national competition will take place throughout October and November. Departments will review applications and withdraw any they do not consider to be competitive. Next, a committee of faculty members in the social sciences and humanities will review and score your applications. The top ranked

applications will be forwarded to the national competition, up to a maximum number set by SSHRC (known as the quota).  This year UVic's SSHRC quota is 49.  You will be advised of the outcome – whether or not you have been selected for the national competition – in late November.  The review process for the national competition takes place in the new year, and SSHRC will announce the results in April.

This concludes the presentation.  Thank you.