








## Discovery Grants Program

Overview	
Duration	Up to five years
Application Deadline	( <a href="http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca">http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca</a> ) <b>August 1</b> ( <a href="http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/FAQ-FAQ_eng.asp#a5">http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/FAQ-FAQ_eng.asp#a5</a> ) (Notification of Intent to Apply) <b>November 1</b> ( <a href="http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/FAQ-FAQ_eng.asp#a5">http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/FAQ-FAQ_eng.asp#a5</a> ) (Application)
Application Procedure	<b>See below</b> ( <a href="http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca#procedures">http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca#procedures</a> )
How to Apply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Canadian Common CV</li><li>▪ Notification of Intent to Apply</li><li>▪ Application</li></ul> <p>To create a Canadian Common CV, select  <b>Canadian Common CV</b> (<a href="https://ccv-cvc.ca/">https://ccv-cvc.ca/</a>) .</p> <p>To create or access a Notification of Intent to Apply or an Application, select <b>Research Portal</b> (<a href="https://portal-portail.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/">https://portal-portail.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/</a>) .</p> <p>To view instructions, select <b>Instructions</b> (<a href="http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/ResearchPortal-PortailDeRecherche/Instructions-Instructions/index_eng.asp">http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/ResearchPortal-PortailDeRecherche/Instructions-Instructions/index_eng.asp</a>) .</p>
For More Information	Consult the <b>Contact List</b> ( <a href="http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/ContactUs-ContactezNous/ContactDirectory-RepertoiredeContact_eng.asp#Professors-Professeurs">http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/ContactUs-ContactezNous/ContactDirectory-RepertoiredeContact_eng.asp#Professors-Professeurs</a> )

## (<http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca>) Important Information

- **Memo to Potential Applicants – Important Notice From NSERC – Notification of Intent to Apply (NOI)** ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/Grants-Subs/DGIGPNotice-PSIGPAvis\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/Grants-Subs/DGIGPNotice-PSIGPAvis_eng.asp))
- **List of Evaluation Groups and Research Topics** ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/Grants-Subs/DGPLList-PSDListe\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/Grants-Subs/DGPLList-PSDListe_eng.asp))
- **Peer Review Manual** ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Reviewers-Examineurs/IntroPRManual-IntroManuelEP\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Reviewers-Examineurs/IntroPRManual-IntroManuelEP_eng.asp))
-  **FAQ on the Evaluation of the HQP Criterion** ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/\\_doc/Professors-Professeurs/FAQ\\_Evaluation\\_HQP\\_eng.pdf](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/_doc/Professors-Professeurs/FAQ_Evaluation_HQP_eng.pdf))
-  **Discovery Grants Merit Indicators** ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/\\_doc/Professors-Professeurs/DG\\_Merit\\_Indicators\\_eng.pdf](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/_doc/Professors-Professeurs/DG_Merit_Indicators_eng.pdf))
-  **Selecting the Appropriate Federal Granting Agency** (<http://www.science.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=FEE7261A-1>)
-  **NSERC Discovery Grants Process for Decisions on Mandate Eligibility** (<http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Grants-Subs/DGIGPProcess-ProcessusdeDecisionSurEligibiliteEng.asp>)

[crsng.gc.ca/\\_doc/Professors-Professeurs/mandate\\_eng.pdf](http://crsng.gc.ca/_doc/Professors-Professeurs/mandate_eng.pdf))

- **Relationship Between NSERC Proposals and Other Sources of Funds** ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Policies-Politiques/NSERCOtherSources-CRSNGAutreSources\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Policies-Politiques/NSERCOtherSources-CRSNGAutreSources_eng.asp))
- **Discovery Grants – Discovery Accelerator Supplements** ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/Grants-Subs/DGAS-SGSA\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/Grants-Subs/DGAS-SGSA_eng.asp))
- **Discovery Grants Information Centre** ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/DGIC-CISD\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/DGIC-CISD_eng.asp))
- **Discovery Grants – Applicant Categories** ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/Grants-Subs/DFCategories-FDCategories\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/Grants-Subs/DFCategories-FDCategories_eng.asp))
-  **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)** ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/\\_doc/Professors-Professeurs/PrimaryCaregivers\\_e.pdf](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/_doc/Professors-Professeurs/PrimaryCaregivers_e.pdf))

## Objective

The Discovery Grants Program assists in:

- promoting and maintaining a diversified base of high-quality research capability in the natural sciences and engineering in Canadian universities;
- fostering research excellence; and
- providing a stimulating environment for research training.

## Description

The Discovery Grants Program supports ongoing programs of research (with long-term goals) rather than a single short-term project or collection of projects. These grants recognize the creativity and innovation that are at the heart of all research advances. Discovery Grants are considered 'grants in aid' of research as they provide long term operating funds to support the costs of a research program. As a grant in aid of research, Discovery Grants are not meant to support the full costs of a research program and they can facilitate access to funding from other programs. NSERC recognizes that, while being of a grant in aid nature, Discovery Grants must be sufficient to support a program of quality research that can have a meaningful impact on the field of study.


Recipients of Discovery Grants are not restricted to the specific activities described in their applications, but may pursue new research interests, provided they are within NSERC's mandate. This provides researchers with the flexibility to pursue promising research avenues as they emerge and the opportunity to address higher-risk (higher reward) topics. Researchers can use their grants to participate in collaborative efforts.

## General Application Eligibility Principles

Discovery Grants are normally awarded for five years. Researchers can apply for and hold only one Discovery Grant at a time. Researchers who hold a Discovery Grant cannot reapply for another Discovery Grant until the last year of their current award. If you currently hold a team grant and wish to apply individually, consult NSERC.



NSERC does not consider requests for supplements to existing Discovery Grants, except for E. W. R. Steacie Memorial Fellows and Discovery Grant Northern Research Supplements holders. Recipients may, however, apply for all other types of NSERC grants.

## Overlap

Applicants cannot submit the same proposal to both NSERC and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada or the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (see  [Selecting the Appropriate Federal Granting Agency](http://www.science.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=FEE7261A-1) (<http://www.science.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=FEE7261A-1>) and [Relationship Between NSERC Proposals and Other Sources of Funds](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Policies-Politiques/NSERCOtherSources-CRSNGAutreSources_eng.asp) ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Policies-Politiques/NSERCOtherSources-CRSNGAutreSources\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Policies-Politiques/NSERCOtherSources-CRSNGAutreSources_eng.asp)).

NSERC encourages researchers to obtain funds from other sources, but does not allow duplication of funding for the same research. The onus is on the applicant to provide information on the relationship (conceptual and budgetary), between the proposed research and other research for which support is held or sought. Refer to the [Peer Review Manual](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Reviewers-Examineurs/IntroPRManual-IntroManuelEP_eng.asp) ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Reviewers-Examineurs/IntroPRManual-IntroManuelEP\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Reviewers-Examineurs/IntroPRManual-IntroManuelEP_eng.asp)) and [Instructions for Completing an Application](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/ResearchPortal-PortailDeRecherche/Instructions-Instructions/DG-SD_eng.asp) ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/ResearchPortal-PortailDeRecherche/Instructions-Instructions/DG-SD\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/ResearchPortal-PortailDeRecherche/Instructions-Instructions/DG-SD_eng.asp)) for further information on conceptual and budgetary overlap.

## Subject Matter


Applicants to the Discovery Grants Program must apply with a program of research that is eligible under NSERC's mandate, which is to promote and assist research in the natural sciences and engineering, other than health. The intended objectives of the research program must be, primarily, to advance knowledge in the natural sciences or in engineering. If NSERC determines that the subject matter is outside of its mandate at any time during the review cycle, the application will be rejected. Refer to  [Selecting the Appropriate Federal Granting Agency](http://www.science.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=FEE7261A-1) (<http://www.science.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=FEE7261A-1>), the [Peer Review Manual](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Reviewers-Examineurs/IntroPRManual-IntroManuelEP_eng.asp) ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Reviewers-Examineurs/IntroPRManual-IntroManuelEP\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Reviewers-Examineurs/IntroPRManual-IntroManuelEP_eng.asp)), and  [NSERC Discovery Grants Process for Decisions on Mandate Eligibility](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/_doc/Professors-Professeurs/mandate_eng.pdf) ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/\\_doc/Professors-Professeurs/mandate\\_eng.pdf](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/_doc/Professors-Professeurs/mandate_eng.pdf)) for further information on the eligibility of subject matter.

## Applicant Categories

Applicants to the Discovery Grant Program are categorized as either Early Career Researchers or Established Researchers. Refer to the [Discovery Grants - Applicant Categories](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/Grants-Subs/DFCategories-FDCategories_eng.asp) ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/Grants-Subs/DFCategories-FDCategories\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/Grants-Subs/DFCategories-FDCategories_eng.asp)) for more information. Applicant categorization is the responsibility of NSERC staff and is based on the information provided by the applicant in the CCV and application. (<http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca>)

## <http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca> Application Procedure

To apply for a Discovery Grant, applicants must first submit a Notification of Intent to Apply (NOI) by the [deadline date](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/Grants-Subs/DGIGP-PSIGP_eng.asp#deadline) ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/Grants-Subs/DGIGP-PSIGP\\_eng.asp#deadline](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/Grants-Subs/DGIGP-PSIGP_eng.asp#deadline)). The NOI is a mandatory step in the application process. It allows NSERC to start the review process (e.g., preliminary assignment to an Evaluation Group (EG), selection of appropriate external reviewers and verification of the eligibility of the subject matter). Applicants must then complete and submit the Application by the deadline date.

Applicants are required to complete and submit the NSERC version of the  [Canadian Common CV](https://ccv-cvc.ca/indexresearcher-eng.frm) (<https://ccv-cvc.ca/indexresearcher-eng.frm>) (CCV) at the NOI and Application stages for this program. The CCV can be updated between the time it is submitted with the NOI and the application deadline.

## <http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca>) Review Procedures and Selection Criteria

Applications are reviewed by Evaluation Groups (EGs). Each EG is comprised of 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 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.

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](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Politiques-Politiques/prepInterdiscip-prepInterdiscip_eng.asp) ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Politiques-Politiques/prepInterdiscip-prepInterdiscip\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Politiques-Politiques/prepInterdiscip-prepInterdiscip_eng.asp)). Applications are rated according to the following selection criteria. The onus is on applicants to address these explicitly in their application.

- **Scientific or Engineering Excellence of the Researcher(s)** (see [Policy and Guidelines on the Assessment of Contributions to Research and Training](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Politiques-Politiques/assesscontrib-evalcontrib_eng.asp) ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Politiques-Politiques/assesscontrib-evalcontrib\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Politiques-Politiques/assesscontrib-evalcontrib_eng.asp)))
  - Knowledge, expertise, and experience.
  - 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.
- **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.
  - Appropriateness of, and justification for, the budget.
  - Explanation of the relationship between other sources of funding and the current proposal; extent to which it is clear, comprehensive and convincing.
- **Contribution to the Training of Highly Qualified Personnel** (see [Policy and Guidelines on the Assessment of Contributions to Research and Training](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Politiques-Politiques/assesscontrib-evalcontrib_eng.asp) ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Politiques-Politiques/assesscontrib-evalcontrib\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Politiques-Politiques/assesscontrib-evalcontrib_eng.asp)))
  - Quality and impact of past contributions to the training of highly qualified personnel (e.g., postdoctoral fellows, graduate and undergraduate students, technicians).
  - Appropriateness and clarity of the proposal for the training of highly qualified personnel.
  - Enhancement of training arising from a collaborative or interdisciplinary environment (where applicable).
- **Relative Cost of Research**

In addition to the selection criteria discussed above, applications are also assessed with regard to the cost of the proposed research relative to the normal costs in the discipline. These can include special needs related to the nature of collaborative activities or infrastructure costs such as user fees.

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, the applicant category, and the outcome of the assessment of the relative costs of research will determine the grant level.



People. Discovery. Innovation.