



## **Backgrounder**

# **Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships Program**

The Government of Canada is launching the new and prestigious Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships Program (Vanier CGS) to strengthen Canada's ability to attract and retain the world's top-tier doctoral students, both nationally and internationally, and make Canada a world leader in higher education research. The program is designed to attract and retain world-class doctoral students who demonstrate leadership skills and a high standard of scholarly achievement in graduate studies in the social sciences and humanities, natural sciences and engineering, and health by offering them a significant financial award to assist them while they study. Beginning in June 2009, a total of 166 scholarships valued at \$50 000 each will be awarded annually, for up to three years. When fully operational, the program will support 500 students per year.

The Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships are targeted towards the top domestic and international doctoral students. The goal is to attract and retain the world's premier students and brand Canada as a global centre of excellence in research and higher learning.

Students must be nominated by a recognized Canadian university to apply for a scholarship, which will be awarded after a competitive process that includes a two-stage peer review. All nominees will be evaluated a peer review committee situated in one of the three federal granting agencies, which will select 70 nominations for the disciplines covered by the agency. These 70 nominations (for a total of 210) will be forwarded to the arm's-length Inter-agency Selection Board that will make the final recommendation. The Board will recommend approximately 55 Vanier CGS recipients to the president of each of the respective agencies (for a total of 165). The Board will also oversee the program delivery process and results to ensure the program achieves its objectives.

The Vanier CGS Program is part of the Government of Canada's Science and Technology Strategy announced in 2007. The program aims to promote the development and application of leading-edge knowledge, support the development of a world-class workforce and position Canada as a magnet for the world's top graduate students.

The program confirms Canada's standing as a global centre of excellence in research and higher learning. Canada's universities and all Canadians will benefit from prosperity and heightened quality of life, as well as the greater learning opportunities for our university students this program provides.

Canada's three research granting agencies — the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research — will provide all the guidance, support and tools needed to administer and promote the program.