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*For Immediate Release*

## **Federal Government Announces Implementation of Prestigious Research and Scholarship Programs**

**TORONTO (September 2, 2008)**—The Honourable Jim Prentice, Minister of Industry today announced the implementation of two new and prestigious programs that will position Canada as a global centre of excellence in research and education: the Canada Excellence Research Chairs (CERC) Program and the Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship Program (Vanier CGS). Distinguished members of the Selection Boards for each program were also announced.

“Canada’s prosperity as a nation is increasingly based on excellence in innovation and technology and the highly skilled and creative individuals whose talents bring discovery to life,” said Minister Prentice. “Their ideas spark the creation of new products, services, and whole industries that drive Canada’s economic competitiveness, strengthen our social foundations, sustain the environment, and improve the quality of life of all Canadians. I am proud to announce the launch of two new government initiatives dedicated to global excellence in research and to strengthening Canada’s ties to the global supply of talent and ideas.”

The Government of Canada has taken unprecedented steps to compete in the global research market, retain the best minds in Canada, and attract the brightest new talent from around the world. In May 2007, the government introduced the Science & Technology (S&T) strategy designed to turn ideas into innovations that provide solutions to environmental, health, and other social challenges while also improving economic competitiveness.

“The two programs are important extensions of the S&T strategy,” continued Minister Prentice. “They will empower people, strengthen knowledge, and encourage entrepreneurial advantages to build a strong Canada for the future.”

The CERC program will award 20 Chair holders and their research teams with up to \$10M over seven years to establish ambitious research programs at Canadian universities. When fully operational, the Vanier CGS Program will support 500 Canadian and international doctoral students each year with three year scholarships valued at up to \$50,000 per annum. Both programs are a tri-agency initiative of the Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) and Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR). The CERC program is administered by the Canada Research Chairs Secretariat, which is housed within SSHRC. The Vanier CGS program is administered by each granting agency and coordinated by the Canada Research Chairs Secretariat.

“The Canada Excellence Research Chairs Program and the Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship Program will promote the development and application of leading-edge

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knowledge and position Canada as a magnet for the world's top research leaders and doctoral students," said Dr. Chad Gaffield, President of SSHRC. "They will attract candidates of the highest calibre including leading academics in every field."

Applications and nominations to the CERC program will be peer-reviewed. A prestigious and distinguished arms-length Selection Board, comprised of world-renowned Canadian and international experts, will assess all applications and nominations. Board members also include Derek Burney, Senior Strategic Advisor, Ogilvy Renault LLP who will serve as the Chair, Robert Prichard, President and Chief Executive Officer, Torstar Corporation who will serve as the Vice Chair.

The Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships Program aims to attract and retain world-class doctoral students by supporting students who demonstrate a high standard of scholarly achievement in graduate studies and leadership skills. Vanier CGS nominees will be evaluated by agency-specific multidisciplinary Peer Review Committees that will forward selected nominations to a blue-ribbon independent Inter-Agency Selection Board. The Board will recommend Vanier CGS recipients, and will be chaired by Laurent Beaudoin, Chairman of the Board of Bombardier Inc., Martha Piper, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the University of Alberta-based National Institute for Nanotechnology (NINT) will serve as the Vice Chair and Marc Lortie, Ambassador of Canada to France will serve as one of the members of the board. The selection Board will also comprise world-renowned Canadian and international experts.

The Science and Technology and Innovation Council provided valuable advice to the Minister of Industry in shaping the design of the two programs.

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For more information on the Programs, please visit [www.cerc.gc.ca](http://www.cerc.gc.ca) and [www.vanier-cgs-bes.gc.ca](http://www.vanier-cgs-bes.gc.ca) or contact:

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### **About the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)**

The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) is the federal agency that promotes and supports university-based research and training in the humanities and social sciences. Through its programs and policies, the Council enables the highest levels of research excellence in Canada, and facilitates knowledge sharing and collaboration across research disciplines, universities and all sectors of society. Created by an act of Parliament in 1977, SSHRC is governed by a 22-member Council that reports to Parliament through the Minister of Industry.

### **About the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC)**

The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) is the national instrument for making strategic investments in Canada's capability in science and technology. NSERC supports both basic university research through discovery grants and project research through partnerships among universities, governments and the private sector, as well as the advanced training of highly qualified people. NSERC is a separate employer of the Government of Canada, reporting to Parliament through the Minister of Industry. It is governed by a President and a Council of 21 distinguished members selected from the private and public sectors, and universities.

### **About The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)**

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) is the major federal agency responsible for funding health research in Canada. It aims to excel in the creation of new health knowledge, and to translate that knowledge from the research setting into real world applications. The results are improved health for Canadians, more effective health services and products, and a strengthened Canadian health care system. As an arms length agency of government, it is accountable to Parliament through the Minister of Health.