STUDENT PROGRAM

GRADUATE STUDENT EXCELLENCE AWARD
2024-2025 Competition

INSTRUCTIONS

Deadline: **August 15, 2024***

*Should this date falls on a Friday or Saturday, the candidates will have until Sunday night to send their application.

Goal

These awards are intended to help and encourage graduate students (**MSc** and **PhD students**) in research in vision in order to better perform in competitions for awards from granting agencies (FRQ, CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC). Students will benefit from constructive comments of experienced evaluators that will allow them to consolidate their application and increase their chances of success in these competitions.

Amount and number of awards

The amount of an "*Excellence award*" will be **$ 2,500,** non-renewable and, the number of awards depends on availability of funds.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the VSRN "*Excellence Award*" competition:

- The candidate must be enrolled full-time in a Master's or PhD program on or before **September 30, 2024**, in a master's or doctoral program under the supervision of a VSRN researcher member.
- The candidate's research project must focus on vision health or sciences.
- It is the responsibility of the student to ensure his or her eligibility to the competition he or she will apply to.
- Only **one Graduate Student Excellence scholarship can be awarded to a student during his or her studies** (all levels included).

Mandatory conditions following the grant

The **recipients** undertake to **submit** his or her **scholarship application** to the FRQ (FRQS, FRQNT or FRQSC) in the current year (fall of the same year). They must provide the **acknowledgement receipt of their application** as well as **proof of registration** (if not present in the initial submission) in the following week to the VSRN. In the rare event that a candidate would not be eligible for a FRQ Master's or a PhD training award, but would be eligible to a CIHR, NSERC or SSHRC competition, the candidate undertake to submit his or her scholarship application to one of this three organisms. Please visit the websites of the eligible organisms for their respective deadlines (see list below).

Evaluation criteria

The application will be assessed on the quality of the candidate's record and his/her chances of success in the scholarship competition to which he/her will apply to. The evaluation grid of the chosen competition will be the one used by the VSRN Scientific Committee.

Commitment

Any recipient of a VSRN *"Excellence Award"* agrees to:
- Acknowledge the support of the VSRN in each presentation (oral or poster) and publication resulting from the project for which he was awarded the scholarship: By using the one of the following wordings, according to the publication language and to the research project topic:
  « Le Réseau de recherche en sciences de la vision » or « The Vision Sciences Research Network »
- Present the results of the research project at the VSRN Annual Meeting;
- Declare to the Network any additional awards received during the period funded by the Network;
- Respond to the requests for follow-up sent by the VSRN after the completion of the Master's or PhD Degree in order to evaluate the efficiency of this program.

Timelines

- Deadline to submit application: **August 15***
- Notification of results and comments: **About 2 weeks before FRQ deadline**

*This date was chosen to allow the Scientific Committee to evaluate applications early enough that students can benefit from these assessments and use them to improve their scholarship application to major funding agencies.

How to apply

The applicant must complete the electronic form available on the **"Graduate Student Excellence Award " program homepage** and attach the appropriate documents**:**

CANDIDATE'S PART

✓ <u>Full Application</u>, following this order (**only one combined PDF Document** – including supervisor's parts)

1.   Fully completed copy of the **application form** for the Master's or Doctoral Scholarship, as required by the granting agency to which the application is submitted (FRQS, FRQNT, FRQSC, CIHR, NSERC or SSHC). Please contact or visit the agency's website for the forms, deadlines and more details:

- FRQS: http://www.frqs.gouv.qc.ca/
- FRQNT: http://www.frqnt.gouv.qc.ca/
- FRQSC: http://www.frqsc.gouv.qc.ca/
- CIHR: http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/
- NSERC: http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/
- SSHRC: http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/

AND these 6 sections if you are not applying for FRQS or FRQNT (if you are applying for one of the 2 organisations, these sections are already included in your form). Don't forget to include in this application all PDF sections required by the FRQ.
   Section 1.   Project summary
   Section 2.   Relevant experience and achievements
   Section 3.   Integrated presentation of academic background
   Section 4.   Interruption or slowing down of research
   Section 5.   Research Project
   Section 6.   Bibliography

2.   **Proof of residency** (valid RAMQ, Canadian citizenship or other official document)
3.   **Completed transcripts** from all university degrees completed or in progress (list and transcripts)
4.   **Recognition and distinctions** (list dans grant letter)
5.   **Proof of registration** at a Quebec University (if already available at the time of submission). Otherwise, this proof will be required if you are a recipient of this award
6.   Acknowledgement of **submitted articles**

SUPERVISOR'S PART

7.   FRQS/FRQNT Electronic form completed by the **supervisor**

OR   this section if you are not applying for FRQS/FRQNT
 Section 7.   Letter of acceptance

✓   <u>Students status update from the laboratory</u> (**EXCEL Document**)

The candidate must ask his supervisor to provide him with this document. This is an **update of the monitoring of students in his laboratory who are or have been funded in the past by the VSRN** (studies in vision, success in scholarship competitions, graduation, and position held). Upon request, the VSRN will provide a copy of this document, which the researcher will only have to update. The candidate must attach this document to the form.

Incomplete and / or non-compliant applications will be rejected.
Write all sections according to FRQS presentation standards:
- minimum 2 cm margins, Times New Roman 12 point, single-spaced

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For additional information, please contact:
Vision Health Research Network (visionnetwork.ca)
reseau.vision@ircm.qc.ca
Remote: 438-825-1425

Réseau thématique soutenu par le

Fonds de recherche
Santé
Québec

VSRN Vision Sciences Research Network

GRADUATE STUDENT EXCELLENCE AWARD

2024-2025 Competition

ELECTRONIC FORM
(for information only)

STEP 1 - IDENTIFICATION

*Candidate: First Name   LAST NAME   Email
Application Degree: **Master** *(MSc/MD-MSc/OD-MSc student) /* **Doctorate** *(PhD/MD-PhD/OD-PhD student)*
Organism to which you will apply: *FRQS, FRQNT, CIHR, other*
Type of research: *Discovery, clinical, translational (preclinical), epidemiology, knowledge transfer, technological transfer*
Study Program:
Affiliation: *University, Research Center, Institute, etc.*

*Supervisor: First Name   LAST NAME   Email

Co-Supervisor (if applicable): First Name   LAST NAME   Email

*Axis: *Vision Neurosciences*
                            Emerging Technologies
                            Rehabilitation & social issues of visual disorders
                            Biology and Pathology of vision

*Does this project result from the use of a VSRN resource?   *No / Yes*
- Network Programs: Common Infrastructures, National and International Networking or other VSRN Student fundings

*Project title related to this application: *general title for your study project (MSc, PhD, fellowship, etc.)*

Mandatory

STEP 2 – SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Combined PDF for FRQS/FRQNT CONTEST		Combined PDF for non FRQS/FRQNT CONTEST
Fully completed copy of the electronic application form (**don't forget to include the PDF of ALL SECTIONS**)	**CANDIDATE**	Fully completed copy of the electronic application form **Sections 1 to 6**
Proof of residency (e.g.: valid RAMQ)		Proof of residency (e.g.: valid RAMQ)
Completed transcripts (including rating scale)		Completed transcripts (including rating scale)
Recognitions / distinctions		Recognitions / distinctions
Proof of registration		Proof of registration
Acknowledgement of submitted articles		Acknowledgement of submitted articles
Copy of the FRQ supervisor's electronic application form	**SUPERVISOR**	**Section 7** (supervisor)
Excel		**Excel**
Students status update from the laboratory		Students status update from the laboratory

Each document must not exceed 30 MB.

Submit

*You will receive an **email** confirming your submission.*

Applicant (First name LAST NAME)**: _____**

SECTION 1 : PROJECT SUMMARY (**300 words** maximum for each language)

Summary intended for the general public. Brief description of your research program or project (**FRENCH** and **ENGLISH**).

FRENCH

ENGLISH (only if the application is written in English)

Applicant (First name LAST NAME)**: _____**

SECTION 2 : RELEVANT EXPERIENCE AND ACHIEVEMENTS (**4 pages** maximum)

RELEVANT EXPERIENCES: *teaching, coaching, assisting and participating in research projects or internships.* Describe your participation in research projects and research training placements during your previous studies. Identify the directors of project and internship; indicate the start and end date of the activity. Please distinguish the mandatory training courses in research integrated into the university curriculum of the study program (Ex: Coop program), internships optional or followed on your own initiative (volunteers). Please also clearly define the added value of these internships in relation to your study program and the research project submitted.

SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS: publications, conferences and presentations
- **PUBLICATIONS:** specify the role of each in the publication and estimate the percentage contribution. Whether or not you have publications, you are invited to present the factors in your research environment that may affect your ability to publish. Then indicate how many of the publications listed are 1) articles published in peer-reviewed journals as a) 1st author (published, in press or accepted), b) 2nd or more author (published), c) 2nd or more author (accepted or in press), 1st or more author (submitted); 2) book chapters or collective works; 3) other types of papers.
- **PRESENTATIONS**: Indicate how many of these are institutional a) oral presentations and how many are b) provincial/regional, c) national or d) international. Do the same with poster presentations.

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS: professional and social (academic or not)

Applicant (First name LAST NAME)**: _____**

SECTION 3: INTEGRATED PRESENTATION OF ACADEMIC BACKGROUND (maximum **1 page**)

You must present your career path in an integrated manner by establishing the links between your experiences and interest, and your choices of orientation, training and academic path. This section should give the evaluation committee a clear understanding of your background.

Applicant (First name LAST NAME)**: _____**

SECTION 4: INTERRUPTION OR SLOWING DOWN OF RESEARCH (maximum **1 page**)

This section allows you to specify any circumstances that may have slowed down or delayed your studies or research activities (work, part-time studies, parental leave, family obligations, illness, disability, etc.). The description must include the reasons for and start and end dates of the interruptions or periods of slowdown and their impact, if any (e.g., on publications, participation in research projects, travel outside Quebec, etc.). Please distinguish if the interruption is related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Linked to the COVID-19 pandemic:

Other situations:

Applicant (First name LAST NAME)**: _____**

SECTION 5 : PROJECT DESCRIPTION (**2 pages** maximum)

Clearly describe your research project, respecting the following sections: **a)** research issues and hypotheses, **b)** research objectives, **c)** methods and analyzes, **d)** the feasibility, **e)** contributions to the advancement of knowledge.

Also specify how the project addresses the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, including the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion, if applicable.

Applicant (First name LAST NAME)**: _____**

SECTION 6 : BIBLIOGRAPHY (1 page maximum)

List complete references.

Applicant (First name LAST NAME)**: _____**

SECTION 7 - supervisor : LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE (maximum 2 pages)

- Indicate to what extent the candidate's research project falls within your research activities.
- Indicate the type of supervision that will be offered to the candidate.
- For training award programs: in the case of a candidate who must use his or her training award in Quebec, confirm that, if awarded, he or she will pursue his or her research activities with a continuous physical presence on Quebec territory for the entire duration of the funding, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the training award Règles générales communes (RGC 2.1).
- Show how the host setting offered to the candidate will allow him/her to achieve his/her objective.
- Additional information that could help the assessment committee to better know the host setting.
- Describe the material resources which will be available for the candidate to achieve his/her project.