Graduate Science Education

Internal Peer Review for Tri-Council Scholarship applications

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Sept. 5, 2018; 1-2 pm

- Creates a culture for applying for funding, that we take scholarships seriously

- Provides experience in reviewing that can be useful in your career path

- Provides experience in mentoring

- Helps our students be successful in obtaining scholarships

- GSE is developing a reviewer pool for scholarship competitions

- Modeled on internal peer review site for faculty grant applications

- Currently information available on GSE website https://cumming.ucalgary.ca/gse/prospective/awards-and-financial-support and our D2L pages

- We are working on Sharepoint-based Scholarship Hub, which should be active this fall

- Application should have two internal reviewers
  - Expert in the project area
    - Supervisor, senior lab member
    - Supervisory committee member
  - Arms length
    - Scientist in general area but not expert
    - Representative of committee members
    - Your role as internal peer reviewer

- Key words provided by reviewer and applicant used to match

- Reviewers will get one or two applications to review

- Matching based on need
  - Research areas
  - Number of students requesting review
  - Reviewing for CIHR, NSERC and possibly other competitions

- Provide comments to the student about their application
  - Is it clearly written
  - Do you understand the project
  - Completeness
- Role is not to rewrite the application!
  - Student must write their application parts themselves

- Applicant and reviewer will receive matching letter from me
- How you work together is up to you and the applicant
  - Virtual or face-to-face meetings
- You have a right to set deadlines and say no to unreasonable requests
  - Respect!!!

- Tri-council doctoral
  - CIHR: Deadline Oct 1
  - NSERC: Deadline Oct 15
  - SSHRC
- Tri-council M.Sc. (CGSM)
  - Deadline Dec 1
- GAC awards
  - Early Winter deadlines

- CIHR funds medically-motivated research
- NSERC funds basic science
- NSERC eligible: Studying virus growth and replication, and virus/host interactions within a normal state host immune system*
- NSERC ineligible/CIHR eligible: Studying virus growth and replication in the diseased state to understand disease progression*
- NSERC will reject applications unreviewed if they do not fit agency mandate

*Thanks to David Schreimer

- CIHR applications adjudicated using a virtual committee
  - Students apply directly to CIHR.
  - Application goes to FGS, but they do not review it for content or completeness
  - Reviews performed on line. No face to face meetings
  - Two reviewers per application.

- Achievements and Activities (35%)
  - Publication activity (10%): CV, publication list
  - Other Research Activity (10%): CV, publication list
  - Academic Performance (15%): Transcripts, letters of reference
- Characteristics and Abilities (40%)
  - References, research proposal, training expectations
- Research Training Environment (25%)-written by student and supervisor
  - Training program for candidate (most written documents, 10%)
  - Scientific Activity of Supervisor (5%)
  - Research Resources of Supervisor (5%)
  - Training Record of Supervisor (5%)
- Student and supervisor must submit a Common CV

- Applications first go to FGS for review
- Top applications sent on to NSERC
  — Based on quota assigned to U. Calgary
- NSERC uses peer review committees (Selection Committees)
- Two tiers of awards for highly ranked applicants
  — CGS D: top tier, 35K/year for 2-3 years
  — PGS D: next tier. 21K/year for 2-3 years

- **Academic excellence (30%)**
  - Transcripts, Scholarships and awards
  - Reviewers also consider relevant work experience, international studies
- **Research ability or potential (50%)**
  - Research proposal, contributions to research, referees
- **Communication, interpersonal and leadership abilities (20%)**
  - Referees, publications, proposal, quality of presentation of application (did you follow all the rules)
- **No supervisor section or Common CV**

- At a minimum, students will send you their research proposal for review.
- Ideally, the student will also include
  — Training Expectations
  — List of publications
  — CV
  — Lay abstract
- Agencies wants to see a well integrated application package
  — Tri-council funds the student, not just the research project
  — Student needs to sell themselves to the agency as to why they should be funded.

- Experiences Tri-council adjudicators, FGS, examination of CIHR reviewer comments
- Content, context and/or impact of research not clearly stated.
- Not following instructions –i.e. addressing criteria, or stretching rules.
- Diluting genuinely important/impressive material by describing generic material at length.
- Not addressing possible weaknesses in the application.
- Proposal lacks hypothesis/research objective, and has insufficient detail in the method

- What is this person going to do?

- Is the research feasible?

- What will be the outcomes and their impact?
  Is it new? Who will care?

- Do I have a picture of who this person is?
  What are their long term goals?

- Is this a good investment?

- Used by reviewers to get an overview of project

- This should be at a level that non-scientists can understand

- Often overlooked by student, but agencies consider it very important

- Is the work in the proposal clear and easily understood?

- Is the proposal free of jargon? Are acronyms defined?

- Is the proposal well written, and lacking grammatical and spelling errors?

- Are page limits and formatting correct?

- Introduction: High level, explain motivation/rationale for the study
  - This should be written at "newspaper article level"
  - Importance of the research question and novelty of the work should be evident in this section.
- The proposal should have a clearly defined, testable hypothesis or research objective/question.
- The methods should include enough detail to convince you that the student can perform the research
  - Methods also used to assess research environment. Are the facilities/equipment/expertise available to support the proposed research
  - Address potential pitfalls/mitigation strategies

- Expected outcomes/ Key Deliverables:
  - What will we learn from your research?
  - Stress novelty, innovation, advances to field
  - Future directions
    - Follow up studies, knowledge translation
- Significance (realistic)
  - Tie into priority areas for agency in the subject area

— Why U. Calgary?

— Why the supervisor?

— Program?

— Where do trainees from the lab go/what do they do?

— Who can they collaborate with?

— What extracurricular opportunities will the have?

— How is this concordant with the agency/U. Calgary Strategies?

— Show intangibles –

- Access to leadership/mentorship?
- Access to editorial/reviewing?
- Committee membership?

— Linked in one cohesive document

Slide courtesy of Dr. Lisa Hughes

- Publications found in Common CV (CIHR) and as an attachment
  - *NSERC also has most significant contributions*
- This provides room for a short description of the paper including
  - Their role in the research
  - The significance/impact of the work in their field
- Provide as much background information as possible
  - adjudicators outside of your discipline may not be aware of the prestige of **awards** you have received**, conferences** at which you have presented or the prominence of the **journal** in which you have been published.

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- Application includes
  - Proposal
  - CV
    - Publications
    - Awards
    - Work and research experience
  - Proposal and academic excellence important for this award
  - More information about reviewing after Oct 15

- rdevinne@ucalgary.ca; awardsgse@ucalgary.ca
- GSE Web site
  - Current Students – Scholarships and Financial Support
  - https://cumming.ucalgary.ca/gse/prospective/awards-and-financial-support