

Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship Program

Important update to Vanier application document requirements

The Vanier-Banting Secretariat realizes that many institutions begin the application/nomination process early in the school year and are therefore communicating these changes to us in advance of the Vanier website update for the 2018-2019 competition. This year two major changes have been implemented and are detailed for you below.

Please circulate to all your prospective nominees.

Change #1: Combining the a) *Description of Leadership and communication skills* and b) *Special Circumstances* documents into a document entitled **Personal Leadership Statement**.

1) Personal Leadership Statement (New)

Previously, the VBS required a maximum one page document entitled *Description of leadership and communication skills*. This document will be combined with the maximum half page *Special Circumstances* document to create a 2-page *Personal Leadership Statement*. The goal of this change is to eliminate systemic barriers to applying for the Vanier CGS, encourage the committee to understand career interruptions as potentially beneficial to a nominee's career path, and better align the Vanier CGS with other prestigious international scholarships.

Below, please find the intended language that will be used for the nomination package:

This document should present to the committee a clear statement of what challenges and opportunities have shaped your doctoral research.

When crafting your Personal Leadership Statement, consider the following points:

- *What led you to doctoral research? How has your relevant life experiences and personal circumstances (may include administrative responsibilities, maternity/parental leave, childrearing, illness, cultural or community responsibilities, socio-economic context, or health-related family responsibilities) shaped your academic, research, leadership choices, challenges, and successes.*
- *How has your personal life driven you to share and disseminate your research?*
- *How have you created opportunities to make change, and how have you overcome obstacles to your vision?*
- *How have you fostered your ability to lead others, and how have you leveraged that skill?*
- *Why have you chosen to undertake your PhD at the nominating institution? How does your nominating institution provide an environment that nurtures both your academic and your leadership skills?*
- *Leadership can take many forms. When crafting this statement, be sure to outline not just your accomplishments for the committee, but how those accomplishments required you to leverage your leadership skills to achieve your goals.*

Your academic transcript, your CCV and your reference letters will provide details of your commitments and accomplishments, but this essay gives you the opportunity to present the overarching narrative about your life, leadership accomplishments, and research goals for the selection committee.

Important Note

Special Circumstances: Only to be used for the calculation of the number of months completed for combined undergraduate and doctoral program

Calculating the number of months completed:

If applicable, specify time spent undertaking part-time PhD study.

If you are registered in a combined undergraduate and doctoral program (e.g., MD/PhD) please provide a [timeline of your combined undergraduate and doctoral program studies](#), broken down by semester. This calculation must be consistent with the transcripts provided. For the purposes of this calculation, the undergraduate portion will not count towards the number of months at the doctoral level.

Note: No other information included in this document will be forwarded to the committee. All information about interruptions to your academic career, choice of nominating institution, and mobility should be included either in the Personal Leadership Statement or the Research Proposal.

Change #2: Requesting an additional **Leadership Reference letter**.

2) Additional Leadership Reference Letter

VBS requires **two letters of reference for the Leadership criterion** rather than just one. This additional letter will allow the candidate to include a broader spectrum of referees, which will in turn provide the committee more information when assessing the Leadership Evaluation criterion. We note that each Leadership letter of reference must be written by one (1) signatory, for a total of two (2) Leadership referees.2) references.