

NMIN Graduate Awards – Doctoral and Master’s 2023-24 Competition Guide

Deadline: 15 September 2023 at 5:00 pm in the applicant’s time zone

NMIN’s Priority Areas for the Development of HQP

The NanoMedicines Innovation Network’s (NMIN) Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP) Program seeks to cultivate the next generation of nanomedicine scientists and entrepreneurs and to train the skilled workforce required by the burgeoning Canadian nanomedicines ecosystem.

- *Priority Area 1:* Nanomedicine Research Skills and Experience
- *Priority Area 2:* IP Creation and Commercialization Skills and Experience
- *Priority Area 3:* Entrepreneurial and Leadership Skills and Experience
- *Priority Area 4:* Communication and Knowledge Mobilization Skills and Experience
- *Priority Area 5:* Genetics, Ethical, Environmental, Economic, Legal and Social (GE³LS) Issues Awareness and Understanding

Program Overview

The goal of the NMIN *Graduate Awards* is to enable exceptional Doctoral and Master’s students to pursue nanomedicine academic research training with Canadian experts. The awards are intended to develop nanomedicine academic research expertise across Canada.

The quality of the applicant, research project, and training opportunity are the principal criteria on which applications will be judged. Eligible academic foci include nanomedicine research ranging from discovery to translation/commercialization, aligned with NMIN’s mission and vision (*i.e.*, targeted drug delivery, gene therapies, and diagnostics) with priority given to projects at least at the stage of Proof-of-Concept (PoC) and Proof-of-Principle (PoP).

Preference will be given to:

- I. Projects jointly funded by industry partners, or,
- II. Projects that exhibit a high potential for commercialization.

Available Awards, Value, and Duration

A total of 10 NMIN *Graduate Awards* are available:

- Five (5) NMIN *Graduate Awards - Doctoral*, which provide a single stipend of \$35,000 for one (1) year in duration.
- Five (5) NMIN *Graduate Awards - Master’s*, which provide a single stipend of \$17,500 for one (1) year in duration.

Supervisors are encouraged to augment these awards with funding from other sources. Award terms must end no later than 31 March 2025.

Applicant Eligibility

- Full-time graduate students pursuing a PhD or Master's degree at a Canadian university or Canadian partner institution and in good academic standing are eligible to apply.
- Applicants must be supervised by an NMIN Investigator and/or an NMIN committee member with an academic appointment at a Canadian university or research institute eligible to hold Tri-Council funds.
- The Award must be held at a Canadian university or research institute.
- The host institution must be an NMIN signatory or become a signatory by agreeing to the terms and conditions of Network participation, as set out in the NCE Network Agreement.
- Should a successful applicant already hold a concurrent federally funded award, the Award will be pro-rated according to CIHR guidelines. Should an awardee receive additional federal awards, a similar reduction will be made according to CIHR guidelines.
- Awardees are required to notify NMIN immediately of any and all awards received during the term of the NMIN *Graduate Award*.

Conditions of Funding

- All conditions specified in the [CIHR Application Administration Guide](#) shall apply to applications funded through this Call for Applications.
- Should NMIN NCE funds be held in an account at the Network Member Institution after 31 March 2024, it will be each Institution's responsibility to report on the use of the NCE funds directly to the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) through the provision of an SOA 300, and to ensure that each NMIN NCE account is fully expended by 31 March 2025.
 - Should there be any unspent NMIN NCE residual funding as of 31 March 2025, those funds must be returned directly to NSERC.
- The recipient must be a Doctoral or Master's student for the duration of the award term.
- Recipients agree to acknowledge NMIN funding in any publication resulting from the work conducted during the funded period.
- NMIN will specify any additional conditions of funding in the award offer and/or funding letter.
- As a member of the NMIN HQP Network (NHN), recipients are expected to uphold exemplary standards of behaviour and not engage in behaviour which is known or ought to be known to be in contravention of federal and/or provincial laws and legislation and/or NMIN, Tri-Council and/or university policy, including but not limited to policies on scientific integrity and research ethics (for example, the [Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research](#)). Grounds for immediate expulsion from the NHN include, but are not limited to, harassment, breach of scientific integrity or ethics policies, misuse of NMIN funds, and release and/or misuse of confidential information.

Application Content

Applicants are requested to complete the NMIN *Graduate Award* application form, which includes the following:

1. Applicant Details
2. Academic Background
3. Relevant Work Experience
4. Scholarships and Other Awards
5. Partner Funding in hand or pending
6. A description of the proposed research project (maximum three pages, 11pt Arial, excluding references, which may be appended on a separate page). Include information on:
 - a. Introduction to the proposed research project and focus
 - b. Hypothesis
 - c. Project objectives
 - d. Research methodology and its appropriateness
 - e. Anticipated research outcomes
 - f. The potential to commercialize research results
7. An applicant statement (maximum three pages, 11pt Arial) describing:
 - a. The nature of the training opportunities, learning environment and mentoring to be provided.
 - b. The applicant's career goals and the skills to be developed during their degree.
 - c. How the NMIN *Graduate Award* and proposed research project will contribute to the applicant's goals and career development.
8. CV of the applicant (with the status of research publications [submitted/published] indicated).
9. CV of the supervisor(s).
10. Disclaimers and Signatures
11. One confidential letter of support from the applicant's proposed supervisor(s). The letter of support should also confirm the funding, resources, and infrastructure available to support the project as proposed. The letter of support must be sent directly to Divya Rao, divyarao@nanomedicines.ca.
12. Official transcripts of the applicant's undergraduate and graduate training, in the original sealed envelope or sent directly to Divya Rao, divyarao@nanomedicines.ca.

Application Submission

Please submit the application package, letters of support and transcripts electronically in PDF format directly to Divya Rao, HQP Program and Network Events Manager, at divyarao@nanomedicines.ca. Only electronic applications will be accepted. If electronic transcripts are not available, please follow up with Divya Rao for a mailing address.

Evaluation Process

- Applications will be screened by the NMIN Administrative Centre staff for completeness.
- Eligible applications will be subject to peer review arranged by NMIN, which will recommend applications for the final decision by NMIN's Research Management Committee.

Evaluation Criteria

Excellence of the Research Project: [33.3%]

- i. Quality and scientific merit of the proposed research
- ii. Potential for significant scientific contribution to the field of nanomedicine and/or commercialize research results
- iii. Availability of funding from industry partners

Excellence of the Applicant: [33.3%]

- iv. Applicant's achievements, including transcripts, publications, presentations, and experiences.
- v. Applicant's career goals and skills to be developed, and how the NMIN *Graduate Award* and proposed research project will contribute to them.

Quality of the Training Environment: [33.3%]

- vi. The quality of the training opportunities, learning environment, and mentoring to be provided.
- vii. The funding, resources, and infrastructure available to support the project as proposed
- viii. Supervisor's research and training environment (e.g., publications, grant support, number of trainees supervised, etc.)

Notification Process

Decisions will normally be communicated to applicants no later than December 2023.

Branding, Attribution and Publications

- Awardees must acknowledge the assistance given by NMIN in any publication or presentation made during or resulting from the tenure of the Award, in accordance with the [NMIN Branding & Attribution Guidelines](#).
- NMIN shall be provided with a copy, at the time of submission, of all manuscripts and presentations submitted for publication that arise from the efforts of the awardee during the tenure of this Award.

Monitoring, Performance Measurement and Evaluation

NMIN is committed to demonstrating results to Canadians for the public funds it invests on their behalf. Therefore, processes for monitoring progress and appropriate use of funds, as well as

for performance measurement and program evaluation, are in place. To this end, funding recipients must:

- Sign NMIN's *NCE Network Agreement* and comply with the Agreement's provisions.
- Attend the 2024 NMIN Research Conference in Vancouver, British Columbia, 24-27 January 2024 and participate in evaluation studies, surveys, workshops, and audits.
- Contribute to the content of NMIN reporting associated with this award.

Intellectual Property and Commercialization

- Awardees, supervisors, and their host institutions must be signatories to the NMIN *NCE Network Agreement*.
- NMIN requires that it be informed of any commercial exploitation arising from activities supported through the Award in accordance with the terms and conditions of the *NCE Network Agreement*
- Intellectual property arising from NMIN's investments in this project (in whole or in part) **must acknowledge NMIN as a supporting organization and be disclosed simultaneously to NMIN and the Host Institution** as per the terms set out in **Section 3.2.5 Disclosure and Commercialization of Network-Supported Intellectual Property (NSIP)** and **Section 3.6 (b) Other Obligations** in the NMIN NCE Network Agreement.

Contact Information

For further information or assistance in completing the application, contact Divya Rao, HQP Program and Network Events Manager, at divyarao@nanomedicines.ca.

Application Check List

- Application Form – Complete Sections 1 – 10 *NOTE: Use 11pt Arial*
 1. Applicant Details
 2. Academic Background
 3. Relevant Work Experience
 4. Scholarships and Other Awards
 5. Partner Funding in hand or pending
 6. Proposed research project - maximum three pages
 7. Applicant statement - maximum three pages
 8. Applicant's CV
 9. Supervisor's(s') CV
 10. Disclaimers and Signatures

- Additional Documentation to be sent directly to Divya Rao, HQP Program and Network Events Manager
 - One letter of support from the candidate's proposed supervisor(s). The letter of support should also confirm the funding, resources, and infrastructure available to support the project as proposed.
 - Official transcripts of the applicant's undergraduate and graduate training, sent separately in the original sealed envelope.