

Contact Newsletter



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The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) is a key federal granting agency investing in people, discovery and innovation.

Upcoming NSERC deadlines

July 4, 2011	Applications for Idea to Innovation Program
August 1, 2011	Letters of Intent (Form 180) for Discovery Grants Program (Individual, Team and Subatomic Physics Project)
August 1, 2011	Letters of Intent (Form 181) from subatomic physics resources for the Major Resources Support Program
August 8, 2011	Full applications (invitation only) for College and Community Innovation Program - Technology Access Centres Grants
August 26, 2011	Full applications (invitation only) for Chairs in Design Engineering Program
September 1, 2011	Nominations for the NSERC Awards for Science Promotion
September 15, 2011	Applications for the PromoScience Program
September 26, 2011	Applications for Idea to Innovation Program

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Natural Sciences and Engineering
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en sciences
naturelles et en génie du Canada

Canada



NSERC and *Budget 2011*

The 2011 federal budget, tabled on June 6, outlined a number of important funding initiatives directed to NSERC. A combination of new and existing programs were endorsed through specific funding measures and the Budget expressed a clear commitment to programs that will help boost research and innovation across Canada.

Specific new investments included the following:

- \$15 million per year to support outstanding research in the natural sciences and engineering;
- \$35 million over five years to support climate change and atmospheric research at Canadian post-secondary institutions;
- \$3 million in 2011–12, and \$5 million per year on a permanent basis starting in 2012–13, to support 30 new Industrial Research Chairs at colleges;
- \$53.5 million over five years to support the creation of 10 new Canada Excellence Research Chairs;
- \$12 million over five years, starting in 2011–12, for the Idea to Innovation Program, which supports joint college-university research and development projects;
- \$12 million over five years for a competition to select a Canada-India Research Centre of Excellence; and
- \$10 million per year, starting in 2011–12, for the Indirect Costs Program.

For more information about *Budget 2011*, please visit the [Department of Finance Canada Web site](#).

Tri-agencies to harmonize policies on student support from grants

The three federal granting agencies—NSERC, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)—are working towards harmonizing their policies on support paid to students and postdoctoral fellows from research grants. As of fall 2011, this means the agencies' existing regulations on minimum and maximum support levels will no longer apply. The agencies will also no longer restrict researchers from using some of their grant money to provide supplements to scholarship holders. These changes respond to concerns expressed by institutions and researchers about the different approaches taken by the agencies. Revised literature that incorporates the policy change will be posted on the agencies' Web sites in September.





Application tips and peer review process videos now available

Last November, NSERC launched a video project intended to provide important information to applicants for Discovery Grants, scholarships and fellowships in a more cost-effective and accessible way. The resulting [four videos](#) have now been posted on NSERC's Web site. Two of the videos provide tips, in the form of interviews with peer review committee members, on writing a better application. The other two videos describe the respective peer review processes for Discovery Grants, scholarships and fellowships.

Undergraduate Student Research Awards Program moves to exclusive on-line submission

Applications for Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRA), whether held at universities or in industry, must be completed and submitted exclusively through NSERC's On-line System starting in July 2011. Paper copies will no longer be accepted.

[University applications](#) will be submitted by the USRA Liaison Officers through a new on-line portal that will be available in the coming weeks, along with new submission instructions. For [Industrial USRAs](#), the designated contact people at eligible organizations will submit applications using NSERC's On-line System. Updated instructions will also be posted for these awards.

The On-line System will automatically check for errors in each application before accepting submission, saving work and time for both the applicants and NSERC. As in the past, all applications will still be verified by NSERC staff before awards are approved.

Scholarships and fellowships regional meetings going electronic

NSERC, in collaboration with CIHR and SSHRC, continues to adopt new ways of delivering information about program updates and application information. Effective immediately, scheduled scholarships and fellowships regional meetings will be replaced with Web-based options that will provide easier access to a larger audience. More information about these options will be sent to various stakeholders, including scholarships liaison officers and deans of graduate studies, as it becomes available.





Maximizing Opportunities: Increasing Women's Participation in Science and Engineering – A Summit – A Report on Summit Outcomes

In November 2010, NSERC, in partnership with Engineers Canada and Research In Motion, brought together leaders from academia and the private sector with policy makers and students to tackle key issues related to increasing women's participation in science and engineering. At the Summit, expert panellists shared innovative ideas and solutions aimed at improving current processes, and implementing new ones that will further promote women's participation in these important fields. The discussion, feedback and recommendations that surfaced during the summit are summarized in [Maximizing Opportunities: Increasing Women's Participation in Science and Engineering – A Summit - A Report on Summit Outcomes](#).

Thank-you to referees

The backbone of NSERC's peer review process consists of experts from the research community, who volunteer countless hours to ensure fair evaluation of all grant and scholarship applications. We would like to express our gratitude for their valuable work. Over the course of the year, this dedicated group includes about 600 scientists and engineers who serve on our many grants and scholarships selection committees. Less visible, but equally important, are the approximately 9,000 researchers (more than one quarter from outside Canada) who act as external referees and provide the benefit of their expertise in the more detailed aspects of a research topic.