

PROGRAM RULES 2015-2016

Doctoral research scholarships program for international students (DE)

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Please, READ THE PROGRAM RULES first.
- Choose a Québec university and a director who accepts to supervise your research project and recommend your preselection
- Deadline – Preselection of candidates by a Québec university : Consult the deadlines of the universities for preselection:
(<http://www.frqnt.gouv.qc.ca/en/bourses/index.htm>)
- Deadline – Submission to FRQNT of the applications recommended by universities:
30 September 2014.
- Deadline – Submitting e-form application and required documents for preselected candidates: **November 1st, 2014 at Midnight** (coordinated universal time UTC-5 Est time zone)
- Announcement of results: End of April 2015

OBJECTIVES

1. The Doctoral Research Scholarships Program for Foreign Students (DE) of the Fonds de recherche du Québec - Nature et les technologies (FRQNT) aims to stimulate international student's interest in beginning or pursuing doctoral studies in Québec and provide financial support to leading international Ph.D. candidates in the natural sciences, mathematics and engineering fields.

APPLICANTS

2. The scholarships are aimed at foreign students who have been preselected by a Québec university and who wish to carry out their doctoral studies in the natural sciences, mathematics and engineering fields. To be eligible, applicants must specialize in the following areas:
 - Aerospace
 - New information and communication technologies
 - New health technologies
 - Genomics
 - Nanotechnologies

ELIGIBILITY, CITIZENSHIP AND RESIDENCE CRITERIA

3. Applicants must:
 - Meet all eligibility criteria by the competition deadline on November 1st, 2014.
 - Have been preselected by a Québec university by September 30th, 2014.
 - Not have obtained a Merit Scholarship for Foreign Students from the Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur, de la Recherche et de la Science (MESRS) or one of the Fonds de recherche du Québec.
 - Not be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada.
 - Not have submitted an application for permanent residence under Canadian immigration laws.

In addition to the aforementioned criteria, applicants should note the following restrictions and administrative prerequisites:

4. Study program restrictions:
 - The scholarship cannot be used for qualifying studies.

Eligibility criteria

5. Scholarship program eligibility rules account for all doctoral sessions (funded or not) completed prior to May 1st, 2015.
6. When calculating the eligibility period, the FRQNT will consider all of the unregistered or part-time sessions for which registrar attestations are provided in the application. The applicant must verify his/her eligibility by consulting the equivalents table for unregistered or part-time sessions on the FRQNT website.
7. The FRQNT will also consider the number of master's and doctoral sessions for which the applicant received funding from a recognized funding agency (e.g. NSERC, CIHR, SSHRC, the FRQNT, etc.) to ensure that the support does not exceed 15 sessions.

Eligibility period for applicants registered in direct-entry doctoral programs (bachelor's to doctorate) and fast-track master's/doctoral programs

8. Applicants admitted to a doctoral program after completing their bachelor's degree and those who fast-tracked to a doctoral program without submitting a thesis may apply to the doctoral scholarships competition (DE) in the 3rd, 4th and 5th years of their graduate studies (between their 7th and 15th study sessions). Sessions that are completed when the scholarship comes into effect will be subtracted from the funding period. Under no circumstances will funding be granted before the 7th session or after the 15th session.
9. Applicants who hold a master's degree when beginning their doctoral studies must submit their applications to the doctoral scholarships competition.

Doctoral scholarship eligibility period

10. Applicants are eligible for the doctoral research scholarships (DE) competition during the first nine (9) sessions of their doctoral studies (or the equivalent). Doctoral sessions (or the equivalent) that are already completed when the scholarship comes into effect will be subtracted from the scholarship period. Under no circumstances will funding be granted after an applicant's 9th doctoral program session.

Eligibility period exceptions

11. Scholarship eligibility period exceptions will only be made in circumstances that are beyond the applicant's control. In such cases, all supporting documents must be submitted along with the application.
12. Applicants who suspend their studies for a maternity or parental leave may ask to extend their eligibility for a maximum period of 12 months. In such cases, all supporting documents must be submitted along with the application.
13. When the applicant is a person with a disability under the Act to secure handicapped persons in the exercise of their rights with a view to achieving social, school and workplace integration (R.S.Q. c. E-20.1), the eligibility requirements do not apply. However, the doctoral scholarship period remains the same (three

years). In such cases, all supporting documents must be submitted along with the application.

14. The FRQNT reserves the right to refuse any request that is not adequately justified.

APPLICANT PRESELECTION

15. Only students who have been preselected by a Québec university may apply to the competition.
16. Universities may support two competition applications per year.
17. Applicant preselection is the sole responsibility of the university. Information on preselection deadlines is available on the website of the FRQNT.
18. The university representatives who must preselect the applicants should consult the Instructions for preselecting applicants to the international student scholarships program on the FRQNT website.
19. University representatives who preselect applicants must fill out the applicant nomination form, which is available on the extranet site of the FRQNT. The form must be submitted electronically by **September 30th, 2014, at 4 p.m.**
20. Applicants must meet all program eligibility requirements. Applications submitted by a university may be deemed ineligible by the FRQNT if the applicants do not meet all program requirements.
21. Preselected applications may also be preselected for the Merit scholarships Program for Foreign Students awarded by the FRQNT. If an applicant submits several applications in the same year, he/she need only send one copy of the recommendation letters and required documents to the FRQNT.

SUBMITTING APPLICATION

22. Preselected applicants will receive a Personal Identification Number (PIN) and a password and must then fill out an e-form to which will be attached the required documents. Applicants may consult the document: **Instructions for completing an application** on the website of the FRQNT.
23. Only the 2015-2016 competition e-forms and other required documents will be accepted. Any appendices or documents other than those required will not be given to the evaluation committee.
24. The e-forms are only available in the secure section of the website of the Fonds. These forms must be filled out and submitted electronically by the competition deadline on November 1st, 2014, at midnight (coordinated universal time UTC-5 Est time zone). Applicants will not be able to update their applications after the competition deadline. It is recommended that applicants keep a hard copy of the e-form for their personal files.

25. The form may be written in French or English. Applicants who submit their applications in English must provide the French translation of the project title.
26. **IMPORTANT:** Applications that do not include the information required will be deemed ineligible by the FRQNT.

REQUIRED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

A) Letter of reference (by email or online)

27. Two letters of reference from referees should be sent to the program manager. The applicant must provide the number of his application and his personal identification number (PIN) to his referees to fulfill the letter.
 - For Quebec referees, it is strongly suggested to use the letter available online in the researcher's personal electronic file. This letter is sent to the Fund through his electronic file.
 - Foreign referees can use the dynamic PDF letter available on the program page. Referees must complete the letter in PDF format, print it, sign it, scan it and send it to the Fund by mail: pbeee@frq.gouv.qc.ca .

B) Documents to include in the electronic form (PDF)

28. The documents listed below must be attached to the electronic form in the order described in a single PDF document. The student must ensure that the document is not protected by a password.
29. Documents submitted in a language other than French or English must be accompanied by a translation of the original.
 - A copy of the identification page of the applicant's valid passport from his/her home country or any other official document that established the applicant's citizenship;
 - A copy of transcripts for all of the applicant's university studies, whether they were completed or not (certificate, diploma, bachelor's, master's, doctoral, etc.). The applicant must also provide the transcripts for any equivalencies that were granted for courses taken in other institutions or as part of other programs. Any transcripts from institutions located outside North America must include a note from the applicant explaining the marking system. The FRQNT reserves the right to verify with institutions the authenticity of any information given by applicants.
 - Acknowledgements of receipt or letters from editors for articles that are submitted, accepted or in press (acknowledgements for published articles will not be given to the committee);
 - A copy of the notifications or attestations for all awards received;

Additional document for applicants who carried out part-time or unregistered sessions since first registering for their graduate studies

- An attestation from the registrar listing any unregistered or part-time sessions.

Additional document for applicants seeking an eligibility period exception

- An official document attesting to the applicant's suspended registration and a medical certificate indicating the reasons and duration of the suspension, if applicable.

Submitting the required documents

30. The candidate must send the electronic form to the FRQNT before the competition deadline: November 1st 2014.
31. It is the applicant's responsibility to verify that the document attached to the electronic form (PDF) includes all the required documents for the application to be considered acceptable. No document requested in the electronic form that would be sent by email or mail will be accepted.
32. The candidate must ensure that his referees send the letters of reference no later than the competition deadline.

Acknowledgment of receipt

33. In December, applicants will be informed via email of the receipt of their application. The candidate who has not received this notice should contact the program manager before December 15th.

APPLICATIONS ASSESSMENT

Evaluation criteria

34. Applications are evaluated according the following criteria and weighting:

Criteria	Doctorate
Applicant's academic record	6 points
Applicant's research skills and relevant research experience	8 points
Quality and scientific interest of the project and socio-economic scope of the project, if applicable.	4 points
Social involvement, leadership and communication skills	2 points
TOTAL	20 points

Applicant's academic record

35. Criterion indicators:
 - Grade point average;
 - Academic progress;
 - Years of schooling;

- Awards and prizes.

Research skills and relevant research experience

36. Criterion indicators:

- Soundness of the application and research interests;
- Applicant's experience and accomplishments;
- Letters of recommendation from respondents.

Quality and scientific interest of the research project

37. Criterion indicators:

- Clarity of the scientific objectives;
- Relevance of the methodology in light of the set objectives;
- Originality of the project;
- Project's contribution to advancing knowledge in the field;
- Project's relevance to the research director's field.

Social involvement, leadership and communication skills

38. Criterion indicators:

- Applicant's leadership skills;
- Conference and meeting organization;
- Positions held;
- Volunteering;
- Mentoring;
- Experience in supervision;
- Experience in knowledge transfer;
- Project management;
- Committee chairmanship;
- Ability or potential to clearly and logically communicate scientific concepts;
- Overall presentation.

Evaluation process

Role of the evaluation committee

39. Eligible applications will be assessed by a four-member multidisciplinary committee. The committees will include university faculty members who may call upon representatives from the private and government sectors.
40. The evaluation committee will assess applications based on program criteria and rank the applications according to merit.
41. Depending on the number of eligible applications, the Fonds may appoint field-specific committees.

Role of the board of directors

42. The board of directors will receive recommendations from the evaluation committees and make the final funding decisions. The board is accountable for its decisions to the government of Québec.

Role of the program administrator

43. The program administrator is responsible for ensuring that the evaluators respect the evaluation criteria and rules in effect as well as the standard rules of ethics.

INTEGRITY OF THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

44. The FRQNT board members are not involved in the scientific evaluation of funding applications, and at no time may researchers, students or institutional authorities make contact with the assessment committee chairperson or members. The FRQNT have the right to withdraw an application from competition if there is any attempt to lobby the committee or sway the evaluation process.
45. Every person recruited to sit on an assessment committee must comply with standard rules of confidentiality regarding the application packages, committee makeup, deliberations and recommendations. The assessment committee chairperson, members and outside experts are required to disclose any conflicts of interest and must sign a written statement in this regard.

AWARDING OF THE SCHOLARSHIPS AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE RESULTS

Awarding of the scholarships

46. The applications will be evaluated and ranked according to merit by the evaluation committees. Scholarships will be awarded based on available funds. The FRQNT reserved the right to adjust the offer based on the directions set out by the board of directors.

Announcement of the results

47. The board of directors of the FRQNT will announce its decision electronically in late April, advising applicants directly via their e-files. Each applicant will be informed of his/her ranking and may print his/her announcement letter.
48. It is strictly prohibited to contact committee members, who must abide by confidentiality rules.
49. The decisions of the board of directors of the FRQNT are final and without appeal. There is no review process.
50. The applicant must accept or refuse the scholarship in the ten (10) business days following the receipt of the offer by filling out the e-form in his/her scholarship holder's file. Should an applicant fail to accept the award before the deadline, the Fonds will consider that he/she has refused it.

TERMS OF THE SCHOLARSHIP

51. Scholarship holders must hold a Certificat d'acceptation du Québec (Québec Acceptance Certificate) issued by the Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Diversité et de l'Inclusion du Québec (<http://www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca>) as well as a student authorization issued by consular services that is valid for the entire study period in Québec.
52. **WARNING:** Please note that no scholarship payment will be done before receiving a copy of the visa.
53. Scholarship holders must meet all of the scholarship rules set out in the scholarship holder's guide.
54. The scholarship period must begin between May 1st, 2015, and January 15th, 2016. Barring exceptional circumstances, the scholarship cannot be transferred from one year to the next. For applicants whose study program is already underway, the scholarship period will begin in May 2015.
55. The scholarship is not retroactive. Any sessions carried out prior to summer 2015 will not be funded.
56. Except in special cases pertaining to part-time studies set out in the scholarship holder's guide, the scholarship holder must be registered as a full-time student in the doctoral program for which the scholarship was awarded.
57. The scholarship is granted for the entire eligibility period, conditional upon the presentation of satisfactory progress reports.
58. Applicants who seek to change program, project or place of tenure must first request an authorization from the FRQNT in writing.

Value of the scholarship

59. The FRQNT board of directors reserves the right to modify the value of scholarships at any time, without notice, notably in accordance with the credits annually allocated by the Assemblée nationale du Québec, its strategic priorities and budgetary process.
60. The maximum annual value of the doctoral research scholarship for international students is \$20 000. During the eligibility period (nine sessions or 36 months), the scholarship holder may receive up to nine payments totalling \$60 000. Each payment of up to \$6 667 covers a period of four months or one session.

Place of tenure

61. Scholarship holders must attend the Québec university at which they were preselected and carry out studies or research activities in Québec.

Concurrent awards

Cumulation is prohibited with:

62. Awards granted by government departments and agencies and the funding agencies of the Canadian and Québec governments.

Cumulation is allowed with:

63. Awards granted by the private sector, the scholarship holder's home country and universities.

Remuneration

64. Except in special cases pertaining to paid work set out in the scholarship holder's guide, the scholarship holder may accept employment that does not exceed 150 hours per session, provided that his/her research supervisor does not object and that the employment does not interfere with the research activities.
65. The salary that the scholarship holder receives exclusively for his/her research project is considered to be a scholarship that may be held concurrently with a doctoral research scholarship for international students.

FALSE OR MISLEADING INFORMATION

66. In accordance with the Act Respecting the Ministère du Développement Économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation (R.S.Q., c. M-30.01), applicants who give false or misleading information in view of obtaining or procuring financial support is guilty of an offence and liable to a fine. If found guilty, he cannot obtain financial support for a period of five years.
67. Where a legal person commits an offence, every director or representative of that legal person who was aware of the offence is deemed to be a party to the offence and is liable to a fine, unless he proves to the satisfaction of the court that he did not acquiesce to the commission of the offence.
68. The FRQNT reserves the right to impose any sanction or supplementary measure deemed useful, and initiate legal proceedings to obtain reimbursement of fraudulently obtained amounts and a compensation for suffered damages.

RESEARCH ETHICS AND CONFORMITY

69. All research projects involving human subjects; biological materials; administrative, scientific or descriptive data from human subjects; animals or animal parts, products or tissues require the approval of the research ethics board of the principal applicant's institution (Common Rules and Regulations, section 5.3).

Furthermore, if applicable, scholarship holders must indicate on their application form any environmental impacts of their research project and employ reasonable efforts to minimize them. To that purpose, they must obtain any necessary permits and authorizations before starting the project.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE FRQNT

70. The FRQNT is not responsible for any direct or indirect damages resulting from the processing of any application with regards to any award, grant or any other type of request. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the FRQNT is not responsible for any direct or indirect damages resulting from the unauthorized disclosure of any information contained in an application. Despite all of the precautions taken by the FRQNT to preserve the confidentiality of all information that must remain as such, it is possible that certain countries to which the information is communicated do not follow the same protection processes (e.g.: asymmetric cryptography, enciphering, etc.).

Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the protection of personal information

The FRQNT is subject to the Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the protection of personal information (R.S.Q., chapter A-2.1).

The applicant should contact the person in charge of access at the FRQNT for information:

Responsible for access to documents and protection of personal information:

Mylène Deschênes, B.C.L., LL.B., LL.M.
Advisor, Ethics and Legal Affairs
responsableacces.nt@frq.gouv.qc.ca

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

71. The FRQNT reserves the right to modify the value of the scholarships and the program rules detailed in this document without prior notice.

EFFECTIVE DATE

72. These rules apply to the 2015-2016 fiscal year.

CONTACT

Program administrator: Guillaume Lamontagne
Telephone: 418 643-8560, extension 3455
For applicants outside Québec: 1 888 653-6512, extension 3455
Fax: 418-643-1451
Email: pbeee@frq.gouv.qc.ca

The offices of the FRQNT are open from Monday to Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Please note that the Fonds does not accept collect calls.

Applicants who contact the FRQNT via email must provide a telephone number at which they can be reached. Priority will be given to email requests.

Programmes de Bourses d'Excellence pour Étudiants Étrangers
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