



# INDUSTRIAL INNOVATION SCHOLARSHIP (IIS) BMP INNOVATION



## SCHOLARSHIPS PROGRAMS

### Partnerships for innovation

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Industrial Innovation Scholarships (IIS) Program, offered jointly by the [Fonds québécois de la recherche sur la nature et les technologies \(FQRNT\)](#) and the [Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada \(NSERC\)](#), offers financial assistance to students enrolled in a master's or doctoral program and interested in undertaking research in natural sciences and engineering, through a university-business partnership.

## 2. OBJECTIVE

The objective of the IIS Program is to foster the development of companies' innovation capacity and to improve employment prospects for recent graduates of master's and doctoral programs through university-industry partnerships:

- By enabling students to acquire experience, as well as personal and employment skills;
- By developing innovative training initiatives;
- By building networks of collaboration and knowledge-transfer;
- By encouraging companies to invest in training and R&D;
- By contributing to increased innovation in key sectors of the various regions in Quebec.

### 3. WHO MAY APPLY?

Full-time master's or doctoral students in a natural sciences or engineering program at a Quebec university at the time the scholarship is received. Part-time student candidates will be considered in exceptional cases.

### 4. ARE YOU ELIGIBLE FOR SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT?

To be considered eligible for support, you must:

- Be a Canadian citizen, a permanent resident of Canada or a foreign student. Foreign students must consult the section entitled [12. Information for foreign students](#).
- Be enrolled in graduate studies in natural sciences or engineering at a Quebec university; and
- Have achieved a first-class cumulative average (A-) in the last two years of completed study, or an undergraduate average of B+. **Note: If you have an academic average slightly below the requirement, but have demonstrated skills and experience relevant to the research project, the Graduate Studies Office can make a case on your behalf for an exception to this requirement.**

Scholarships are not given to students completing qualifying studies.

To evaluate your eligibility for the IIS Program, the number of months of graduate studies completed in the program for which you are requesting funding will be considered, as well as whether the program deals with a research field supported by NSERC and the FQRNT. Eight months of part-time graduate study will be counted as the equivalent of four months of full-time study at the time of your application.

Rules pertaining to the IIS Program eligibility period take into account the number of months of studies completed at the master's or doctoral level for a graduate degree, even if these months were completed at an institution other than the one where you received, or will receive, your degree.

#### 4.1 IIS (Master's)

##### Maximum length: 24 months

When your application is received, you must:

- Be entering, or have begun the first year of a master's program;
- Be entering, or have begun the first year of a doctoral program, if you were admitted to the PhD program directly from your bachelor's program;
- Intend to enrol for a minimum of one year (or three academic terms). The maximum length of time for the scholarship is two years (or six academic terms); and
- Have completed no more than the equivalent of 12 months of full-time graduate studies in the master's program for which you are requesting funding. The minimum required period is 12 months. Scholarship support will not extend beyond the 28<sup>th</sup> month of a master's program.

You are not considered eligible for an IIS (master's) if you previously held an IPS 1, a PGS M, a CGS M, a PGS A, an FQRNT master's research scholarship (B1) or an FQRNT-NSERC IIS. If you have already received financial support from a recognized funding agency (e.g., NSERC, CIHR, SSHRC, FRSQ, FQRSC, FCAR) over a total period of five years (15 academic terms of 60 months full-time), you are not eligible to receive an IIS (master's).

## 4.2 IIS (Doctoral)

### Maximum length: 36 months

You are eligible for this type of scholarship only if you are, or will be, a doctoral candidate.

When your application is received, you must:

- Have completed no more than the full-time equivalent of 24 months of full-time studies in the doctoral program for which you are requesting funding in a field of research that NSERC and FQRNT support;
- Have completed the equivalent of four to 36 months of full-time studies in the doctoral program for which you are requesting funding, if you were admitted into a doctoral program directly from your bachelor's program.

Support will not extend beyond the 52<sup>nd</sup> month of doctoral studies, and you must remain for at least two years (6 academic terms) in the graduate program for which you received the scholarship. The minimum required period is 24 months.

You are not eligible for an IIS (doctoral) if you previously held an IPS 2, a PGS D, a CGS D, a PGS B or an FQRNT doctoral research scholarship (B2). If you have received financial support from a recognized funding agency (e.g., NSERC, CIHR, SSHRC, FRSQ, FQRSC, FCAR) over a period totalling five years (15 academic terms or 60 months full-time) you are not eligible for an IIS (doctoral) scholarship.

## 4.3 Part-time

If you are enrolled part-time in a natural sciences or engineering graduate studies program at a Quebec university, you are eligible for the IIS Program on an exceptional basis. Part-time students are eligible for financial support for a maximum of 48 months at the master's level, or 72 months at the doctoral level at one-half the normal stipend level.

## 4.4 Who are the eligible host organizations?

Eligible host organizations:

- Companies, consortiums and private-sector industry groups (production, processing, service) working in partnership with universities and involved or interested in becoming involved in R&D in Quebec ;
- Companies or organizations outside Quebec may be considered if the benefits of the initiative for Quebec are demonstrated;
- Government agencies operating as regular for-profit enterprises, or on a cost-recovery basis;
- Start-up or spin-off companies with their own research facilities (i.e., not attached to a university);
- Non-profit organizations that do not receive a significant portion (more than 50 percent) of their operating budget from public funds.

Ineligible:

- University laboratories, research centres and institutes;
- Federal, provincial and municipal governments;
- Non-profit organizations that receive a significant portion (more than 50 per cent) of their operating budget from public funds.

## 4.5 Group applications

A number of scholarships may be awarded to groups or associations.

For group applications, a project proposal may originate with a company, a group of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), a consortium, an association, a university or a region. NSERC and FQRNT must enter into an agreement concerning the proposal with the participating partners (i.e., company or group of SMEs, associations, consortium). The agreement will specify the number of scholarships awarded for this proposal, selection requirements, and other applicable terms and conditions.

## 5. HOW DO YOU APPLY?

You must contact the university's [Graduate Studies Office](#), which is responsible for submitting applications. A complete application includes the following items:

- The IIS form, available on the FQRNT [Web site](#). The form must be completed and delivered electronically. Keep a printed copy for your file. You must also deliver a copy to the Graduate Studies Office.
- Official academic transcripts with the grade point average (GPA) indicated.
- Certification by the Dean of Graduate Studies of the student's admission to the proposed degree program on a full-time basis.
- A statement signed\* by the university, the host organization, the student and the university supervisor in which you all agree to:
  - the host organization's financial contribution to the scholarship (for full-time, a minimum of \$7,000 per year for a master's student and \$9,000 per year for a doctoral student for the duration of the scholarship);
  - the ownership of intellectual property arising from the research. This agreement must comply with the Quebec action plan for the management of intellectual property in universities (Plan d'action du Québec relatif à la gestion de la PI dans les universités) and with the Guiding Principles and the Mandatory Elements set out in [NSERC's Policy on Intellectual Property](#);
  - that the student must generally spend most of his/her research time at the host organization;
  - that granting of student's degree will not be delayed by the desire to keep research results confidential; and
  - that the student will not be subject to any restrictions regarding the offers of employment that he or she may accept while enrolled in the graduate program or after obtaining a degree.
- A notification that the application file has been submitted, which can be printed once the electronic form has been sent.
- A list of required documents (available when the application is printed), including the director's section, the on-the-job supervisor's section and the university's recommendation;
- A proof of citizenship or residency status;
- The training supplement application form, if this additional financial support is requested at the time of application; and
- The travel allowance form, if this additional financial support is requested.

\* A [template agreement](#) (PDF format – 167 KB – 14 pages) between the student, the university and the host organization is available on FQRNT and NSERC Web sites.

## 5.1 Application Deadlines

Student applications for the NSERC-FQRNT Industrial Innovation Scholarships Program may be submitted at any time; however, the university can assign internal deadlines. For more information about university deadlines, contact the [Graduate Studies Office or the Scholarship Liaison Officer](#).

## 6. REVIEW PROCESS

The proposal must originate with the student, in association with his/her university supervisor and a host organization.

Applications must be submitted to the appropriate Graduate Studies Office at the candidate's university.

The student, the university and the host organization must enter into an agreement concerning the proposal.

The office of the Dean of Graduate Studies coordinates all applications for the IIS Program and forwards the application file, including the signed agreement, to FQRNT. The application form is sent electronically to FQRNT, which sends a copy to NSERC.

The university must evaluate the proposal by providing a score and comments for each of the four criteria listed below and make an overall recommendation.

A joint committee composed of NSERC and FQRNT program managers examines the applications and makes a recommendation on whether funds should be granted.

Applications will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- Relevance and quality of the research project;
- Candidate's aptitude for research and innovation;
- Supervision available to the student; and
- Candidate's academic record.

### 6.1 Criteria, indicators and Weighting

#### 1. Relevance and quality of research project (35 points):

- Contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the discipline and to the host organization's development;
- Fit between the proposed project and the director's research field (doctoral scholarships only);
- Appropriateness to the host organization's area of work;
- Originality of project and clarity of the science and technology objectives;
- Appropriate methodology for the research objectives.

#### 2. Candidate's aptitude for research and innovation (25 points):

- Experience and achievements;
- Ability to communicate, including overall presentation of project.

### **3. Supervision available to the student (25 points):**

- Justification of choice of educational institution and host organization, including:
  - Supervision by university;
  - Supervision by host organization;
- Student's work environment;
- Value added by work experience in industry.

### **4. Academic record (15 points)**

- Academic average (bachelor's/master's);
- Awards, prizes and scholarships;
- Academic progress.

## **7. ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS**

The results of the competition will be announced no later than two months following the acknowledgement of the complete application, including all the required documents and the signed partnership agreement.

## **8. SCHOLARSHIP RULES**

The scholarship may only be used at the university that submitted your application. However, in order to meet the scholarship requirements, you must generally devote the majority of your research time while with the host organization to research activities related to your thesis at the host organization site. Either in the research proposal summary section of the application form or in a detailed table ([work plan](#)) appended to this form, you must clearly describe, in detail, what you expect your work with the host organization to entail. This may include such things as field work or spending time with an alternate industrial partner.

You must keep a [record](#) of the time you spend at the host organization site (complete with dates and hours, in tabular form) and provide it as part of your progress report.

You must also comply with the conditions for use of your scholarship, as described in the [Award Holder's Guide](#), including, but not limited to, the authorization to perform a maximum of 150 hours of paid work per four-month period.

### **8.1 Concurrent scholarships**

#### **Concurrent scholarships not allowed**

The IIS cannot be combined with another scholarship from a federal funding agency such as NSERC, SSHRC and CIHR, and provincial funding agencies such as FQRNT, FQRSC and FRSQ. Scholarships of equal or greater value awarded by other Quebec or federal government departments or by charitable foundations cannot be combined with the IIS unless there are agreements on particular joint initiatives between these organizations and NSERC or FQRNT.

#### **Concurrent scholarships allowed**

If you are receiving a scholarship from a private source, including universities, research chairs, consortiums, private, international or foreign foundations, other Canadian provincial governments or foreign governments, you may hold that scholarship concurrently with the IIS if the concurrency rules of these organizations allow it.

Holding awards concurrently with loans and scholarships from the Québec ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) is permitted.

## **8.2 Start date and period of scholarship validity**

The start date of the scholarship may be retroactive to the start of the academic term when the application was submitted. This retroactivity does not apply to scholarships for which applications are submitted after February 1, or that were submitted but for which required information is missing on that date. In these cases, scholarships will not be awarded until the start of the term following the February 1 date. The scholarships should be awarded approximately three months after the nominations are received.

The scholarships are awarded for the duration of the eligibility period, subject to the submission of progress reports deemed satisfactory by NSERC, FQRNT and the host organization.

## **8.3 Payment of scholarships**

The university will be responsible for making regular payments to the scholarship holder for the NSERC and host organization portions of the scholarship. The FQRNT portion will go directly to the student.

## **8.4 Termination of support**

The scholarship must be terminated:

- If you are no longer eligible for this scholarship, it must be terminated;
- If your host organization withdraws its financial support for your scholarship, or if you no longer meet the eligibility criteria that were in effect at the time your award was approved, the scholarship must be terminated.

## **8.5 Progress report**

In order to authorize a payment for subsequent years of the scholarship, NSERC and FQRNT must have received a yearly progress report. The report is sent to FQRNT by the Dean of Graduate Studies by the anniversary date of the start date of the scholarship. This report must:

- verify the student's satisfactory standing in the graduate program;
- describe the progress the student has made in the research project;
- [detail the time](#) the student has spent at the host organization;
- confirm the host organization's continued financial support.

Parts of the report may be prepared by the Dean of Graduate Studies, the student, the university supervisor, or the host organization representative (as appropriate).

## **8.6 Final report**

A final report is required at the end of the scholarship period. Any further financial assistance under another program will be conditional upon the receipt of the report.

## 9. VALUE OF SCHOLARSHIP

### IIS (Master's)

Annual value of scholarship: \$14,000 + a minimum of \$7,000 from the private partner  
NSERC: \$7,000 + FQRNT: \$7,000 + Private partner: \$7,000 = \$21,000 or more;

### IIS (Doctoral)

Annual value of scholarship: \$18,000 + a minimum of \$9,000 from private partner  
NSERC: \$9,000 + FQRNT: \$9,000 + Private partner: \$9,000 = \$27,000 or more;

### Training supplement (maximum \$2,500)

The total cost is shared equally between NSERC and FQRNT.

**Travel Allowance** (maximum \$1,500 for IIS [Master's] and \$2,000 for IIS [Doctoral]). The cost is absorbed by FQRNT.

## 10. TRAINING SUPPLEMENT

A training supplement is available to pay for aspects of the student's training and for the acquisition of skills. The total amount may not exceed \$2,500 during the course of the scholarship. It is intended to facilitate travel and registration in relevant training activities. The goal of these activities is to assist the student **in acquiring complementary skills for working in the host organization site.**

The student must submit a duly completed Training Supplement application form directly to FQRNT. The application must be well-justified. These applications for the supplement will be processed following the same procedure as the scholarship applications and will be assessed by the joint committee created by the two funding agencies for this purpose. The application may be submitted at the same time as the scholarship application or, at the latest, within the first four months of the last year of financial support.

The activities must take place during the payment period of the scholarship. The supplement will be paid to the student once receipts have been submitted (for details regarding reimbursement of expenses, see the [Award Holder's Guide](#)) and must be used solely for the training activities approved by the joint committee.

### Eligible expenses:

- Registration, travel and follow-up expenditures for courses, workshops, internships, seminars or other training activities enabling the student to acquire the skills needed to carry out his or her research work in an industrial setting.

### Non-eligible expenses:

- Fees for scientific symposiums or conferences related to the candidate's research field (organization and participation);
- Remuneration of the on-the-job supervisor or research director;
- Any expenditure related to the carrying out of the candidate's research work; and
- Furniture and equipment.

## 11. TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

When requested, a special allowance may be granted to students who are conducting research in a company located in an outlying area far from their place of study.

The objective is to support students seeking to carry out research in a targeted company located at least 150 kilometres from their place of residence or study.

### Eligibility

To receive the allowance, students must meet all of the following conditions:

- Student
  - The student must be a IIS Scholarship holder.
- Research location
  - The student must be conducting research in an area that is not the one in which he/she studies and incurring significant additional travel time (area located over 150 kilometres from his/her place of study or residence);
  - The research must be carried out in one of Québec's administrative regions.

### Amounts offered

FQRNT offers a maximum allowance of \$1,500 to master's students and \$2,000 to Ph.D. students for the duration of their scholarships.

FQRNT covers the allocation.

### Allowance payment

To receive the scholarship supplement, the student must submit a written request signed by his/her research director and on-the-job supervisor when presenting his/her project to the FQRNT. The applicant must include an overview of the additional fees incurred because the location of the company in which the research is conducted is far from his/her place of study. The allocation is chiefly meant to cover any additional travel and accommodation (if applicable) expenses incurred by the student.

## 12. INFORMATION FOR FOREIGN STUDENTS

FQRNT and NSERC will accept applications from foreign students. These applicants, as well as their applications, must meet all other IIS Program requirements.

A maximum of 20% of IIS Program scholarships will be awarded to foreign students. FQRNT and NSERC will inform the universities when the limit has almost been reached.

Foreign students who receive an IIS will have the same rights and must follow the same rules as other IIS holders, as described in the [Award Holder's Guide](#). However, foreign students enrolled in a part-time program are not eligible for an IIS.

### Student visa and employment

NSERC and FQRNT emphasize that IIS awards are scholarships and should not be considered as employment. Therefore, foreign students who hold student visas allowing them to study in Canada are not required to obtain a work permit in order to collaborate with sponsoring organizations through an IIS.

### **Eligible host organizations for foreign students who hold an IIS**

Foreign students who hold an IIS must work for a host organization whose offices, labs or other facilities are located in Quebec. Students must devote their research time to activities covered by the IIS. These activities must be carried out on host organization premises located in Quebec.

### **Additional documents required for IIS Applications submitted by foreign students**

If their transcripts are in a language other than English or French, foreign students must attach a certified translation of these transcripts to their application. An assessment of the academic qualifications upon which the student's admissibility to the graduate program was based must also be attached. This assessment must be written by the university.

### **13. FOR INFORMATION**

Program administrator: Annik Brosseau  
Phone: 418 643-3463  
For students outside the Québec city area: 1 888 653-6512  
ext. 3463  
Télécopieur : 418 643-1451  
E-mail: annik.brosseau@fqrnt.gouv.qc.ca

FQRNT's offices are open from Monday to Friday and from 8:30 to 5pm (Standard Eastern time).

Note that FQRNT does not accept fees from collect calls.

Candidates who contact us by e-mail must provide a phone number where they can be reached.  
**Priority is given to e-mailed information requests.**

Fonds québécois de la recherche sur la nature et les technologies

Programmes de bourses

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