

Marine Institute GRAD Fund

Administration

Last updated: Jan 30, 2018

Background

The School of Fisheries (SOF) seeks proposals for the **Graduate Research Accelerator Development (GRAD) fund**, awarded through the Fisheries and Oceans Canada Ocean and Freshwater Science Contribution Program. The GRAD fund is valued at:

\$100,000 for FY 2018-2019

\$80,000 for FY 2019-2020*

*Our receipt of 2019-2020 funds is contingent on performance in 2018-2019. The fund becomes available for use as of **April 1, 2018**.

Purpose and Rationale

The GRAD fund exists to support graduate students enrolled in the SOF research-based graduate programs. Its purpose is to facilitate student-led research, and give graduate students the experience of conceiving a project, applying for funding, executing the project (while managing its budget), and publishing the results.

Eligibility

Currently-enrolled graduate students in any SOF graduate program (M.Sc Fisheries Science (*Fisheries Science and Technology*), M.Sc Fisheries Science (*Stock Assessment*), Ph.D. Fisheries Science), and graduate students enrolled in other Departments but supervised by Marine Institute faculty members may apply to the GRAD fund. MI Post-doctoral fellows may only apply as co-applicants to a project led by a graduate student.

Students may collaborate on applications, but a single project leader must be identified who will be held accountable for project management, outcomes, and execution. All co-applicants must be enrolled in an SOF graduate program, or supervised by an MI faculty member (including cross-appointees or adjuncts). Any project that pertains to fisheries science is eligible for support.

Award criteria

Projects must meet the following criteria:

- Be relevant to fisheries science (including research relevant to the Centre for Fisheries Ecosystems Research, the Centre for Sustainable Aquatic Resources, or the Centre for Aquaculture and Seafood Development, CFER, CSAR, CASD respectively, or otherwise associated with the ecology, management, or practice of North Atlantic fisheries)
- Represent independent thought by the graduate student (i.e. this money does not replace funds that should otherwise be provided by the student's P.I.)

Budget, and Eligible Expenses

Normally, project budgets should not exceed \$20,000. Projects must be contained within a fiscal year (i.e. all funds must be spent by March 31, 2019 for Year 1 projects, and March 31, 2020 for Year 2 projects).

Eligible expenses include anything that would be eligible under an NSERC Discovery Grant. However, this fund is not meant to provide basic funding for student salary – it is meant to extend the ability of students to conduct research beyond the financial support of their PI.

Applicants may therefore include in their budget a maximum of \$2,900 or \$3,200 of stipend support for themselves (i.e. 50% of one semester's support for a M.Sc and Ph.D student, respectively).

A student receiving a GRAD fund should normally be receiving an income of at least \$17,500 p.a. for M.Sc students, or \$19,000 p.a. for Ph.D students from all sources. That is, supervisors should not stop financially supporting their students if the student receives a GRAD fund.

Stipends for research assistants *are* eligible. Research and Technical Personnel (RTP) charge-out rates are eligible as well, but cannot exceed 10 percent of the proposed project budget. We encourage graduate students to recruit undergraduate assistants and pay them from this fund. See: http://www.mun.ca/hr/careers/student/student_Rates/ for student employment pay rates.

Deadline

Projects will be assessed as submissions are received, on a first-come-first-served basis. Students should apply early to improve odds of success. All funds should be allocated by September 1, 2018 to allow for sufficient time to complete the project.

Our goal is to render decisions on applications within one month of the application being submitted. *For the first year, we encourage students to apply for funding even before April 1, 2018.*

Instructions

A complete application must include the following:

- Completed cover page (see template on Page 5).
- One-page **project description**, written in the format of an NSERC project proposal (see 'outline of proposed research' section - http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/OnlineServices-ServicesEnLigne/instructions/201/pgs-pdf_eng.asp#appinfo). The proposal should be fully-referenced, and references may appear on a second page.
- One-page **budget and workplan** including a proposed budget (with justification for costs), an explanation of project milestones, and a timeline showing when those milestones will be complete.
- One-page **statement of interest**, explaining how this project would extend the student's research capacity beyond their assigned research program, and why this fund is needed (as opposed to having the project supported by the PI's core grants).

- A letter of support from the student's supervisor, indicating their support for the student proceeding with the proposed research program if awarded. **This letter should include a description of how – and to what level – the student will be financially supported during the proposed research.**
- The project lead's current CV
- If relevant, copies of any ethical review clearances needed to receive the money. If the GRAD fund application can be encapsulated within an existing ethical clearance, please specify.

Assessment criteria

Applications that do not follow the guidelines will be rejected.

Component	Description	Weighting /100
Project description	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Project is relevant to fisheries science- Description is clear, well-written, and with specific research objectives- Student has clearly articulated a knowledge gap that their project will fill, and explained how filling this gap will advance the ecology, management, or practice of North Atlantic fisheries	40
Budget and Workplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Budget is realistic, comprehensive, and less than \$20,000*- Timelines are descriptive and achievable- Milestones are clear and logical	20
Statement of interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Student must demonstrate that the GRAD fund would extend their research program beyond that which was assigned by their PI- The proposed project should represent a logical extension of their existing thesis research	20
Research Capacity (via CV)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Student has either established a publication record, or has otherwise demonstrated to the review committee that they are likely to be capable of producing scholarly literature	10
HQP involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Preference will be given to projects in which the graduate student recruits and trains one or more undergraduate assistants as part of the work	10

*Our preference is to fund fewer projects at a higher value. We encourage students to think big.

Applications will be assessed by an ad hoc committee composed of: Brett Favaro, Paul Winger, Kelley Santos, and Maxime Geoffroy. Committee members will not judge applications from the students they supervise and decisions will be reached by consensus.

Assessment outcomes

There are three possible outcomes of an assessment:

1. Accepted as-is: The project is approved without further revision. The committee reserves the right to award a sum different from that which was requested by the student.
2. Accepted with revision: Project approved in principle, but funds are only dispersed once the student meets specific conditions as assigned by the review committee. Again, the committee may award a sum different from what was requested.
3. Rejected: The application is rejected outright. The student may only re-apply once on a rejected project.

These guidelines are subject to change.

Applications should be submitted to the graduate secretary by email. The entire package should consist of three files:

1. Word Document or PDF, containing the cover page, project description, budget and workplan and statement of interest
2. Word document or PDF containing the letter of support from the supervisor
3. CV of the lead applicant (or, a link to the student's completed OrcID)

Cover page: GRAD Fund Application

Project lead: _____

Graduate program: _____

Project lead's supervisor: _____

Co-applicant(s): _____

Application submission date: _____

Project Title:

Signatures:

Project Lead

Project lead's supervisor

Include signatures of any co-applicants: