



Polar Knowledge
Canada

Savoir polaire
Canada

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Northern Scientific Training Program (NSTP)

I am pleased to invite you, on behalf of your institution, to submit an application to the Northern Scientific Training Program, which provides supplementary funding support to Canadian university students conducting thesis research in Northern regions, for the year 2020-2021.

The deadline for receiving your submission is December 1, 2019. Any application submitted past this date could impact funding decisions by the NSTP Management Committee.

Minor revisions have been made to improve the guidelines and manuals. Attached you will find all necessary documents for this years' competition, including:

- a general information sheet with tips for properly completing the student report and application forms and what to look for before sending the submission to the NSTP Secretariat;
- a "Frequently Asked Questions" page;
- the POLAR logo, which you may use on posters, in presentations, etc.
- the NSTP Instruction Manual (Guidelines, Students and Chairperson);
- a template for the university Northern Studies Committee Information Sheet;
- information resources for Community interactions;
- NSTP – Examples of Community Engagement
- Checklist for Conducting Research in Canada's North (Polar Knowledge Canada)
- a comprehensive list of licence/permit organizations (provided by the Polar Continental Shelf Program);
- a one-page ad you may use to advertise the program, in any way (email, social media, newsletter, bulletin board, etc.).

Progress reports and new applications forms **must** be completed online. All documents/forms can be found on the NSTP internet site at:

English: <http://www.canada.ca/en/polar-knowledge/fundingforresearchers/index.html#h2-2>

French: <http://www.canada.ca/fr/savoir-polaire/financementchercheurs/index.html>

Changes this year to the online process include:

- The Northern Studies information and the Institution Information Sheet have been merged into one document.
- Members of the university committees are no longer required to sign the Northern Studies Information Sheet.
- The Chair can now sign the form electronically.
- The President's signature remains the same (the signed copy must be uploaded).
- New deadlines are now in place: November 8th for students to complete their report/application; and, December 1st for universities to submit to the NSTP Secretariat.

It is important to provide a detailed Northern Studies Committee Information Sheet, as this provides the NSTP Management Committee with an overview of your submission as a whole and outlines research priorities for the University.

After the December 1st application deadline, the information required for the NSTP Management Committee to assess the submissions will be captured on an Overview Spreadsheet. Universities are no longer required to provide signed Overview Spreadsheets with the submission. If you are still interested in this document for your records please contact the NSTP Secretariat.

If NSTP funds were awarded to one or more of your students in 2019/2020 conducting fall/winter projects (i.e., those for which northern fieldwork in 2019/2020 will occur just prior to or after the December 1st application deadline for 2020/2021), it will be impossible for them to report completely on their progress by December 1st. In such cases, please provide as much information as possible about progress on these projects in your application package. A final progress report for these projects must be submitted to the NSTP Secretariat by April 30, 2020.

The NSTP Secretariat is offering to participate in an information session by teleconference or “gotomeeting” (web-based video conferencing). The NSTP Secretariat will also be attending the 2019 ACUNS Annual General Meeting in Ottawa, October 2019.

The NSTP Management Committee's Annual Allocation Meeting, to evaluate applications for funding, has been tentatively scheduled for February 2020.

The NSTP Management Committee welcomes your comments regarding the NSTP and its operations. We have acted on many constructive suggestions made over the years, which have greatly improved the NSTP program. These may be included with your submission in a covering letter or in ‘Section Eight’ of the Northern Studies Committee Information Sheet.

REMINDERS/UPDATES

Unexpended Funds:

In the past, many universities routinely had unused funds each year, usually because of project cancellations. **As of the 2017/2018 year, universities may re-allocate funds awarded to projects that end up not proceeding, for whatever reason, to students who are going north in the same year.** If a student is not able to carry out their planned field work, the Committee would prefer that a replacement student is found for the project, but it is understood this is not always possible. In these cases the funds allocated to the cancelled project may be distributed among the remaining students in the current fiscal year. It is not permissible to “hold” the funds for the same student to use in a subsequent year; in such a case, the student may re-apply for NSTP funds. How funds are re-allocated is at the discretion of the university northern studies committee, but the NSTP Secretariat must be notified in advance of the re-allocation. With this policy in place, it is expected that, each year, universities will fully allocate all NSTP funds awarded to them, and will carry-over funds only in exceptional circumstances. **If your institution currently has a balance of funds, please allocate them now among students who completed (or will complete) fieldwork in the current fiscal year, such that the balance reported in your forthcoming application is eliminated or substantially minimized.**

Community interactions/Engagement:

What is engagement? The NSTP Management Committee strongly recommends front-end engagement. Some points to consider:

- Who are you engaging? Translate complex research accordingly.
- Make the link as to why this research is important.
- Ask communities – what do YOU want?

To summarize, engagement is who the research is relevant to – being creative and innovative is key! Examples from last years' competition have been compiled and can be found as an attachment.

Number of Days in the North:

Until now, the application required trips under 21 days to be justified.

Moving forward, the application will ask students to:

- Provide a brief rationale for the length of their stay(s) in the North, regardless of the number of days (i.e., whether they will be in the North for 6 days or 60)
- Rationale will be required where there are multiple trips

NSTP Geographic Boundary:

It was requested that the NSTP reconsiders the current definition to be more inclusive of Innu communities.

Seeing as there are so many possibilities, given everyone has different opinions as to what is considered northern research, one possible solution would be to give the universities' northern studies committees the right to allow exceptions.

After lengthy discussions on this issue, it was decided that, in the case of social science projects, the onus will be on the university committee to justify out of boundary projects. Within the Northern Studies Committee report that accompanies the submission, highlight projects that are close to the line and add justification up front for the NSTP Management Committee to consider.

Northern Colleges

In order to increase participation in northern research for northern students the NSTP is implementing a policy change to increase northern college engagement.

Northern colleges can apply for students working on a research project. The NSTP will support funding for southern universities to include northern students as research assistants. This policy change has been incorporated into the NSTP Information Manual.

Note: A research assistant could be defined as an individual working on a research project with a graduate student working on their thesis project.

If you have any questions concerning your submission, please do not hesitate to contact the NSTP Secretariat staff (Rhonda Turner, 613 222-7421 or Nathalie Robillard-Bergeron, 613 222-9537).

Yours sincerely,



Jeffery M. Saarela, Ph.D.
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Attachments