

6/13/2018

Vanier Application Components – Templates Project Overview

The following components of the Vanier Application are completed by the Vanier Candidate.

Title of Research Proposal (max. 640 characters)

Completed by Vanier Applicant

- Used by the agency to identify the research project. It is acceptable to use your Lay Title as your Research Proposal Title

Lay Title (max. 200 characters)

Completed by Vanier Applicant

- Shorten and simplify your research proposal title so it is clear and understandable to the public.

Lay Summary (max. 2,000 characters)

Completed by Vanier Applicant. This is typically the first component the reviewer reads. Write it well!

- Opening sentence should grab the reader's attention e.g. an intriguing statistic or critical problem
- Write in the active voice
- Use clear, non-technical, plain language. No acronyms. Do not copy and paste any part of your research proposal.
- Provide a brief description of the work you will do.
- Explain why and for whom the research is important.
- Wrap up with anticipated outcomes.
- Seek feedback on your draft summary from your supervisor, as well as from a variety of lay and multi-disciplinary people to make sure they can understand what you have written.
- Ultimately the summary is used for promotional purposes outside the research community to inform the public about why your research is valuable and deserves to be publicly funded.

Project Descriptors/Keywords

Completed by Vanier Applicant

- Describe your research project, the techniques and the methods employed, and the areas of interest

6/13/2018

Research Proposal (max. 2 pages, including graphs and images)

Completed by Vanier Applicant

- Write a detailed description of your research project for the period during which the award would be held
- Be as specific as possible
- Articulate how your research fits within the context of the current knowledge in the field
- Clearly state the objectives, hypothesis, research question
- Outline the experimental or theoretical approach to be taken
- Cite literature pertinent to the proposal
- State the methods and procedures to be used
- Explain how your project advances knowledge
- Describe the incremental benefit conferred by undertaking your PhD research at Western (e.g. supervisor/departmental specialization, lab facilities, funding opportunities, support structures offered/in-place).
- Your program, of study will be evaluated by a multi-disciplinary committee (non-specialist audience), and as such should be written in non-technical terms, avoiding jargon.
- Write clearly
- Only use one citation style. Best to use in-text citations, so reviewers don't have to work so hard looking up numbered references.
- A great research proposal includes:
 - Intriguing introduction – research problem, problem justification, objectives, significance of the study/project
 - Literature review
 - Research methodology – research philosophy, research strategy, hypotheses, population and sample, operationalization of variables, statistical method
 - Compelling conclusion and deliverables

Canadian Common CV

Completed by Vanier Applicant

- Create an account in the [CCCV](#) portal, if you do not already have one, and create a Vanier-Banting Academic CV.
- Follow these instructions for completing your CCCV http://www.vanier.gc.ca/en/completing_ccv.html
- You will eventually link this to your Vanier application in ResearchNet
- Free-form CVs are not accepted
- Provide a PDF copy of your CCCV for this draft application

6/13/2018

Research Contributions (max. one page)

Completed by Vanier Applicant

- From the research contributions listed in your CCV, choose up to 5 that you judge to be the most significant and relevant to your research proposal. For each of these contributions:
 - Describe your role in the research, including by clarifying your contribution to collaborative research and to the actual writing of joint publications;
 - Discuss the reasons for selecting the medium (e.g., journal article, conference presentation, etc.) for mobilizing the research, if appropriate;
 - Indicate any collaboration with other researchers and/or with other knowledge users from outside academia;
 - Discuss the significance, relevance and impact of your work in relation to the social sciences and humanities, the natural sciences and engineering or to health-related fields and processes, if appropriate;
 - Describe their significance in terms of demonstrating your research leadership and sphere of influence at the institutional level and beyond; and,
 - Discuss the impact and importance of these activities in terms of your career aspirations.
- This component of the application should speak directly to the following selection criteria: research potential and leadership (potential and demonstrated ability)

Combined Program: Statement of Special Circumstance (max. one page)

Completed by Vanier Applicant

- If you are registered in a combined undergraduate and doctoral program (e.g., MD/PhD), provide a timeline of your combined undergraduate and doctoral program studies, broken down by semester/term.
- Your timeline must be consistent with your transcripts.

Personal Leadership Statement (2 pages)

Completed by Vanier Candidate. This is not an autobiographical account. It is a clear statement of what challenges and opportunities have shaped your doctoral research.

- Start by defining what leadership means to you in the opening paragraph.
- Use 4-5 examples from your CCV that illustrate how you have demonstrated your leadership skills, and explain each one in a separate paragraph, gradually building your case.
- Consider the following points when crafting your leadership narrative:
 - What led you to doctoral research? How have your relevant life experiences and personal circumstances (may include administrative responsibilities, maternity/parental leave, childrearing, illness, cultural or community responsibilities, socio-economic context, or health-related family responsibilities) shaped your academic, research, leadership choices, challenges, and successes?
 - If you have experienced career interruptions in your university education, explain in your narrative how it is potentially beneficial to your career path
 - How has your personal life driven you to share and disseminate your research?
 - How have you created opportunities to make change, and how have you overcome obstacles to your vision?
 - How have you fostered your ability to lead others?
 - Why have you chosen to undertake your PhD at the nominating institution? How does your nominating institution provide an environment that nurtures both your academic and your leadership skills?
- Leadership can take many forms. When crafting this statement, be sure to outline not just your accomplishments for the committee, but how those accomplishments required you to leverage your leadership skills to achieve your goals.
- Write a closing paragraph that satisfies the reviewer that you have made your case.
- Keep in mind:
 - Clarity - Be clear, and structure your statement properly
 - Conviction - Make direct statements, not, for example, "I hope to..." or "I might...". Be gracious, never boastful, in your writing.
 - Clinch the deal – Persuade the reviewers that you are the one that stands out above all others.

6/13/2018

Four references are required within the Vanier Application:

- **Two are Academic References, one of which should be your Supervisor.**
- **Two are Leadership References, to be completed by someone who knows you in a non-academic capacity and can describe how you have demonstrated and will potentially continue to demonstrate leadership in your activities, whether volunteer or work, sport or art, and any other type of participation.**
 - This is normally not a faculty member.

1st Referee Assessment (1 of 4 Assessments Required)

Normally Completed by the Vanier Applicant's PhD Supervisor, or Master's Supervisor if not yet in the PhD.

- In three separate sections, describe the candidate's talent and strengths in each of the following areas, providing concrete evidence/examples in each section:
 1. **Academic Excellence** as demonstrated by past academic results and by transcripts, awards and distinctions.
 - When writing this assessment consider the sphere of influence of the candidate relative to others along the following continuum of expanding impact:
 - Research program
 - Canadian institution
 - Research community
 - International research community
 - Society at large
 - Both the prestige of the Vanier CGS and the stage and nature of the candidate's academic career should be considered when writing the assessment. In the case of health professionals, highlight research productivity, etc. for their level of experience/qualifications relative to a PhD student. For applicants who have relevant work experience, scientific productivity prior to graduate school should be highlighted.
 2. **Research Potential** as demonstrated by the candidate's research history, their interest in discovery, the proposed research and its potential contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the field, and any anticipated outcomes
 - When writing this assessment consider the nature/prestige of the Vanier CGS and the stage and nature of the candidate's career.
 - Collaboration, teamwork, mentoring are important and valid contributions to research and training and should be illustrated to indicate excellence in the candidate's workstyle and commitment.
 - Demonstrate the student's potential contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the field.
 - Mention specific anticipated outcomes as relevant. Evaluate excellence/productivity commensurate with the career stage of the candidate.
 3. **Leadership** an overarching assessment of demonstrated and potential leadership
 - Elaborate on how the candidate has gone above and beyond the opportunities presented to him/her to achieve a goal, create positive change, contribute to their community, or how they have taken on responsibility for others.
 - Consider the following points when writing the assessment:
 - What led them to doctoral research? i.e. how have their relevant life experiences and personal circumstances shaped their academic, research, leadership choices, challenges, and successes? How has it driven them to share and disseminate their research?
 - How have they created opportunities to make change, overcome obstacles to their vision?
 - How have they fostered their ability for lead others? How have they leveraged that skill?
 - Why did they choose to undertake their PhD at Western? What about your lab/program nurtures their academic and leadership skills?
 - Remember that high achievement does not, in and of itself, constitute Leadership.
- Because the selection committees are multidisciplinary in nature, providing examples/evidence to support the assessment, in comparison to the norms particular to the research area(s), is very useful. The following are some examples of useful information:
 - Detailing where knowledge gaps exist in the discipline related to the proposal
 - Avenues for research dissemination – norms for the discipline
 - Authorship norms on publications for the discipline
 - Impact of applicant's past contribution, (i.e. prestige of publication venue)
- Each of the three sections should be approx. 200-300 words in length, using paragraph breaks, where appropriate.

2nd Referee Assessment (2 of 4 Assessments Required)

Completed by a professor who can speak most highly to your talents and strengths in graduate studies

- In three separate sections, describe the candidate's talent and strengths in each of the following areas, providing concrete evidence/examples in each section:
 1. **Academic Excellence** as demonstrated by past academic results and by transcripts, awards and distinctions.
 - When writing this assessment consider the sphere of influence of the candidate relative to others along the following continuum of expanding impact:
 - Research program
 - Canadian institution
 - Research community
 - International research community
 - Society at large
 - Both the prestige of the Vanier CGS and the stage and nature of the candidate's academic career should be considered when writing the assessment. In the case of health professionals, highlight research productivity, etc. for their level of experience/qualifications relative to a PhD student. For applicants who have relevant work experience, scientific productivity prior to graduate school should be highlighted.
 2. **Research Potential** as demonstrated by the candidate's research history, their interest in discovery, the proposed research and its potential contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the field, and any anticipated outcomes
 - When writing this assessment consider the nature/prestige of the Vanier CGS and the stage and nature of the candidate's career.
 - Collaboration, teamwork, mentoring are important and valid contributions to research and training and should be illustrated to indicate excellence in the candidate's workstyle and commitment.
 - Demonstrate the student's potential contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the field.
 - Mention specific anticipated outcomes as relevant. Evaluate excellence/productivity commensurate with the career stage of the candidate.
 3. **Leadership** an overarching assessment of demonstrated and potential leadership
 - Elaborate on how the candidate has gone above and beyond the opportunities presented to him/her to achieve a goal, create positive change, contribute to their community, or how they have taken on responsibility for others.
 - Consider the following points when writing the assessment:
 - What led them to doctoral research? i.e. how have their relevant life experiences and personal circumstances shaped their academic, research, leadership choices, challenges, and successes? How has it driven them to share and disseminate their research?
 - How have they created opportunities to make change, overcome obstacles to their vision?
 - How have they fostered their ability for lead others? How have they leveraged that skill?
 - Why did they choose to undertake their PhD at Western? What about your lab/program nurtures their academic and leadership skills?
 - Remember that high achievement does not, in and of itself, constitute Leadership.
- Because the selection committees are multidisciplinary in nature, providing examples/evidence to support the assessment, in comparison to the norms particular to the research area(s), is very useful. The following are some examples of useful information:
 - Detailing where knowledge gaps exist in the discipline related to the proposal
 - Avenues for research dissemination – norms for the discipline
 - Authorship norms on publications for the discipline
 - Impact of applicant's past contribution, (i.e. prestige of publication venue)
- Each of the three sections should be approx. 200-300 words in length, using paragraph breaks, where appropriate.

6/13/2018

1st Leadership Assessment (3 of 4 Assessments Required - max. 2 pages)

Completed by someone who knows you in a Non-Academic, leadership context

- Describe how the candidate has demonstrated leadership in relevant activities
- Draw on concrete examples that support how the applicant leadership shows initiative, integrity, focus, passion, inspiration, patience, etc.
- Demonstrate how applicant went beyond their role to accomplish more than normally expected in that role (e.g., achieves a goal, contribute to community, or take on responsibility for others).
- Leadership should be assessed with the following personal and/or social skills:
 - Goal achievement
 - Self-management
 - Integrity
 - Other
 - Creativity
 - Courage
 - Curiosity and dealing with complexity
 - Big-picture thinking
 - Capacity to produce extraordinary results
 - Ability to solve real problems/create real products
 - Social skills:
 - Develops positive relationships with a diverse range of people
 - Cares about and listens to what others say and gives feedback
 - Knows how to motivate individuals
 - Is persuasive
 - Able to negotiate
 - Considered by others to be trustworthy, ethical and dependable
 - Is well-respected
 - Displays mastery of presentation skills and public communications

2nd Leadership Assessment (4 of 4 Assessments Required - max. 2 pages)

Completed by someone who knows you in a Non-Academic, leadership context

- Describe how the candidate has demonstrated leadership in relevant activities
- Draw on concrete examples that support how the applicant leadership shows initiative, integrity, focus, passion, inspiration, patience, etc.
- Demonstrate how applicant went beyond their role to accomplish more than normally expected in that role (e.g., achieves a goal, contribute to community, or take on responsibility for others).
- Leadership should be assessed with the following personal and/or social skills:
 - Goal achievement
 - Self-management
 - Integrity
 - Other
 - Creativity
 - Courage
 - Curiosity and dealing with complexity
 - Big-picture thinking
 - Capacity to produce extraordinary results
 - Ability to solve real problems/create real products
 - Social skills:
 - Develops positive relationships with a diverse range of people
 - Cares about and listens to what others say and gives feedback
 - Knows how to motivate individuals
 - Is persuasive
 - Able to negotiate
 - Considered by others to be trustworthy, ethical and dependable
 - Is well-respected
 - Displays mastery of presentation skills and public communications

Graduate Chair Nomination Letter (max. 2 pages, signed by the Department Chair)

Completed by the Graduate Chair once the official application is ready to be submitted in ResearchNet (no later than August 15)

- Read all components of the candidate's application, including all three reference letters, before writing the letter
- Address the following points and provide supporting evidence for the:
 - Rationale for your choice of the candidate
 - Highlight the factors you used to determine he/she is deserving of a Vanier CGS
 - Articulate clearly the excellence of the candidate according to the three selection criteria, 1) academic excellence, 2) research potential and 3) leadership
 - Emphasize as much as possible leadership potential and demonstrated ability
 - Research training environment for the candidate
 - Elaborate on any commitments that your department or Western will provide the candidate
 - Recruitment and mobility of the candidate
 - Comment on how Western's nomination of the candidate promotes the recruitment endeavours of Western.
 - If the candidate has completed a previous degree at Western, provide a compelling justification for the lack of mobility by explaining why it is in the candidate's best interest to stay at Western (i.e. research/paid institution (or its affiliate), supervisor or co-supervisor, availability of specialized equipment).
- Demonstrate where possible evidence of the candidate's strengths in critical thinking, application of knowledge, judgment, originality, initiative, autonomy and enthusiasm for research.
- Have your Department Chair sign the final letterhead version of the letter