

Contact

Investing in people, discovery and innovation

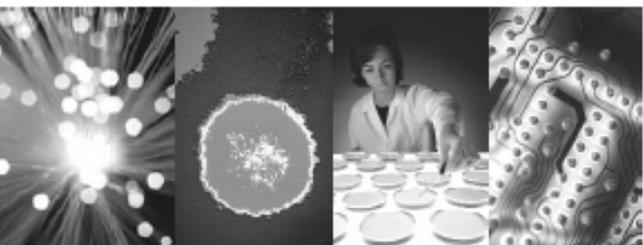
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Upcoming deadlines

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April 1, 2010	Nominations close for the Gerhard Herzberg Canada Gold Medal for Science and Engineering (awarded for sustained excellence and overall influence of research)
April 1, 2010	Nominations close for the Brockhouse Canada Prize for Interdisciplinary Research in Science and Engineering (awarded for important achievements by a team of researchers from different disciplines)
May 3, 2010	Nominations close for the Synergy Awards for Innovation (awarded for outstanding examples of university-industry collaboration)
May 17, 2010	Nominations close for the Innovation Challenge Awards (awarded for the best potential products or services that could result from applying research conducted for a graduate thesis)

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Keeping the academic community informed

NSERC is pleased to reintroduce the Contact newsletter. We plan to publish six times per year, keeping the academic community up-to-date on current news and issues. Please visit our Web site regularly, as we will continue to post time-sensitive news in between issues. We also invite you to send us your [comments](#).

2010 Discovery Grants competition

The 2010 Discovery Grants competition has concluded, and the results are being processed by NSERC staff.

This year's competition saw the successful implementation of the conference model that was recommended in the [Grant Selection Committee Structure Review report](#) in 2008. First piloted by a number of the former Grant Selection Committees, the new model consists of [12 Evaluation Groups](#) whose members form into sections based on the match between their expertise and the specific topics of a set of applications. As needed, members from different groups can join different sections to review topics that cross the traditional boundaries between disciplines.

Group members reacted very positively to the new system. They were equally

positive about the new two-stage rating system, which was first used in the 2009 competition. Specific comments stated that the changes made to the review process during the past two years allow for an effective assessment of the overall quality of proposals, while removing the influence of the previous grant on the outcome of the new application and reducing members' workloads. The conference model now also incorporates more flexibility to react to the emergence of new research areas, many of which are interdisciplinary.

The overall Discovery Grants budget remains stable from previous years, but this year's competition saw the number of applications increase by 115 over 2009. The results of the competition will be communicated to the academic community in late March.

Strategic Project Grants program changes and deadlines

Updates have been posted on NSERC's Web site for the next Strategic Project Grants (SPG) competition. Changes for the 2010 competition relate to NSERC's revised intellectual property policy, project management costs and international collaboration. Minor changes have been made to several of the target areas. This will be the final competition using the current target areas. A review will be

undertaken to determine the target areas that will be in effect for competition years 2011 to 2015. Please consult the [SPG program description](#) for more details. The application deadline is **April 15, 2010**.

Program additions and changes foster industry ties

As part of the new [Strategy for Partnerships and Innovation](#), NSERC introduced two new programs late last year and modified existing programs to make it easier for industry and universities to establish productive research partnerships. The [Engage Grants Program](#) supports the creation of a new university-industry partnership by offering researchers up to \$25,000 to undertake a short-term (six-month) project aimed at addressing a specific company problem. The [Interaction Grants Program](#) provides up to \$5,000 in travel costs to establish new contacts between companies and NSERC-eligible researchers, and identify potential research projects. Researchers have responded enthusiastically to both

initiatives. As of February 1, 2010, NSERC had received almost 50 Engage proposals and over 20 submissions for Interaction support.

In addition to the new programs, the Industrial Research Chairs, Collaborative Research and Development Grants, Idea to Innovation (Phase IIb), and Strategic Project Grants programs have been modified to allow up to 10 percent of the eligible direct cost of research to be devoted to [project management expenses](#). The Idea to Innovation Program also now allows institutions to submit proposals devoted solely to [Market Assessments](#) on potential products, processes or technologies.

Planning the future for ethical use of animals in research

Following 18 months of consultation, the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) has published its [CCAC Five-Year Plan 2009-2014](#), outlining how it will carry out its mandate to ensure the ethical use of animals in research. The plan responds to the expected growth in research that relies on animal subjects, combined with

increased public interest in the ethical aspects of this type of research. Participants in the consultation process included NSERC, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and academic institutions across the country.

You may also be interested in ...

NSERC recently began publishing the [IN Partnership](#) newsletter, an e-mail bulletin showcasing the benefits of R&D collaborations involving business and higher education researchers. Researchers

are invited to share stories about their successful collaboration by contacting [Vincent Wright](#).

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