

NSERC Postgraduate Scholarship – Doctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowship programs Considering equity, diversity and inclusion in your research design

NSERC is acting on the evidence that achieving a more equitable, diverse and inclusive Canadian research enterprise is essential to creating the excellent, innovative and impactful research necessary to advance knowledge and understanding, and respond to local, national and global challenges. This principle informs the commitments described in the [Tri-Agency Statement on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#).

Incorporating diversity considerations, including but not limited to, sex (biological), gender (socio-cultural), disability, ethnicity, age and other factors, and their intersections, in research design makes research more ethically sound, rigorous and useful. You are asked to describe how these aspects will be addressed in your research design, methods, analysis and interpretation, and/or dissemination of findings, where applicable.

Note that extrapolation of the results to the population as a whole, when they actually only apply to a portion of the population, is misleading and could have serious implications¹.

Prior to preparing your application, you should consider the following question:

Are diversity considerations including, but not limited to, sex and gender taken into account in the proposed research design, methods, analysis and interpretation, and/or dissemination of findings?

If **yes**, you should ensure that diversity considerations are incorporated throughout your research proposal (i.e. research design, methods, analysis and interpretation, and/or dissemination of findings).

If **no**, you should use the text box provided in [Form 201](#) to explain why diversity considerations are not relevant to your research design².

NSERC acknowledges that diversity considerations may not be applicable in the context of some research projects, but nonetheless encourages you to fully consider their relevance prior to selecting a “no” response.

NSERC is aware that certain research projects may be focused on a specific population, for example on solely one sex, or one gender of one specific population group and age group. In such cases, you should explain why you have chosen to study a specific population, note the limitations of doing so, and consider how your research will be extrapolated to a more diverse population in future work.

If you have questions, please contact us at: schol@nserc-crsng.gc.ca

¹ Irish Research Council policies and practice to promote gender equality and the integration of gender analysis in research – Progress Report. June 2016.

² NSERC acknowledges that these considerations may not be relevant to every field in the natural sciences and engineering. Note that you will not be penalized if you do not include diversity considerations in your research design when such considerations are not applicable. Inclusion of these considerations when they *are* applicable should strengthen the overall research proposal.

Additional resources that may be helpful include:

- [New Frontiers in Research Fund Best Practices in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Research](#)
(see: Feasibility criterion – Design of the research project)
- Stanford University's [Gendered Innovations](#) (available in English only)
- The [Réseau interuniversitaire québécois sur l'EDI](#) (RIQEDI) (available in French only)

Last updated: July, 2020