Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
• Master’s degree. Transcripts from all previous programs/degrees are considered.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
• Statement of research interest.
• C.V. highlighting scholarly outputs and work experiences.
• If English is not a native language, prospective students must meet the English language proficiency requirements: (1) TOEFL writing, speaking, reading, and listening. The School of Graduate Studies requires the following minimum scores: TOEFL (paper-based): 550, (2) TOEFL iBT: Writing (24/30), Speaking (22/30), Reading (22/30), Listening (20/30), for a total of 88/120 (applicants must have the minimum score in each test as well as the minimum overall score), or (3) IELTS: 7.0 (academic module overall band score), or (4) PTE Academic: 65.

KEY DATES & DEADLINES
• Application deadline: January 15 (international students)/January 31 (domestic students). Late applications may be accepted.
• Notification of acceptance: March.

Before you start your application, please review the Graduate studies application process.

What about FUNDING?

The minimum funding guarantee for Geography PhD students is $18,000 per year, throughout years 1-4. The funding package may be comprised of graduate awards and teaching assistantships. Additional funding is highly likely.

We encourage all students to apply for external funding from OGS, SSHRC, NSERC, CIHR, and other sources. Queen’s will automatically issue a $10,000 award to incoming PhD students who have won federal government tri-council awards. For more information, see the School of Graduate Studies’ information on awards and scholarships.

Why GRADUATE STUDIES in GEOGRAPHY?

Explore critical questions about our environment and our society as you develop research skills. Study with award-winning faculty in an interdisciplinary department that combines fundamental analysis and research with practical, applied approaches to planning and implementation.

“Geography gave me the support I needed. I was able to take a complex project and really run with it.”
– Dr Sarah de Leeuw, PhD

Why QUEEN’S?

The Department of Geography and Planning at Queen’s University offers a comprehensive graduate program based on innovative research and strong collaboration between faculty and graduate students. Our specialized Earth System Science labs include GIS and remote-sensing labs equipped with a wide range of the latest software and hardware, and facilities with the latest field equipment and laboratory instrumentation. In human geography, we provide strong support for fieldwork that engages topics of public interest from the community to the national or international scale. Many of our students work on questions of global significance, including development projects in Latin America or Africa, ecological change in the Arctic or the relationship between international migration and human rights. We provide a place for graduate students to learn and excel within a vibrant and supportive intellectual community.
A graduate degree in Geography can equip you with valuable and versatile skills, such as:

- Knowledge and technical skills
- Effective communication skills in multiple forms for diverse audiences
- Information management: prioritize, organize and synthesize large amounts of information
- Time management: Meet deadlines and manage responsibilities despite competing demands
- Project management: develop ideas, gather information, analyze, critically appraise findings, draw and act on conclusions
- Creativity and innovation
- Perseverance
- Independence and experience as a collaborative worker
- Awareness, an understanding of sound ethical practices, social responsibility: responsible research and cultural sensitivity
- Professionalism in all aspects of work, research, and interactions
- Leadership: initiative and vision, leading people and discussion

WHERE CAN I GO?
A PhD in Geography can take your career in many directions. In Canada, less than 40% of all PhDs will work in post-secondary education – the majority will work in industry, government, or non-profits.

- Academia and teaching
- Consulting
- International development
- Government
- Policy

Taking time to explore career options, build experience, and network can help you have a smooth transition to the world of work after graduation.

**YEAR I**

- Key priorities include forming your committee, coursework, developing your research proposal, and preparing for your qualifying exam.
- Meet early with your supervisor to set expectations and discuss roles, responsibilities, program requirements, resources, research/occupational goals, timelines, and any required accommodation plans.
- Look to Student Academic Success Services for supports.
- Attend and participate in graduate seminars in our Geography Colloquium and in other departments such as SAGES, Policy Studies, and Environmental Studies.

**YEAR II**

- Write and defend your thesis proposal.
- Find your way through the academic process with the help of Expanding Horizons.
- Attend or present at a conference such as the Canadian Association of Geographers Annual Meeting or the American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting.

**YEAR III**

- Continue to meet regularly with your supervisor, review research progress, and write your dissertation. Check out the SGS Dissertation Boot Camp or Dissertation on the Lake.
- Use conference presentations to create, discuss, and explore ways to disseminate research findings. Learn from the Expanding Horizons Publishing workshop.
- Begin discussion of potential thesis defence examiner.

**YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING**

- Plan date of thesis submission for examination.
- Present your research to graduate students and faculty at conferences and workshops.
- Research academic careers of interest. Craft your CV and job application materials.
- Apply to jobs or make plans for other adventures.

- Build connections with faculty outside of your department. Pursue interviews for faculty positions and apply for post-doc fellowships and positions.
- Get help from Career Services with job searching, resumes, or interviews.
- If considering jobs abroad, research possible immigration regulations. If you are an international student interested in staying in Canada, consider speaking with an International Student Advisor.

**WHAT WILL I LEARN?**

- Geographical career pathways: research positions, grants, and research funding.
- Teaching and learning: curriculum design, teaching strategies, assessment methods.
- Research skills: literature review, data analysis, hypothesis testing.
- Professional development: attending conferences, networking, mentoring.
- Leadership and management: project management, team building, conflict resolution.
- Career planning: exploring different career options, developing a search plan.
- Professional associations: membership, participation, leadership roles.
- Alumni connections: networking with alumni in various careers through "Career Cruising."