Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
- A Master’s degree in Neuroscience, or in a field with a strong neuroscience and research component.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
- Statement of Interest.
- Current CV.
- If English is not a native language, prospective students must meet the English language proficiency requirements: writing, speaking, reading, and listening. The School of Graduate Studies requires the following minimum scores: TOEFL (paper-based): 550, (internet-based): 79 (total and each test as well as the minimum overall score), or (3) IELTS: 6.5 (academic module overall band score), or (4) PTE: Academic: 65.

KEY DATES & DEADLINES
- Application due: To be eligible for internal awards, applications must be submitted by February 1st. Applications received after the deadline will be accepted based on supervisor availability.

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

What about FUNDING?

PhD students in Neuroscience are offered a minimum funding of $23,000 per year. As part of the minimum funding package, you may serve as a Teaching Assistant, but it is not guaranteed. The Centre for Neuroscience offers numerous academic awards. Applicants to the Centre for Neuroscience program with external funding awards will have a greater opportunity of being accepted to the program.

Apply for external funding from OGS, CHR, NSERC and other sources. Queen’s will automatically issue a $5,000 top-up to Master’s winners of federal government tri-council awards and scholarships.

Why GRADUATE STUDIES in NEUROSCIENCE?

The multidisciplinary graduate program in Neuroscience is educating the next generation of leaders who will build on the progress in reducing the impact of neurological disorders. Top students from across North America and beyond come to the Centre to learn in a collaborative environment where they can learn from the best minds in the field. The Neuroscience graduate program is firmly rooted in research because our objective is to produce highly-trained graduates who will continue our efforts to prevent and treat neurological diseases. The program offers students spanning the full spectrum of neuroscience research, from cellular/molecular to clinical studies.

Why QUEEN’S?

The Centre for Neuroscience Studies (CNS) at Queen’s University welcomes applications from students from a variety of different academic backgrounds. It offers an interdisciplinary program recruiting expertise from a wide range of research areas and backgrounds, ranging from the use of cellular/molecular and genetic approaches to those that emphasize neuronal systems, whole organism and clinical studies.

Program STRUCTURE

PhD (4 years, full time): Course work, research project, seminar series, thesis, defense, and a comprehensive examination in 2nd year.

Research AREAS
- Cellular/Molecular Neuroscience
- Systems Neuroscience
- Cognitive/Behavioral Neuroscience
- Clinical Neuroscience
- Computational Neuroscience

Visit the Neuroscience website to learn more about faculty members and their research areas. When you find a faculty member with similar research interests to yours, contact him/her and tell them about your interest in graduate work and related experience.
YEAR I

ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS

- Key priorities include your relationship with your supervisor, completing required health and safety, human; animal; human research ethics training and any required coursework, developing your research proposal, and finishing part 1 of your PhD thesis form.
- Look to Student Academic Success Services for a variety of supports.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

- Think about audiences for your research.
- Complete ROMEO online module on research ethics if doing research with living people or sensitive topics.
- Apply to CIHR, NSERC, OGS, and other funding.
- Attend conferences in your field such as the Society for Neuroscience (SFN), the Canadian Association for Neuroscience (CAN), the Canadian Neuroscience Society (CNS), the Neuroscience Outreach Association for Neuroscience (CAN), or other sources.
- Use a Teaching Assistant or Research Assistant position to develop your skills and experience.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Serve on departmental, faculty or university committees.
- Consider positions in student services, the SGPS, or media outlets like the Queen’s Journal, CFRC, and the SGS Blog. Look in the AMS Clubs Directory.
- Use a Teaching Assistant or Research Assistant position to develop your skills and experience.

ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

- Explore how you can connect with your community through experiential opportunities on- and off-campus, community engagement.
- Consider volunteering with different community organizations, such as the Neuroscience Outreach Program.
- Attend the seminar series put on by the Centre for Neuroscience-Studies.

LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

- Finding career fit starts with knowing yourself. Take a Career Services career planning workshop or meet with a career counsellor for help. Check out books like So What Are You Going to Do With That? or Planning a Scientific Career in Industry from the Career Resources.
- Stay on the lookout for special events like Graduate Student Career Week to explore your career pathways.

YEAR II

ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS

- Priorities include pursuing research, completing your comprehensive exam, and writing your Annual Report.
- Find your way through the academic process with the help of Expanding Horizons workshops and SG5, Habitat.
- Complete AODA training in accessible customer service.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

- Present your work at graduate conferences, through professional associations, or topic conferences.
- Expand your research audience through social media.
- Apply for the Graduate Dean’s Travel Grant for Doctoral Field Research.
- Continue to present at conferences.
- Consider participating in the 3 Minute Thesis (3MT) competition.
- Contact the Queen’s Media Centre for guidance on speaking to news outlets about your work.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- None for non-academic employment by continuing involvement on committees and in community.
- Start keeping an eportfolio of your skills, experiences, and competencies.
- For help with teaching, get support from the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) or the PUTL certificate for more professional development in teaching and learning.

ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups like Material Matters.

LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

- Start building your teaching portfolio including student evaluations, and seeking mentorship.
- Explore different careers of interest by reading alumni profiles on the SG5 website, and using Queen’sConnects on LinkedIn to connect with Queen’s alumni.
- Find alumni in various career pathways through Ask an Alumni. For more information check our Career Cruising.
- Investigate requirements for professional positions or other opportunities related to careers of interest.

YEAR III

ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS

- Continue to research, write your dissertation and finish your Annual Report. Check out the SG5, Dissertation Boot Camp or Dissertation on the Lake.
- Consider publishing elements of your research. Learn from the Expanding Horizons Publishing workshop.
- Use conference presentations to create and refine dissertation material.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

- Present your research to neuroscience-graduate students and faculty.
- Complete and defend your dissertation.
- Continue to pursue publication options.
- Complete PhD Thesis Form Part 2 at least 4 months prior to defense, and your Annual Report.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Continue to attend conferences and connect with scholars in your field and with community partners.
- Continue public outreach through social media and the Queen’s Media Centre.

ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

- Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through Queen’sConnects on LinkedIn, or the Queen’s Alumni Association professional associations, and at conferences Get help from a Career Services workshop.

LAUNCH YOUR CAREER

- Participate in hiring committees and attend job talks.
- Research academic careers of interest. Craft your CV and job application materials.
- Start focusing on non-academic areas of interest. Research organizations of interest and start putting together your industry resume and begin your job search plan.
- Check out the free online modules at MyGradSkills to help you plan your career.

YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING

ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS

- Build connections with faculty outside of your department. Pursue interviews for faculty positions and apply for post-doc fellowships and positions.
- Apply to jobs or make plans for other adventures.
- 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.

MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT

- Continue targeted networking with people working in careers of interest. Join groups on LinkedIn reflecting specific careers or topics of interest in Biomedical & molecular sciences.

BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Consider joining one of the many professional associations like the Society for Neuroscience (SFN) or the Canadian Association for Neuroscience (CAN).
- Continue targeted networking with people working in careers of interest. Join groups on LinkedIn reflecting specific careers or topics of interest in Biomedical & molecular sciences.

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WHAT WILL I LEARN?

A graduate degree in Neuroscience 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
- Professionalism across all aspects of work, research, and interactions
- Leadership: initiative and vision leading people and discussion

WHERE CAN I GO?

A PhD in Neuroscience 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.

- Post-doctoral study or academia
- Outreach education
- Scientific writing
- Biomedical industry
- Pharmaceutical companies
- Medical school

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

* This map is intended to provide suggestions for activities and careers, but everyone’s abilities, experiences, and constraints are different. Build your own Grad Map using our online My Grad Map tool.