Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

**ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS**
- Master’s degree in Science or Applied Science.
- Grade requirements: minimum B+ standing.

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**
- Two official transcripts for all post-secondary studies.
- At least 2 letters of reference.
- Curriculum vitae.
- If English is not a native language, prospective students must meet the English language proficiency requirements in 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 86/120 (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 Academics: 65.

**KEY DATES & DEADLINES**
- Application due: February 15th.
- Notification of acceptance: 4 weeks after the full application has been received.

Before you start your application, please review the [graduate studies application process](#).

What about FUNDING?
The minimum funding guarantee for Physics PhD students is $27,012 per year, throughout years 1-4. This basic level funding consists of graduate awards, external scholarships, teaching assistantships, and support from your supervisor.

We encourage all students to apply for external funding from OGS, NSERC 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 [available resources](#).

**FUNDING**
- Teaching assistantships.
- Research assistantships.
- Travel grants to attend conferences.
- Professional development opportunities, excellent funding packages and life in the affordable, historic waterfront city of Kingston, Queen's offers a wonderful environment for study and personal growth.
- You will find friends, peers and mentors among the graduate students enrolled in Queen's more than 130 graduate programs within 50+ departments & research centres.
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Year I
- 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 a variety of supports.
- Attend and participate in graduate seminars and colloquia hosted by the department.

Year II
- Write and defend your thesis proposal.
- Embark on your substantive research.
- Set up regular meetings with your supervisor to discuss progress and obstacles to timely completion.
- Find your way through the academic process with the help of Expanding Horizons.
- Seek experiential/professional development opportunities.

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.
- Consider publishing elements of your research. Learn from the Expanding Horizons Publishing workshop.
- Begin discussion of potential thesis defence examiners.

Year IV & Transitioning
- Plan date of thesis submission for examination.
- Present your research to graduate students and faculty at conferences and work with supervisor to prepare for defence.
- Review submission and examination guidelines.
- Secure necessary oral defence accommodations.
- Discuss career pathways, references, letters, and publication options with your supervisor.

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 NSERC, OGS, and other funding.
- Attend conferences in your field, such as the Canadian Association of Physics Annual Congress.

Build Skills and Experience
- Serve on departmental, faculty or university committees. Talk to the Society for Graduate Students for tips on getting involved.
- Consider positions in student services, the SGPS or media outlets like the Queen's Journal (CFRC) and the SGGS 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
- Consider volunteering with different community organizations, such as Martha's Table or Loving Spoonful.
- Take advantage of the facilities linked to the department, including the Cancer Centre of Southeastern Ontario, the Sudbury Neutron Observatory (SNOlab), the Kingston Nano Fabrication Laboratory (KNFL), and more.

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 Resource Area for advice on various career options.
- Start reading publications like University Affairs and the Chronicle of Higher Education. Browse non-academic labour market websites.
- Stay on the lookout for special events like Graduate Student Career Week to explore your career path.
- Start building your teaching portfolio including student evaluations, and seeking mentorship.

What Will I Learn?
- A graduate degree in Physics, Engineering Physics & Astronomy 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 collaborator
  - Awareness, an understanding of social/ethical practices, personal responsibility, 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 Physics, Engineering Physics & Astronomy 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 research
  - Consulting
  - Medical technologies: radiation physics, x-ray physics
  - Renewable energy
  - Technology sector
- Taking time to explore career options, build experience, 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 services for all careers, but everyone’s abilities, experiences, and constraints are different. Build your own Grad Map using our online My Grad Map tool.