Why GRADUATE STUDIES in HISTORY?

Consider a graduate degree in History for all it has to offer: well-developed skills in critical reading, writing, and research and, perhaps even more importantly, engagement with oneself and the world we all inhabit.

Graduate students and their work are an important part of an ongoing research process that provides the community with ways of understanding natural, cultural, imaginative, social, and technological phenomena.

Today's employment marketplace seeks people who are critically informed, culturally literate, capable of synthesizing information, and adept at creating and managing knowledge-based projects. Study History and you will acquire such skills.

Students participate in the departmental seminar series and host the biannual McGill-Queen's Graduate History conference that draws students from across Canada and the US.

Program STRUCTURE

PhD (4 years): 5 seminar courses, including historical theories and methods, two field requirements, one language requirement, thesis proposal, thesis, and defence.

RESEARCH Areas

Besides its traditional strengths in Canadian and European history, the department has strengths in several geographically-defined areas including Asia, Africa and Latin America, the British Imperial, and Transatlantic worlds, as well as the following thematic fields:

- Childhood and Youth
- Cultural History
- Economic History
- Environmental History
- Gender, Sexuality, and Women
- Global and Transnational History
- Historiography
- Imperial, Colonial, and Postcolonial
- Indigenous History
- Intellectual History
- Legal History
- Migration and Diasporas
- Politics and the State
- Public Policy
- Race
- Religion
- Science, Medicine, and Technology
- Social History
- War and Conflict

We encourage you to identify an area of research interest and contact a potential supervisor before applying.

Visit the History Department website to read faculty profiles and learn more about faculty members' research areas. When you find a faculty member with similar research interests to yours, contact them and tell them about your interest in graduate work, area of research interest, and related experience.
History PhD Map

Year I

Achieve Your Academic Goals
- Key priorities include your relationship with your supervisor, forming your committee, coursework, field exams, and language exams.
- 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.

Maximize Research Impact
- Think about audiences for your research.
- Complete ROMEO online module on research ethics if doing research regarding sensitive topics.
- Apply to SSHRC, OGS, and other funding.
- Attend conferences in your field.

Build Skills and Experience
- Serve on departmental, faculty, or university committees. Talk to the Graduate History Student Association for tips on getting involved.
- Consider positions in student services, the SGPS, or media outlets like the Queen’s Journal, CFCR, and the SGSPA Blog. Look in the AMS Clubs Directory.
- hone skills for non-academic employment by continuing involvement on committees.
- For help with teaching, get support from the Centre for Teaching and Learning. Enrol in SGS902 or the PUTL Certificate for more professional development in teaching and learning.

Engage with Your Community
- Consider volunteering with community organizations, museums, or cultural studies groups, such as the Kingston Association of Museums, the Kingston Museum of Health Care, and the Queen’s Archives.
- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups.

Launch Your Career
- Finding career fit starts with knowing yourself. Take a Career Services workshop or meet with a career educator and coach for help. Check out 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 Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs Career Week to explore your career pathways.

Year II

Achieve Your Academic Goals
- 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 School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs professional development and the SGSPA website.
- Seek experiential/professional development opportunities. Attend or present at a graduate conference such as McGill-Queen’s.

Maximize Research Impact
- Present your work at graduate conferences, through professional associations, or topic conferences.
- Expand your research audience through social media such as Twitter or a blog.
- Apply for the Graduate Dean’s Travel Grant for Doctoral Field Research.

Build Skills and Experience
- Hone skills for non-academic employment by continuing involvement on committees.
- For help with teaching, get support from the Centre for Teaching and Learning. Enrol in SGS902 or the PUTL Certificate for more professional development in teaching and learning.

Engage with Your Community
- Consider volunteering with community organizations, museums, or cultural studies groups, such as the Kingston Association of Museums, the Kingston Museum of Health Care, and the Queen’s Archives.
- Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups.

Launch Your Career
- Start building your teaching portfolio including student evaluations, and seeking mentorship.
- Explore different careers of interest by using Queen’s Connects on LinkedIn, the Queen’s Alumni Association, professional associations, and at conferences. Get help from a Career Services workshop.

Year III

Achieve Your Academic Goals
- Continue to meet regularly with your supervisor, review research progress, and write your dissertation. Check out the SGSPA writing camps, such as Dissertation Boot Camp.
- Use conference presentations to create, discuss, and explore ways to disseminate research findings.
- Begin discussion of potential thesis defence examiners.

Maximize Research Impact
- 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. List yourself on the Arts and Science University Research website.

Build Skills and Experience
- Hone teaching as a departmental Teaching Fellow.
- Investigate internships from MITACS and other sources. Find opportunities for extra training through CTL, School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs professional development, MITACS, or other sources to boost your skills.
- Prepare for work or studies in a multi-cultural environment by taking the Intercultural Awareness Training Certificate.

Engage with Your Community
- Consider joining professional associations like the History Canada Association and the Canadian Historical Association (CHA).
- Continue targeted networking with people working in careers of interest. Join groups on LinkedIn reflecting specific careers or topics of interest in History.

Launch Your Career
- Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through Queens Connects on LinkedIn, the Queen’s Alumni Association, professional associations, and at conferences. Get help from a Career Services workshop.
- Build connections with faculty outside of your department. Pursue internships for faculty positions and apply for post-doc fellowships and positions.
- Apply to jobs or make plans for other adventures. Get help from Career Services with job searching, resumes, and 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.

Year IV

Achieve Your Academic Goals
- Plan date of thesis submission for examination.
- Present your research to graduate students and faculty or 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
- Continue to attend conferences, such as those listed by the Graduate Students Committee or the Graduate Students Association Annual Meeting.
- Continue public outreach through social media and the Queen’s Media Centre.
- Set up a meeting with the School of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs for a Grad Chat to discuss your research interests.

Build Skills and Experience
- Practice articulating the skills you have been developing in settings outside the university, such as casual conversation, networking, and interviews. Get help from a Career Services workshop.
- Develop research and writing skills through SGS902 or the PUTL Certificate for more professional development in teaching and learning.

Engage with Your Community
- Consider joining professional associations like the Heritage Canada Association and the Canadian Historical Association (CHA).
- Continue targeted networking with people working in careers of interest. Join groups on LinkedIn reflecting specific careers or topics of interest in History.

Launch Your Career
- Contact the Queen’s Alumni Centre for help with teaching, get support from the Centre for Teaching and Learning.
- Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through Queens Connects on LinkedIn, the Queen’s Alumni Association, professional associations, and at conferences. Get help from a Career Services workshop.
- Build connections with faculty outside of your department. Pursue internships for faculty positions and apply for post-doc fellowships and positions.
- Apply to jobs or make plans for other adventures. Get help from Career Services with job searching, resumes, and 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?
A graduate degree in History can equip you with:
- Project management: develop ideas, gather information, analyze, critically appraise findings, draw and act on conclusions
- Knowledge and technical skills
- Effective communication skills in multiple forms such as writing, editing, and presenting for diverse audiences
- Information management: prioritize, organize, and synthesize large amounts of information
- Time management: meet deadlines and manage responsibilities despite competing demands
- 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 History 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 in fields such as:
- Documentary Filmmaking
- Education
- Government
- Journalism
- Law
- Military
- Museums and Public History
- Publishing
- Public Service
- Social Policy Research

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

How do I make the most of my time at Queen’s?

Use the Grad Map to plan for success in five overlapping areas of your career and academic life. Everyone’s journey is different - the ideas on the maps are just suggestions to help you explore possibilities. For more support with your professional development, take advantage of the SGSPA professional development framework and the new Individual Development Plan (IDP) process to set customized goals to help you get career ready when you graduate.

Where can I get help?

Queen’s provides you with a broad range of support services from your first point of contact with the university through to graduation. Ranging from help with academics and careers, to physical, emotional, or spiritual resources – our welcoming environment offers the programs and services you need to be successful, both academically and personally. Check out the SGSPA website for available resources.

What is the community like?

At Queen’s, graduate students from all disciplines learn and discover in a close-knit intellectual community. You will find friends, peers and support among the graduate students enrolled in Queen’s more than 130 graduate programs within 50+ departments & research centres. With the world’s best scholars, prize-winning professional development opportunities, excellent funding packages and life in the affordable, historic waterfront city of Kingston, Queen’s offers a wonderful environment for graduate studies. Queen’s is an integral part of the Kingston community, with the campus nestled in the core of the city, only a 10-minute walk to downtown with its shopping, dining and waterfront. For more about Kingston’s history and culture, see Queen’s University’s Discover Kingston page.

Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
• MA in History or equivalent from a recognized university with first-class standing (minimum A- average).

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
• Writing sample.
• Extended statement of interest.
• If English is not a native language, prospective students must meet the English language proficiency requirements in writing, speaking, reading, and listening.

KEY DATES & DEADLINES
• Application due: Third week of January.
Before you start your application, please review the Graduate studies application process.

What about FUNDING?

The minimum funding guarantee for History PhD students is $20,000 per year, and is frequently substantially more throughout years 1-4. The Department of History at Queen’s offers numerous internal awards that students are automatically considered for. PhD students receive financial support from a variety of sources including Queen’s Academic Excellence Awards, Teaching Assistantships and Teaching Fellowships, and travel scholarships.

We encourage all students to apply for external funding from OGS, SSHRC, 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 and Postdoctoral Affairs’ information on awards and scholarships.

PhD Career Outcomes in the Humanities


Government, Nonprofit, Community, Public Service 24%
Faculty, Teaching, Research 33%
Business, Corporate 43%

Cathy Dickison, Graduate Assistant
(613) 533-6931
hist.grad@queensu.ca
queensu.ca/history/graduate