Application FAQs

What do I need to know to APPLY?

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
- Master's degree in Civil Engineering. Applicants with a Master's degree in a cognate science may be admitted.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
- 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, (internet-based): 80, (PTE Academic): 65.

KEY DATES & DEADLINES
- Application deadline: March 1 to qualify for internal funding.
- Notification of acceptance: 2-3 months after the full application has been received.

What about FUNDING?

The level of financial support consequently varies among graduate students in the Department, with a guaranteed minimum level of $18,000. As part of the minimum funding package, you may serve as a Teaching or Research Assistant.

We encourage all students to apply for external funding from OGS, NSERC and other sources. Queen's will automatically issue a one-time $10,000 award to Doctoral students who have won federal government tri-council awards. For more information, see the School of Graduate Studies' information on awards and scholarships or see what awards are offered through the Civil Engineering Department.

Why GRADUATE STUDIES in CIVIL ENGINEERING?

As a PhD student in the field of Civil Engineering, you can play a vital role in future developments in such areas as rock mechanics, design of foundations, water quality, sediment transportation, pipeline flow, construction and rehabilitation of structures, and many other areas. Civil Engineering has a wide range of applications that contribute to modern life and its infrastructure.

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. Check out whygradstudies.ca for more reasons to choose graduate studies in engineering.

Why QUEEN'S?

As a PhD student in Civil Engineering at Queen's you are part of one of the most research intensive universities in Canada. Our research program is internationally renowned with a wide range of research activities in all of the major specialization areas of Civil Engineering.

The Queen's graduate programs in Civil Engineering are home to some of the finest minds in the fields of civil and environmental engineering. Students have the chance to study engineering in an environment where multidisciplinary research and activities are encouraged and facilitated. Research activity in the Department is generally classified under two fields: Civil Engineering Environment and Civil Engineering Infrastructure.

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 SGS Habitat 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.

Why CIVIL ENGINEERING?

The Civil Engineering Department's objective is to provide a broadly-based education in civil engineering which is intrinsically supported by world-class research in the areas of Structural, Geotechnical, Hydrotechnical, and Environmental Engineering.

Program STRUCTURE

PhD (4 years): 4 graduate term length courses, research, comprehensive oral examination and a thesis.

RESEARCH Areas
- Geotechnical Engineering
- Environmental Engineering
- Hydrotechnical Engineering
- Structural Engineering

Visit the Civil Engineering website to read about research areas and learn more about faculty members' research specialization. We suggest that you review the specific research projects currently being investigated by faculty members to identify a potential supervisor. Please note, however, that contacting a faculty member does not guarantee acceptance and you will need to submit your full application in order to be considered.

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**2020-2021**

**Civil Engineering PhD Map**

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PHD)**

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**YEAR I**

**ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS**

- Key priorities include forming your committee, coursework, discussing direction of your thesis research, and beginning your research.
- 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.

**MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT**

- Think about audiences for your research.
- Complete the CORE online module on research ethics if doing research regarding sensitive topics.
- Apply to NSERC, OGS, and other funding sources.
- Attend conferences in your field, based on supervisor advising.

**BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**

- Serve on departmental, faculty or university committees.
- Consider positions in student services, the SGS, or media outlets like the Queen’s Journal, CFRC, or the SGS Blog. Look in the AMS Club 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.
- Connect to broader communities of engineers by joining one of the Engineering Society’s Design Teams.

**LAUNCH YOUR CAREER**

- Finding career fit starts with knowing yourself. Take a Career Services workshop or meet with a career counselor for help. Check out books like So What Are You Going to Do With That? for advice on various career options.
- Start building your professional portfolio including student evaluations, and seeking mentorship.
- Explore different careers of interest by using QueenConnect on LinkedIn to connect with Queen's alumni. For more information check out Career Cruising.
- Investigate requirements for professional positions or other opportunities related to careers of interest.

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**YEAR II**

**ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS**

- Priorities include completing your comprehensive examination and pursuing 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 and the SGS Habitat.
- Seek experiential/professional development opportunities.

**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.
- Consider publishing elements of your research. Learn from the Expanding Horizons publishing workshop.

**BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**

- Hone skills 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. Enroll in SG5902 or the PDIL 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.

**LAUNCH YOUR CAREER**

- Start building your teaching portfolio including student evaluations, and seeking mentorship.
- Explore different careers of interest by using QueenConnect on LinkedIn to connect with Queen's alumni. For more information check out Career Cruising.
- Investigate requirements for professional positions or other opportunities related to careers of interest.

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**YEAR III**

**ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS**

- Continue to meet regularly with your supervisor, review research progress, and write your dissertation. Check out the SGS writing camps, such as Dissertation Boot Camp or Dissertation on the Lake.
- 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.
- Contact the Queen’s Media Centre for guidance on speaking to news outlets about your work.
- Consider putting an article in The Conversation.

**BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**

- Investigate internships from MITACS and other sources.
- Find opportunities for extra training through CTL, Expanding Horizons, 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 hosted by QUIC and PDIC.

**ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY**

- Do some targeted networking with people working in careers of interest, through Queen’s Connects on LinkedIn, 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.

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**YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING**

**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 and connect with scholars in your field and with community partners.
- Continue public outreach through social media and the Queen’s Media Centre.
- Set up a meeting with the School of Graduate Studies for a Grad Chat to discuss your research interests.

**BUILD SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**

- Practice articulating the skills you have been developing in difficult forums: casual conversation, networking, and interviews. Get help from a Career Services workshop.

**ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY**

- Consider joining professional societies like the Canadian Society for Civil Engineers.
- Join groups on LinkedIn reflecting specific careers or topics of interest.

**LAUNCH YOUR CAREER**

- 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. 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.

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**WHAT WILL I LEARN?**

A graduate degree in Civil Engineering can equip you with:

- 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 present conclusions.
- Creativity and innovation.
- Perseverance.
- Independence and experience as a collaborative worker.
- Awareness and understanding of sound ethical practices, social responsibility, responsible research and professional conduct.
- Professionalism in all aspects of work, research, and interactions.
- Leadership: initiative and vision leading people and discussion.

**WHERE CAN I GO?**

A PhD in Civil Engineering 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. Our PhD students are equipped with a strong foundation for careers in:

- Academia and Research
- Consulting
- Public sector
- Manufacturing
- Policy and Governance
- Civil Engineering in the public domain
- Law

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

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Visit careers.queensu.ca/gradmaps for the online version with links!

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