Neuroscience PhD Map

Applying to and Navigating Graduate Studies
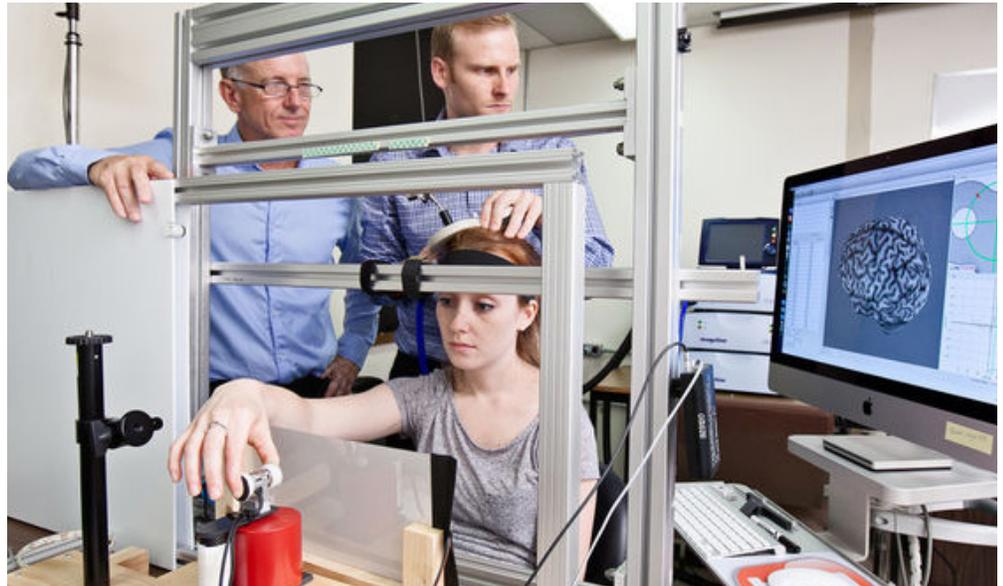
Why **GRADUATE STUDIES** in NEUROSCIENCE?

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 studies spanning the full spectrum of neuroscience research, from cellular/molecular to clinical studies.

Why **QUEEN'S?**

At the forefront of discovery and innovation is the Centre for Neuroscience Studies (CNS) at Queen's University. A hub of multidisciplinary research and teaching aimed at improving the understanding of the brain, how it works and how new therapies and diagnoses can play an important role in the prevention and treatment of diseases like Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, Stroke, Obesity, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, Schizophrenia, Behavioral Disorders, and Depression.

"Right from the day I started at the Centre for Neuroscience Studies, it felt like family. The camaraderie and support you get is amazing."
– Alicia Peltsch, PhD

The Centre for Neuroscience Studies (CNS) 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.
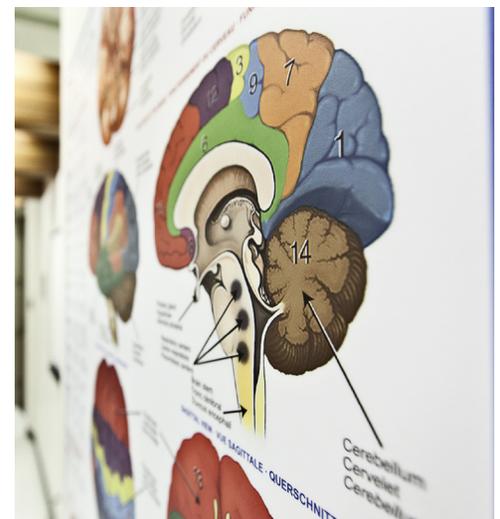
Program **STRUCTURE**

PhD (4 years, full time): Research project, seminar series, thesis, defense, and a comprehensive examination in 2nd year.
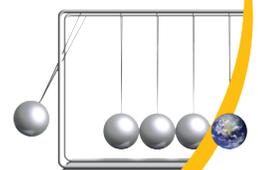
Research **AREAS**

- Cellular/Molecular Neuroscience
- Systems Neuroscience
- Cognitive/Behavioural 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.

School of Graduate Studies
Create an impact
www.queensu.ca/sgs

2020-2021

Neuroscience PhD Map *

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD)

The coronavirus pandemic may impact how some activities are delivered in 2020-2021. Please check directly with the host of any activity on the map for the latest information.

Queen's UNIVERSITY

	YEAR I	YEAR II	YEAR III	YEAR IV & TRANSITIONING
ACHIEVE YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS	• Key priorities include your relationship with your supervisor, completing required health and safety, 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.	• Priorities include pursing 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 **SGS Habitat**. • Complete AODA training in accessible customer service.	• Continue to research, write your dissertation and finish your Annual Report. Check out the **SGS writing camps,** like Dissertation Boot Camp. • Consider publishing elements of your research. Learn from the Expanding Horizons publishing workshop. • Use conference presentations to create and refine dissertation material.	• 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.
MAXIMIZE RESEARCH IMPACT	• Think about audiences for your research. • Complete CORE online module on research ethics if doing research regarding sensitive topics. • Apply to CIHR, NSERC, OGS, and other funding. • Attend conferences in your field such as the **Society for Neuroscience (SFN)**, or the **Canadian Association for Neuroscience (CAN)**	• 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.	• 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	• 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.	• 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 SGS902 or the PUTL Certificate for more professional development in teaching and learning.	• 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 FDISC.	• 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.
ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY	• Explore how you can connect with your community through experiential opportunities on- and off-campus. • Consider volunteering with different community organizations, such as the **Neuroscience Outreach Program**. • Attend the seminar series put on by the Centre for Neuroscience Studies.	• Participate in your graduate and professional community through activities such as graduate student outreach programs, organizing conferences, and research groups.	• 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.	• 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.
LAUNCH YOUR CAREER	• Finding career fit starts with knowing yourself. Take a **Career Services 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 **Science and Nature** and the **Journal of Neuroscience**. Browse non-academic labour market websites. • Stay on the lookout for special events like School of Graduate Studies Career Week to explore your career pathways.	• Start building your teaching portfolio including student evaluations, and seeking mentorship. • Explore different careers of interest by using **Queens Connects** 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.	• 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.	• 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**.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

A graduate degree in Neuroscience 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 act on conclusions
- **Creativity** and **innovation**
- **Perseverance**
- **Independence** and experience as a **collaborative** worker
- **Awareness**, an understanding of sound **ethical** practices, **social responsiblity**, 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 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 experience, and network can help you have a smooth transition to the world of work after graduation.

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

* 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.

© Career Services, Queen's University, 2020-2021

Graduate Studies FAQs

How do I use this map?

Whether you are considering or have embarked on graduate studies at Queen's, use this map to plan for success in five overlapping areas of your career and academic life. The map helps you explore possibilities, set goals and track your individual accomplishments. Everyone's journey is different – the guide offers options for finding your way at Queen's and setting the foundation for your future. To make your own customized map, use the online **My Grad Map** tool.

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.

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.
- 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 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 Academics: 65.
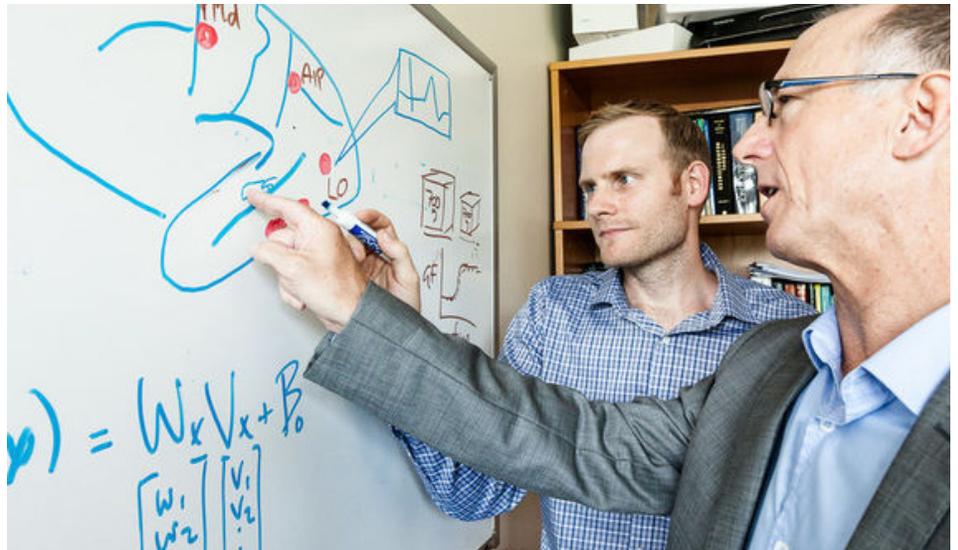
KEY DATES & DEADLINES
- **Application due:** To be eligible for internal awards, applications must be submitted by February 1st. Applications received after the deadline will be accepted based on supervisor availability.

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

What about **FUNDING?**

PhD students in Neurosciences 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, CIHR/NSERC and other sources. Queen's will automatically issue a one time $5,000 top-up to Master's winners of federal government tri-council awards. See the School of Graduate Studies' information on **awards and scholarships** for more.

Queen's UNIVERSITY | DEPARTMENT OF NEUROSCIENCE

Lucy Russo-Smith, Graduate Assistant
613-533-6000 x 77274
russol@queensu.ca
neuroscience.queensu.ca