Weston Family Awards in Northern Research
Master's (MSc) Level Awards
2020 Application Guidelines

Objective

Since 2007, the Weston Family Awards in Northern Research (formerly The W. Garfield Weston Awards in Northern Research) have provided unparalleled support to young scientists in Canada pursuing research in Canada's North. The awards are some of the largest in the country for students pursuing a master's degree, doctoral students, and postdoctoral fellows, with over 270 early-career researchers having been selected to receive an award since the program's inception. This has resulted in a community of Weston Family Northern Scientists at the forefront of northern scholarship, all of whom share a passion for Arctic and Northern research and all of whom are helping to create a better future for Canada and for the world.

Award recipients undertake research across a broad spectrum of fields and disciplines in the natural sciences, including studies of northern ecosystems, biodiversity, flora and fauna, meteorology, oceanography, glaciology, geography, and environmental studies, among others. The program also supports travel for postdoctoral fellows to attend conferences and perform research in the North, as well as an "Extended Stay" program that enables master's level and doctoral students to apply for funding to engage with northerners (including Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities and community members) to disseminate the results of their field research and maximize the impact of their work.

Number, Value and Duration of Scholarships

In the 2020-2021 program year, The W. Garfield Weston Foundation will aim to support up to **fifteen (15) awards for master's level students**. Each award is valued at **$15,000 over one (1) year**.

Successful applicants in the master's level stream will also be considered for additional funding as part of the Extended Stay program (see details in the "How to Apply" section).

Eligibility

Applicants to the **master's level awards** program must:

- Be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada as of the application deadline;
- Be currently enrolled in a master's program in the natural sciences pursuing northern research at a Canadian university leading to a thesis;
- Continue to be enrolled in their program throughout the duration of the one-year award (awards will begin in June 2020); and
- Have received approval for their research proposal at the time of receipt of the award, including any required ethical reviews and/or research licenses.

Field of Study/Program Requirements

Research projects from all natural science subject areas will be considered provided they include a field research component conducted within the term of the award in the Canadian North.

Conditions and Restrictions

- Master's level applicants must be enrolled at an accredited Canadian university in a graduate program in the natural sciences. Proof of registration will be required in order for the award to be distributed.
- Successful candidates who are awarded a scholarship in the master's stream and who fast-track to a PhD before the end of the tenure of their award can continue to receive their award at the master's level, provided their research project and supervisor remain the same. Written confirmation will need to be provided to The W. Garfield Weston Foundation and to Scholarship Partners Canada (SPC).
- Students must continue to be enrolled at the university listed on their application throughout the duration of their award. Changes to research projects or project supervisors must be pre-approved by The W. Garfield Weston Foundation and by SPC in order for the recipient to continue receiving their award.
- Research and field studies must relate to and take place in Canada's North, as defined by any region in Canada where both permafrost and ground ice are present according to the National Atlas of Canada, 5th edition (1978-1995). A map is available through Polar Knowledge Canada with a boundary line that defines these northern regions (https://www.canada.ca/en/polar-knowledge/fundingforresearchers/maps.html), however please note that this is merely a guideline and some flexibility will be granted for regions close to the boundary.
- Applications will be reviewed by a multi-disciplinary committee. As such, technical jargon should be kept to a minimum.
- Payment will be issued in installments and is to be used as a stipend.

Administrator

SPC, a division of Universities Canada, administers the scholarship program on behalf of The W. Garfield Weston Foundation. Universities Canada's mandate is to facilitate the development of public policy on higher education and to encourage cooperation among universities and governments, industries, communities, and institutions in other countries.

Universities Canada is associated with leading firms in nearly every sector of the economy through its provision of scholarship services and management of more than 120 different scholarships programs on behalf of corporations, government agencies and private foundations throughout North America. For additional information, please visit www.univcan.ca.

Selection Process

All applications will be reviewed internally by SPC for basic eligibility before they are shared with an independent, impartial and arms-length Selection Committee that will review and rank all eligible applications. The top applications will then be further reviewed, and award-winners informed in May of 2020.

For the master's level awards:

Applicants are assessed on academic excellence, research promise/proposal, and potential impact. Preference will be given to applicants who:

a) Have a clearly defined research project that includes significant research time spent in the Canadian North;
b) Demonstrate the importance of their research in furthering our understanding of northern ecosystems and biodiversity in the North;
c) Demonstrate excellence in research and effectively communicate the potential impact of their project; and
d) Exhibit a willingness to communicate the results of their research within the scientific community, in northern communities, and at national meetings.

How to Apply

There are four parts to the application for the master's level awards, as indicated below. **All four parts must be received before Monday, January 27th, 2020 5:00pm EST.** Applications received after this time will not be considered. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all supporting documents outlined below have been received and accepted by this time. This can be done through the online portal at https://portal.scholarshippartners.ca/welcome/WestonFamilyAwards/. Applicants will be notified by email once their application has been received and processed by SPC.

The four parts to the application are:

1. **Application Form**
   Please complete the application form through SPC's online portal at https://portal.scholarshippartners.ca/welcome/WestonFamilyAwards/. Please read the award guidelines and instructions carefully before completing the form. You will need to create an account first and register through the portal, at which point you will receive a verification email. This account will allow you to save your information and track the progress of your application, referee reports, and transcripts.

2. **Two (2) Referee Reports**
   Applicants are required to have two referees complete online referee reports. At least one of these reports must be from an academic reference. The second report can be either from an academic reference or from a northern resident or community member capable of judging the methods and objectives of the research project (e.g. a territorial government scientist, academic living full-time in the North, representative of an Indigenous government responsible for local licensing, etc.). The Selection Committee requires that any northern reference have relevant geographic and research ties to the jurisdiction where the project will take place, and if possible should have a direct connection to the research and/or be able to comment on the proposed research plan.

Report templates are available through the online portal above. Please have each referee complete a report template and submit it by email to awards@univcan.ca before the deadline. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that each referee is advised well ahead of time that they will need to complete a report and that they have ample time to do so before the deadline.

3. **Transcripts**
Original transcripts must be scanned and uploaded through the Scholarship Partner's Canada online portal (link provided above). Applicants are required to upload both their undergraduate transcripts as well as any applicable graduate level transcripts (including both past programs and programs currently in-progress). Please note that it can take several weeks for transcripts to be ordered and processed. It is therefore highly recommended that you order your transcripts well in advance in order to ensure they arrive on time and can be uploaded before the application deadline.

4. **Additional Questions – Extended Stay Projects (optional)**
The Extended Stay program is designed to allow successful recipients of a Weston Family Award in Northern Research to organize one or more community engagement events or activities close to the regions in which they undertake fieldwork as part of their research. The goal is to provide an opportunity to engage with local northern communities and disseminate research findings to northern residents to create meaningful impact and establish strong, positive connections. As such, each applicant may submit an optional proposal (no more than 2 pages) for an Extended Stay project that would supplement their research fieldwork (please note that not all Extended Stay projects will necessarily be approved as they are dependent on available funding and on the nature of your proposal). The proposal must address the following questions:

   a) If given additional funding to organize and carry out outreach activities in northern communities near your proposed research locations, what would you do and how would you maximize your time there? (max. 250 words)

   b) What would be the potential benefits to northern scholarship and northern communities? (max. 250 words)

   c) What would be the expected duration of this extended time in the North (preferably immediately preceding, during or following your field work season)? (max. 100 words)

   d) Have you already begun engaging with these northern communities to determine their priorities, their interest, and the feasibility of these outreach activities? (max. 100 words)

   e) Please provide a budget for reasonable expenses related to your proposed outreach activity. As a general guideline, Extended Stay projects that are approved usually fall within a budgetary range of $2,000-8,000, depending on the activity, time commitment and location. Each item in the budget should include a general statement of what it is (e.g. travel, accommodation, food, stationery, etc.) and how much it would cost.

Successful Applicants

Successful applicants will receive confirmation of their scholarship in May. Recipients will be required to sign their award letters and provide additional information (including banking information) in order for their awards to be administered. It is the responsibility of each recipient to keep SPC informed of any changes to their contact information through the online portal during the tenure of their award. Award winners will also be required to submit regular progress reports and a video report as part of their award, as well as confirmation of registration/compliance forms before each installment of their award can be processed.

The names, biographical information, and photographs of successful applicants may be used in promotional initiatives for The W. Garfield Weston Foundation.

Payment

SPC will send installments by direct deposit directly to the award winners on behalf of the Weston Foundation. The breakdown of the payment schedule is as follows:

- First installment: $10,000 (September 2020)
- Second installment: $5,000 (February 2021)

About The W. Garfield Weston Foundation

The predecessor to The W. Garfield Weston Foundation was first established in the 1950s by Willard Garfield Weston and his wife Reta, with a donation of shares from the family company, George Weston Limited. The Founders believed that because the funds were generated through the hard work and success of Canadian businesses, the Foundation's donations should be given in Canada for the benefit of Canadians. With a focus on medical research, the environment, and education, the Weston Family aims to catalyze inquiry and innovation to bring about long-term change. As the family's charitable giving marks its 60th anniversary, it continues to collaborate with a broad range of Canadian charities to further world-class research, explore new ideas, and create tangible benefits for the communities in which it works. For more information, please visit www.westonfoundation.org.

Contact Us

Scholarship Partners Canada.
Partenaires en bourses d'études Canada.

ATTN: Scholarship Partners Canada
Universities Canada
350 Albert Street, Suite 1710
Ottawa, ON
K1R 1B1

westonawards@univcan.ca
613-563-1236 ext. 219
univcan.ca