Memo

To: Associate Deans Research

Cc: Deans, Research Officers

From: Rui Wang, Interim Vice-President Research & Innovation

Date: March 12, 2020

Subject: York University Internal Process for NSERC E.W.R. Steacie Memorial Fellowship Nominations

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Introduction

Please find below information regarding the internal call for nominations for the 2020 E.W.R. Steacie Memorial Fellowships, which are awarded annually to enhance the career development of outstanding and highly promising scientists and engineers who are faculty members of Canadian universities. Note that this is separate and distinct from the Steacie Prize.

The internal nomination, review and feedback process is designed to support the nomination process, and to result in the most competitive nominations possible from York University. Universities may only submit six nominations; if necessary, the internal nomination process will also inform the selection of the six nominations to go forward.

This information should be circulated to your respective Research Directors, Research Officers and faculty members, to ensure their familiarity with the internal nomination and review process.

Please note that this year’s competition has changed significantly from previous years. Self-nominations are now permitted, which, along with changes in the evaluation criteria, are designed to promote equity, diversity and inclusion.

NSERC’s E.W.R Steacie Memorial Fellowships

NSERC’s E.W.R Steacie Memorial Fellowships are awarded to enhance the career development of outstanding and highly promising university faculty who are earning a strong international reputation for original research. For further context, potential applicants and/or nominators are encouraged to view past winners.

Every year, NSERC awards up to six Steacie Fellowships that are held for a two-year period. Successful fellows are relieved of teaching and administrative duties, so that they can devote all their time and energy to research. The Fellowships are held at a Canadian university or affiliated research institution.
Each fellow receives a research grant of $250,000 over two years. Research grant funds paid to winners of this prize are subject to the Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide.

The Fellowship normally also includes a contribution of $90,000 per year to the university toward the fellow's salary. As part of the Fellowship agreement, the university is expected to fund a replacement for the fellow’s teaching and administrative responsibilities. Should the recipient of the Fellowship already hold another federal award that has a salary component, such as a Canada Research Chair or an Industrial Research Chair, NSERC will reduce the contribution to the university accordingly.

**Eligibility**
Nominees should be an early career researcher, defined as holding an independent academic position for 10 year or less as of June 1 of the year of the competition (June 1, 2010 or later for this year’s competition) and hold a grant from NSERC. This has changed from previous rounds, where eligibility was determined by time from Ph.D.

An independent academic position is defined as a position that:

- Is a university faculty appointment (tenured or non-tenured)
- Requires that the researcher engages in research that is not under the direction of another individual;
- Authorizes the researcher to supervise or co-supervise the research of students registered in an undergraduate or graduate degree program, or postdoctoral fellows.

The eligibility window is adjusted to take into account eligible delays in research such as parental leave, bereavement or illness. These delays must be identified in the Personal Data Form (Form 100) and the impacts of the research delay should be full described.

The research of the nominee must be primarily based in the fields of the natural sciences and/or engineering. NSERC reserves the right to rule on the eligibility of nominees.

The start date of the E.W.R. Steacie Memorial Fellowship should be between April 1, 2021 and March 31, 2022; the award is normally paid in two installments of $125,000 per year.

**Selection Criteria**
Submissions to NSERC will be reviewed by a selection committee of distinguished academic, government and industry representatives from a variety of disciplines according to the following new criteria:

- **Research achievements and impact (40%)**:  
  - The originality, quality and impact of the nominee’s contributions to date.
  - Whether these contributions have led to grand-breaking advances in the research area(s) and/or a technology or policy that addresses socioeconomic or environmental needs.

- **Outreach, mentorship and leadership (30%)**:  
  - Past achievement and the potential for future achievement in communication of research to non-specialist audiences and/or involvement in public outreach activities.
  - Mentorship of the next generation.
  - Leadership in activities related to the above and/or their research area and/or the broader natural sciences and engineering context.
• **Future directions (30%)**: Whether the nominee’s research vision, proposed research and description of HQP training:
  - Represents an original or innovative concept or line of inquiry.
  - Will significantly advance the research area and/or have policy- and/or technology-related impact.
  - Are likely to succeed given the proposed work and the research environment.
  - Define a highly appropriate approach to training and mentoring HQP.
  - Consider equity, diversity and inclusion in the research and training environment.
  - If applicable, integrates consideration of sex, gender, and diversity in the research design; if not applicable, the appropriateness of the rationale provided.

Note that the selection committee is multidisciplinary, and as such the nomination material should be written for non-specialists.

**New Emphasis on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**

Faculties are expected to give due consideration to equity, diversity and inclusion with regards to soliciting and supporting nominations. This is to be detailed in the Faculty memo included in the internal nomination package (see details below).

If more than six nominations in total are received by VPRI, and in the case of equally excellent nominees who meet the criteria of the award, equity considerations may inform the determination of those nominations selected to proceed.

As such, nominees are:

1. Encouraged to self-identify (or update their self-identification information) by completing the survey found at [https://hr1.apps01.yorku.ca/machform/view.php?id=1](https://hr1.apps01.yorku.ca/machform/view.php?id=1). Note that you must first sign into Passport York to access the survey. For questions, please contact Annette Booradram, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Officer ([boodram@yorku.ca](mailto:boodram@yorku.ca)).

2. Provide a signed letter in the internal nomination packages that acknowledges they understand that their self-identifying information may be used in the adjudication process, and that they grant VPRI access to this information. (See template below)

Note that self-identifying information will be kept confidential by VPRI; only whether a person has self-identified, and not how they have self-identified, will be discussed in the event of a tie.

**Internal Nomination Process**

- Faculties are asked to submit nominations for review by the Major Awards Advisory Committee (MAAC). There is no limit as to the number of nominations that Faculties may bring forward.
- The MAAC will review nominations and provide feedback to nominees and advice to inform institutional decision making on which nominations are likely to succeed.
- Abby Vogus, SIRI Specialist, Office of Research Services, will work with nominees, to prepare final documentation for submission.
- NSERC will adjudicate the competition and notify York University of results.
York Internal Nomination Package (due April 10, 2020 by email to avogus@yorku.ca)
A complete internal nomination package includes:

- A Faculty memo that includes the following:
  - Endorsement of the nomination.
  - A contextual explanation of the scope and impact of the research.
  - Description of how the Faculty identified nominees for this award opportunity, including information about how it took equity, diversity and inclusion into consideration in selecting its nominees.
  - A statement that, should a Fellowship be awarded, the Faculty approves complete release from teaching and administrative duties, and describes how the Faculty will fully relieve the nominee of these responsibilities.

- A completed NSERC Personal Data Form (Form 100) – contributions do not need to be limited to those in the last 6 years and there is no page limit.

- A draft letter explaining a) why you (the nominee) deserve consideration for the Steacie Fellowship, taking into account research achievements and impacts, and outreach mentorship and leadership (max 3 pages); and b) description of your future research directions, including your research vision, proposed research and approach to training highly qualified personnel (max 3 pages).

- A signed letter from the nominee stating that you (the nominee) understand that self-identifying information may be used in the adjudication process in cases where candidates are considered to be equally excellent, and that you agree to allow VPRI to access this information for these purposes.

Completed Nomination Package (due June 2, 2020 by email to avogus@yorku.ca)

A. The nominee provides:

- The final nomination letter explaining a) why you (the nominee) deserve consideration for Steacie Fellowship, taking into account research achievements and impacts, and outreach mentorship and leadership (max 3 pages); and b) description of your future research directions including your research vision, proposed research and approach to training highly qualified personnel. (max 3 pages).

- A completed NSERC Personal Data Form (Form 100) – contributions do not need to be limited to those in the last 6 years and there is no page limit.

- Page one of an Application for a Grant (Form 101). Note that only the top part, including the Certification/Requirements box, needs to be completed. No signatures are required on this form.

- A completed Environmental Information Form (Appendix A), if required.

- The names and addresses (mail and e-mail) of five to seven external reviewers. The reviewers should be internationally recognized experts in the nominee’s field, who, in the opinion of the nominee, could be approached by NSERC to conduct an impartial review of the nomination. NSERC strongly recommends that you suggest a cross-section of reviewers (i.e. international and Canadian reviewers, from early career to established researchers, including women and other under-represented groups, researchers at a variety of academic and non-academic institutions) with expertise in your area of research. External reviewers should not be members of the nominee’s university, former professors or supervisors, or present or former
collaborators or colleagues. Nominees must not contact suggested external reviewers in advance.

- A signed Terms and Conditions of Form for Nominees.
- Verification that you have completed the required self-identification form online.
- A signed ORS Checklist.

B. The SIRI team on behalf of executive head of the university provides the completed and signed Steacie Institution Certification of Nominee Form:

- The form should list the current teaching and administrative responsibilities of the nominee and indicate how the University will fully relieve the nominee of these responsibilities during the tenure of the award.
- Outline the University’s process in selecting its nominees.

Nominations will be submitted to NSERC by VPRI.

Relevant Deadlines

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Milestone</th>
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<tr>
<td>April 10, 2020</td>
<td>Faculties submit internal nominations to VPRI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Late April</td>
<td>MAAC Review</td>
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<td>Late April</td>
<td>VPRI decisions and feedback provided to nominees</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 2</td>
<td>Final submission to ORS</td>
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<td>June 5 (June 7 is a Sunday)</td>
<td>NSERC deadline</td>
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Contact
For more information please contact Abby Vogus, SIRI Specialist, Office of Research Services, avogus@yorku.ca, ext. 44670.
LETTER TEMPLATE
(please use Faculty or Department letterhead available to you)

[Date]

Dear Dr. Roseman,

This letter confirms that I have read the information provided in the memo to Faculties regarding the NSERC EWR Steacie Fellowship in relationship to equity, diversity and inclusion. I further understand that if it is necessary for the Major Awards Advisory Committee to adjudicate nominations, my self-identifying information may be used to determine which nominations to put forward to NSERC. I grant permission for this data to be shared with the Office of Research Services to facilitate this process.

Sincerely,

[Nominee signature]