



Effectively Demonstrating Leadership in Vanier/Banting Applications

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Plan for Presentation

- ▶ Overview of Application Requirements
 - ▶ Vanier
 - ▶ Banting
- ▶ Overview of Review Process
- ▶ Suggestions for excellent leadership statements

Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship 2019-20

Background

- ▶ Tri-Agency program designed to attract and retain world-class doctoral students to a Canadian University

Value

- ▶ \$50,000 per year for up to 3 years

Vanier winners at McMaster

McMaster Quotas and Results for 2017-2018 competition

- ▶ CIHR quota 10 – 6 successful applicants
- ▶ NSERC quota 7 – 4 successful applicants
- ▶ SSHRC quota 5 - 0 successful applicants

Review Process for Vanier

- ▶ There is a two stage internal process at McMaster
- ▶ Students must have received departmental endorsement to submit a stage one Vanier letter of intent package at McMaster
- ▶ If students are endorsed to stage two of the internal competition, they will have to submit a full application through ResearchNet

Vanier Evaluation Criteria

All three criteria carry equal weighting (33%) for evaluation by the committee

- ▶ Academic Excellence
- ▶ Research Potential
- ▶ *Leadership

* Consider carefully if you are suitable for Vanier competition

McMaster Vanier Review Panel

- ▶ 2018 Review Panel
 - ▶ Chemistry, Geography, Business Engineering and Management, English, Sociology, Materials Science and Engineering, Psychiatry and Nursing
 - ▶ Your research and leadership statements must be understandable and speak to reviewers from all disciplines

Leadership (Potential and Demonstrated ability)

As demonstrated by the following indicators:
personal achievement, involvement in academic life, volunteerism and civic engagement

- ▶ The difference between leadership and volunteering is determined based on the role you had in the extra-curricular activity
 - ▶ Leadership implies developing a strategic goal by one's self to the benefit of a larger body and delegating tasks to others
 - ▶ Volunteering in the context of this point implies following tasks given by others
 - ▶ If you do have volunteer experience, indicate the leadership role you played

Evidence of Leadership- Vanier

- ▶ In the CCV, use the sections extracurricular events or positions to show leadership
- ▶ Your support letters (two leadership support letters) and two referee assessments should speak to your leadership abilities and activities

Vanier - An Engaging Leadership Statement

- ▶ Two page statement highlighting activities as they relate to your future as a leader in you field of research
- ▶ Deliberate descriptions of activities that you have participated in and support your future leadership in your research area
 - ▶ Link your activities to your goals and research program
 - ▶ Consider what academic researchers do
- ▶ Clear writing and formatting
- ▶ Describe what you are doing above and beyond your research and coursework

Frequent Mistakes in Leadership Statements

- ▶ Essays about leadership philosophy, theory or concepts
 - ▶ Quotes
- ▶ Narratives or life histories
 - ▶ When I was __, I injured my _____, and ever since that time, I have wanted to research _____.
 - ▶ I come from a long line of leaders. My _____
- ▶ Chronological ordering
- ▶ Reporting activities that are typical of graduate education
 - ▶ Academic progress, TA, RA, etc

Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships

- ▶ Seeks to attract and retain top-tier PDF talent
- ▶ To develop their leadership potential
- ▶ Position Banting PDFs for success as the research leaders of tomorrow
- ▶ Allotment Nationally
 - ▶ 23 CIHR
 - ▶ 23 NSERC
 - ▶ 23 SSHRC

Banting Selection Criteria

- ▶ Quality of Applicant's Proposed Research Program
- ▶ Institutional Commitment and Synergy b/w Application and institutional strategic priorities
- ▶ Applicant's research excellence and leadership in the research domain*
 - ▶ *leadership criterion is research leadership only
 - ▶ This differs from the Vanier where leadership can be defined more broadly

Banting Leadership Criterion

- ▶ Defined by sphere of influence achieved by applicant
- ▶ Levels of potential influence
 - ▶ Research program
 - ▶ Institution
 - ▶ National Research Community
 - ▶ International Research Community
 - ▶ Society at large

Demonstrating Leadership (Banting)

- ▶ All of the below offer the opportunity to highlight your sphere of influence
 - ▶ Applicant's CCV
 - ▶ Reference Letters
 - ▶ Research proposal (to non-specialist audience)
 - ▶ Significance of (up to) 3 Leadership Contributions (1 page)
 - ▶ Supervisor's Statement

Non-Leadership Statement Tips

- ▶ Ensure that any and all leadership activities are captured on your CCV
- ▶ In your research proposal highlight your work's existing influence if at all possible
- ▶ Prompt your letter writers by helping them focus on your leadership experiences in addition to other aspects of your CV

Leadership Statement

Objective: To show how you've started on your way to become a future leader (and have the potential to be one)

- ▶ Try to tell a compelling story that links to your research accomplishments and future goals/trajectory
- ▶ Where to start
 - ▶ List all of your potential leadership activities
 - ▶ Pick the top three
 - ▶ Consider how you'll present them to have maximum impact

Examples of Leadership

- ▶ Position Papers, Clinical Practice Guidelines
- ▶ Invited talks
- ▶ KT Exercises (especially coordination roles)
 - ▶ Community outreach with students, public health, etc
- ▶ University committees
- ▶ Awards, Scholarships
- ▶ Volunteerism (if you actually led something)
 - ▶ Scientific Organization Student Leadership
 - ▶ Scientific Meeting Organization Tasks
- ▶ Recurring newsletter contributions
- ▶ Patents

Examples of Leadership (2)

▶ Assessment/Review Activities

- ▶ Journal reviews
- ▶ Conference reviews
- ▶ Grant reviews
- ▶ Organizational reviews

▶ Teaching

- ▶ Programs developed and taught
- ▶ Courses developed and taught

▶ Supervisory Activity

- ▶ Student Supervision
- ▶ Staff Supervision
- ▶ Mentoring

Leadership Statement Tips

- ▶ Your leadership statement should be as compelling as your research proposal
- ▶ Modesty is not a virtue here
- ▶ When selecting activities and supporting them:
 - ▶ Describe their significance in terms of your leadership and sphere of influence
 - ▶ Discuss their impact and importance in terms of your career objectives (press interviews, blogs, other coverage can be highlighted)

Leadership Statement Tips (2)

- ▶ Put strongest roles and proof up front, then add more minor roles, then volunteering (if necessary)
- ▶ Provide actual proof of change
 - ▶ Explain the role you played in improving/changing things (don't just list)
 - ▶ Indicate change that has occurred since you assumed leadership (how was it before and after you led)
- ▶ Never expect the reviewer will understand the extent of the accomplishment
 - ▶ Stress the value of the work, give them insights into how the reviewer should value the contribution
 - ▶ Highlight how you have gone above and beyond expected norms to overcome obstacles, foster others, spearhead change

Leadership Statement Tips (3)

- ▶ Be up front
- ▶ Use numbers to back up your claims (increase in membership, readership, funding, etc)
- ▶ Use strong action words that convey leadership (don't overuse led, lead, etc)
- ▶ State what the end impact is anticipated to be
- ▶ Avoid unrelated fluff
 - ▶ Too often, content is too focused on biographical elements on why they wanted to become a researcher
 - ▶ This is insufficient evidence of leadership and puts off reviewers because it doesn't come to the point quickly

General Suggestions

- ▶ Seek past applications from other students, particularly those that have been successful in some way
- ▶ Discuss your statement with a supervisor, department chair, past winner or Banting Committee Member
- ▶ Expect to write, review, edit, re-write

Questions?