**Ontario Trillium Scholarship (OTS) – Departmental Nomination March 15 annually**

In 2010, the Ontario government announced the introduction of the OTS program as a significant initiative to attract more of the best qualified international students to Ontario for PhD studies. The program is jointly funded by the Province of Ontario and Ontario universities. The Province of Ontario contributes two-thirds of the value of the award and the university provides one-third.

Open only to incoming international students on a study permit and there is not a specific separate application.

The OTS are to be awarded to international PhD recipients for a maximum of four years and each OTS is valued at $40,000. These scholarships are to be automatically awarded to the student for each of the three years following the first year provided the student maintains good academic standing and continues to meet recipient eligibility requirements.

All incoming international doctoral applications (from any program) are assessed by the Department they applied, and the Department submits nominations to the School of Graduate Studies. Selection is by a Graduate Scholarship Committee who adjudicate all eligible nominations and award the scholarships.

Each OTS is valued at $40,000 annually and is automatically renewable for an additional three years

**Eligibility, Selection criteria & Conditions of funding:**

Academic merit is the defining criterion for the selection of OTS recipients by institutions. OTS recipients must have achieved a first-class average, as determined by each university, in each of the two years of full-time study prior to awarding of the OTS.

In order to be eligible for an OTS, a candidate must meet all of the criteria below:

* Be an international student:
* International students are students who have received a temporary resident visa as a member of the student class under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (Canada) on the first day of class;
* Domestic and refugee students who are eligible for government financial assistance (e.g. under the Ontario Student Assistance Program) are ineligible to receive an OTS;
* Should an OTS recipient obtain permanent residency status after the beginning of the first term of study, s/he will continue to be eligible for the OTS for the balance of his/her renewable OTS for a total of four years;
* Recipients must have achieved a first-class average in each of the two years of full-time study prior to being awarded the OTS;
* Be intending to pursue full-time graduate studies at an eligible Ontario university at the doctoral level. A full-time doctoral student is a student who must:
	+ Be studying to earn a doctoral degree at an eligible institution;
	+ Be pursuing their studies on a full-time basis;
	+ Be identified by the institution as a full-time student;
	+ Be geographically available and visit their campus regularly;
	+ Not be employed outside the university except by permission of their academic supervisor.
	+ Not be intending to enrol in a qualifying or make-up year;
* Recipients must not have completed a previous degree at an Ontario post-secondary institution at the undergraduate or graduate level immediately prior to being admitted to the PhD program; recipients must not be currently studying at an Ontario post-secondary institution at the undergraduate or graduate level (students currently registered in a PhD program are not eligible;
* Not have concurrently accepted a scholarship or fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), or the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), or be in receipt of an Ontario Graduate Scholarship (OGS), Vanier Scholarship or Ontario Graduate Scholarship in Science and Technology (OGSST) award. Trent University OTS holders are not permitted to apply to other external scholarship opportunities while holding their scholarship.
* Recipients who withdraw, transfer to part-time status or fail to complete the term without prior consultation with the Graduate Studies Office may be required to repay the award.

Once selected, recipients must enrol at the awarding university within the fiscal year that the scholarship was awarded. Recipients must be enrolled and remain enrolled as a full-time student in an eligible program. Recipients who withdraw, transfer to part-time status, or fail to complete the term, without prior consultation with the Dean of Graduate Studies or other official identified by the institution, are no longer eligible for the OTS.

During the duration of the award, an OTS recipient may change the program of study with the prior written approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies or other institutionally designated official.

An OTS recipient may accept research assistantships, part-time teaching positions, or other employment that does not affect their status as a full-time graduate student. The institution should satisfy itself that such work opportunities comply with federal guidelines established by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) with regards to on-campus and off-campus employment for international students.

An OTS recipient, while still under academic supervision, may be absent from their eligible institution of study, e.g. visiting libraries, conducting field work, or attending a graduate course at another institution, provided that if any such period of absence exceeds four weeks in any one term, written evidence shall be available in the Graduate

Studies Office to the effect that the absence has the approval of the Chairperson of the department and the Dean of Graduate Studies. However, recipients lose eligibility status if participating in a paid educational leave or sabbatical.

**Leaves of Absence and Deferrals**

An OTS recipient may be granted a deferral or leave of absence for exceptional circumstances, not to exceed on any one occasion, more than 12 consecutive months, for reasons including:

* Immigration process;
* Maternity or parental leave;
* Family or medical leave; or
* Compassionate leave (e.g. bereavement).

Each institution shall use its own discretion in determining whether the leave of absence or deferral is appropriate and shall request supporting documentation for the leave of absence or deferral (as applicable).

The university’s policy concerning length of allowable leaves of absence from or deferral of a program shall apply, where the allowable leave of absence is 12 months or less. Terms across the leave of absence should be considered sequential.

Applicants are encouraged to start their graduate doctoral studies application early. For further information contact: School of Graduate Studies, Jane Rennie – Graduate Finance Officer janerennie@trentu.ca or 705-748-1011 ext. 7075