FUNDING COMPETITION HANDBOOK
PREPARED BY GRADUATE FUNDING

This short lighthearted Handbook was created to help new GPC (or equivalent) prepare and run funding competitions. As well, it covers what to expect after final competition results are in. The Handbook is in no way exhaustive. We welcome any tips or tricks you may come across that can enhance it.

First off, you need to understand some of **the lingo**

**Unit** = Department, School, Institute, Division, or Faculty

**Award** = fellowship = scholarship = studentship = money paid to student or postdoc for supplementing life during study and/or research.

**FAD** = Fellowships and Awards Database = online platform for submission of applicant information required by GPS-Graduate Funding. Each Unit has a login and password provided by Graduate Funding.


**NOA** = Notice of award = official letter or document from Agency outlining an offer of award to a student.

**FOF** = Fund Opening/Renewal Form

Now you are set to have some fun.

GETTING READY

Learn everything you can about the funding opportunity so you are prepared to respond to student inquiries. Know where to look for answers.

- **Value** and **Duration** of Fellowship
- **ELIGIBILITY** of applicant (to apply and/or the hold the award)
- Application process of student - **DEADLINES**
- Nomination process of Unit – Quota & **DEADLINES**

Here is where you can find your answers

- GPS info session- Keep an eye out for emails from GPS-Graduate Funding
- Agency webpage
- GPS webpages (both applicant and staff pages)- [https://www.mcgill.ca/gps/funding](https://www.mcgill.ca/gps/funding)
- When all else fails, [graduatefunding.gps@mcgill.ca](mailto:graduatefunding.gps@mcgill.ca)

Make a plan according to the **DEADLINES** set by GPS. Use the Competition Setup Checklist and tailor it to your specific unit’s needs to help organize your planning. Notify your GPD or Unit Head so he or she is aware of the funding opportunity and if a nomination/recommendation letter is required. Work backwards from your nomination deadline to GPS and plan time to complete the required tasks. It is important to note that some funding opportunities have very short turnarounds.

RUNNING A FUNDING COMPETITION

- Set your **DEADLINES** (give yourself time)
- Inform your students
  - some applicants will come from outside McGill so be prepared to explain McGill processes and where information can be found
- Recruit your selection committee
  - Inform potential members of deadline you need the results that allows time for you to complete the nomination process to GPS
  - if you don’t use a committee, be sure of the selection process in your Unit. If your GPD or Unit head makes the selection, inform him or her of your deadline.
- Respond to all inquiries from students
• **Review** application files using **reviewer’s checklist** from GPS webpage (even if GPS has done a preliminary review)
  - Create a spreadsheet to collect information (make sure to include what is required on FAD / Checklist) on each applicant that is easily transferable to FAD and scoresheet
  - Refer to agency eligibility criteria
  - If anything is missing, **inform applicant** as incomplete application packages are NOT accepted by GPS and GPS will NOT extend a deadline.

• **Calculate GPA** according to GPS instruction

• Create selection scoresheet using agency **selection criteria**
  - GPS has a template for this purpose

• Submit applicant files corresponding your Unit’s selection committee and be sure to inform them of your **Unit’s quota** and **remind committee of your deadline**.
  - Obtain Unit nomination / recommendation letter if required
    - **Include all pertinent information to letter writer** such as: Agency webpage links, your completed reviewer’s checklist, evaluation criteria, copy of application, GPA calculations, and recommendation letters written by others for the student.

• **Submit** nominations to GPS
  - Enter information of non-recommended applicants on FAD
  - Submit applications packages of nominated applicants listed on FAD to GPS according to instructions on reviewer’s checklist
    - Scanned PDF copy of full application package to gradcomp.gps@mcgill.ca
    - Hard copies of some documents may be required to be submitted
  - **Inform all your applicants of the results of your competition. (recommended to GPS or not)**

TIPS: You may begin FAD entries at anytime as soon as FAD has been opened (usually a week before your deadline to GPS). Use the information from FAD to create your selection committee scoresheet (or vice versa) There is no need to wait until your selection process is completed. You may enter and save the information at any time. Once your selection process is complete, you simply go back into FAD to indicate recommended or not and submit.

**The Aftermath**

**Funding competitions are completed** once offers of awards have been made to successful applicants (unsuccessful applicants will have been notified as well). The Agency awarding the fellowship notifies successful applicants. The exception is the CGSM (Harmonized CGS Master’s). GPS makes the offer of award to selected applicants. When GPS receives notification from an Agency, an email message containing instructions on how to activate an award and request payments is sent to successful applicants pointing them here: [https://www.mcgill.ca/gps/funding/getting-paid](https://www.mcgill.ca/gps/funding/getting-paid).

Sometimes students receive notice before GPS, or have been offered an award from an Agency for which McGill (or you) did not administer a competition. You must advise these students of the webpage that contains the instructions. It is the responsibility of the awardee to submit the documents for payment, not you.

**General steps students** follow for “**getting paid and maintaining a fellowship**” outlined for most awards:

- Notice of Award received
- Payment documents gathered
- Required signatures procured
- Person responsible for payment of award is indicated
- **STUDENT** submits all award activation and payment documents to Graduatefunding.gps@mcgill.ca as per instructions.