



Global Excellence Initiative

ANNUAL REPORT

2023



Universities
Canada.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

4

OBJECTIVES OF THE GLOBAL
EXCELLENCE INITIATIVE

5

A YEAR IN REVIEW:
2023 AT A GLANCE

6

2020-2023 DATA

7

YEAR IN REVIEW:
2023 INSTITUTIONAL
PARTICIPATION

8

CELEBRATING RESEARCH
EXCELLENCE

9

CANADIAN WINNERS
OF INTERNATIONAL
AND NATIONAL PRIZES

10

CONCLUSION

11

APPENDIX A:
A DETAILED HISTORY OF THE
GLOBAL EXCELLENCE INITIATIVE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Researchers in Canada are working at the cutting edge of their fields to fuel the breakthroughs of tomorrow across a variety of specializations. From quantum science to artificial intelligence, from climate change research to psychology and mathematics, researchers are helping to improve the lives of Canadians, while working on discoveries that will make Canada a leader in the global economy.

The international and national research award winners of 2023 show the importance of a strong Canadian science and research community and the big impact Canadians are having at home and abroad.

Acknowledging and honouring researchers in Canada is critical to fostering a culture of innovation, lighting the way for the next generation, and showing the rest of the world what Canada can do.

The Global Excellence Initiative not only underscores the value of our research enterprise to building a better Canada and working across borders, but also serves to inspire our next generation of researchers to see the value of careers in research and discovery.

2023 was an important year for the program with the addition of significant funding from the Rideau Hall Foundation. This new funding has allowed for the strengthening of operations, a growing team and exciting new initiatives aimed at celebrating the achievements of researchers in Canada. With more partnerships, we can offer more supports to researchers who can benefit from our services, especially those in underrepresented groups such as early-career, women and BIPOC researchers.

The work of the initiative is possible thanks to the backing of our partner organizations:

- The Rideau Hall Foundation (RHF)
- The Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI)
- The Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR)
- The National Research Council Canada (NRC)
- The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), and
- The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)



National Research Council Canada | Conseil national de recherches Canada



Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada | Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada



OBJECTIVES OF THE GLOBAL EXCELLENCE INITIATIVE

The Global Excellence Initiative (GEI) promotes the recognition of the contributions made by Canadian researchers both nationally and internationally. The goal of the initiative is to markedly enhance Canada's research profile on the global stage while celebrating researchers in Canada who have received globally benchmarked prizes. To this end, the number of international research prizes received by Canadians has increased significantly, as has awareness, at home and abroad, of Canada's research excellence.

The Global Excellence Initiative focuses on:

1

Increasing Canadians' awareness of the contributions of leading Canadian researchers and inspiring young Canadians to pursue academic studies and careers in research, whether in industry, academia or government laboratories.

2

Increasing the number of national and international research prizes won by Canadian researchers and promoting a culture of excellence.

3

Increasing global awareness of Canadian research excellence, augmenting Canada's visibility as a top location for study and research.

*See Appendix A for a detailed history of the Global Excellence Initiative.

YEAR IN REVIEW: 2023 AT A GLANCE

Strengthening our foundation

The Global Excellence Initiative saw significant growth in 2023 through the dedicated work of its committees, team members and new funding from the Rideau Hall Foundation.

The initiative saw a strengthening of the program in three major areas.

First, we **bolstered operations** through the addition of new team members, the reinforcement of the external review service and the completion of an external evaluation of the program.

Secondly, we facilitated **increased knowledge-sharing** through a cross-country tour conducted in the spring, consisting of eight regional sessions with 81 attendees and 38 research institutions represented; the launch of a quarterly newsletter sharing upcoming deadlines, events, interviews with award winners and helpful articles; and two webinars geared to support researchers, administrators and nominators in their effort to submit successful dossiers.

Lastly, we **boosted recognition and celebration** initiatives through the development of a new website, the planning of celebratory events and a national promotional strategy.

The Global Excellence Initiative continues to collaborate with the embassies in Ottawa on several international awards and the promotion of research excellence.

In addition to offering visibility to the initiative and Canadian researchers, these connections allow for international collaboration and knowledge-sharing regarding national and international research schemes.

GEI by the numbers

2023 continued to see a high demand for the external review service with a large number of review requests submitted.

The Global Excellence Initiative received 107 requests for review for both national and international awards in 2023 across a wide breadth of research areas, with a 5% increase in female nominations from the previous year.

After reaching out to 709 potential reviewers in 2023, 106 said yes, making for a 15% success rate from all reviewers petitioned. Staff at the Global Excellence Initiative continue to seek out subject-matter experts and laureates as reviewers, reaching out to an average of 10 potential reviewers per review request.

2023 data

107

total # of requests

58

for international awards

49

for national awards

44 (41%)

for female nominees

60 (56%)

for male nominees

1 (1%)

non-binary nominee

2 (2%)

group nominations

66

reviewed

106

of reviews provided

23

not reviewed

38

with 1 reviewer/dossier

28

with 2+ reviewers/dossier



2020-2023 DATA

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2020

Advised of request	59
Pending	0
Not reviewed	1
Reviewed	46
1 reviewer/dossier	6
2+ reviewers/dossier	40
Female nominees	22 (37%)
Male nominees	37 (63%)

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2021

Advised of request	121
National awards requests	73
International awards requests	48
Pending	0
Not reviewed	15
Reviewed	84
1 reviewer/dossier	32
2+ reviewers/dossier	52
Female nominees	43 (36%)
Male nominees	68 (64%)

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2022

Advised of request	62
National awards requests	34
International awards requests	28
Pending	1
Not reviewed	8
Reviewed	43
1 reviewer/dossier	16
2+ reviewers/dossier	26
Female nominees	26 (36%)
Male nominees	36 (58%)

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2023

Advised of request	107
National awards requests	49
International awards requests	58
Pending	0
Not reviewed	23
Reviewed	66
1 reviewer/dossier	38
2+ reviewers/dossier	28
Female nominees	44 (41%)
Male nominees	60 (56%)
Non-binary nominee	1 (1%)
Group nominees	2 (2%)
Reviews provided	106



A YEAR IN REVIEW: 2023 INSTITUTIONAL PARTICIPATION

In 2023, 14 universities, one research institution and three nominees in Canada not connected to an institution requested support through the Global Excellence Initiative.

Carleton University	7	University of Alberta*	2
Concordia University	3	University of Manitoba	8
McGill University	15	University of Ottawa	2
National Research Council Canada	5	University of Toronto	5
Queen's University	29	University of Victoria	1
Simon Fraser University	9	Western University	8
University of British Columbia (The)*	1	York University	8
Université de Montréal	1	Not connected to institution	3
* new in 2023			107

INSTITUTIONS 2020 (15)

Carleton University*	3
Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador	1
McGill University	14
NRC	3
Queen's University	4
Université Laval*	1
Université de Montréal	1
Université de Sherbrooke	2
University of Guelph*	2
University of Manitoba	3
University of Ottawa	3
University of Toronto	8
University of Victoria	2
Western University	11
York University*	1
	59

* new in 2020

INSTITUTIONS 2021 (15)

Carleton University	4
Concordia University	3
McGill University	13
Queen's University	29
Simon Fraser University	2
Université de Montréal	2
Université de Sherbrooke	2
University of Calgary	4
University of Guelph	7
University of Manitoba	14
University of Ottawa	6
University of Toronto	5
University of Victoria	8
Western University	20
York University	2
	121

INSTITUTIONS 2022 (10)

NRC	4
Queen's University	21
Simon Fraser University	1
University of Calgary	1
University of Manitoba	9
University of Toronto	8
University of Victoria	4
University of Waterloo*	1
Western University	10
York University	2
	61

* new in 2022



CELEBRATING RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

2023 saw 21 researchers at Canadian institutions receive international recognition for their work and advancements across a broad spectrum of fields.

Canadian winners of international awards and prizes

21 international award winners

Recipient	Institution	Award/Prize
Jimmy Ba	University of Toronto	Sloan Research Fellowship in Computer Science
Gilles Brassard	Université de Montréal	Eduard Rhein Foundation Award
Elise Burton	University of Toronto	Dan David Prize
Saurabh Chitnis	Dalhousie University	Sloan Research Fellowship in Chemistry
Paul Corkum	University of Ottawa; National Research Council Canada	BBVA Foundation Frontiers of Knowledge Award in Basic Sciences
Pieter Cullis	The University of British Columbia	Harvey Prize
Duncan Dauvergne	University of Toronto	Sloan Research Fellowship in Physics
Maria Drout	University of Toronto	Sloan Research Fellowship in Physics
Daniel Drucker	University of Toronto	Wolf Prize for Medicine & VinFuture Special Prize
Michael Groechenig	University of Toronto	New Horizons Prize in Math
Alannah Hallas	The University of British Columbia	Sloan Research Fellowship in Physics
Daniel Pauly & Rashid Sumaila	The University of British Columbia	Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement
Federico Rosei	Institut national de la recherche scientifique	Guggenheim Fellowship in Engineering
Sushant Sachdeva	University of Toronto	Sloan Research Fellowship in Computer Science
Dolph Schluter	The University of British Columbia	Crafoord Prize
Karen Solie	University of St. Andrews, UK (from Toronto)	Guggenheim Fellowship in Poetry
Sophie Spirkl	University of Waterloo	Sloan Research Fellowship in Mathematics
Diana Valencia	University of Toronto	Guggenheim Fellow in Astrophysics
Robert J. Vallerand	Université du Québec à Montréal	Tang Prize
Anastassia Voronova	University of Alberta	Sloan Research Fellowship in Neuroscience



Winners of Canadian awards and prizes

49 winners of Canadian prizes

Recipient	Institution	Award/Prize
Amanda Bates	University of Victoria	Arthur B. McDonald Fellowships
Nicolas Cowan	McGill University	
Foutse Khomh	Polytechnique Montréal	
Karen Maxwell	University of Toronto	
Chelsea Rochman	University of Toronto	
Mark Schmidt	The University of British Columbia	
Joséphine Bacon		Canada Council for the Arts Molson Prizes
Françoise Baylis	Dalhousie University	
Christopher Mushquash	Lakehead University	Canada Gairdner Momentum Award
Gelareh Zadeh	University of Toronto	
Jennifer Stinson	University of Toronto	CIHR Barer-Flood Prize for Health Services and Policy Research
Yoshua Bengio	Université de Montréal	Gerhard Herzberg Canada Gold Medal for Science and Engineering
Evergon		Governor General's Awards in Visual and Media Arts
FASTWÜRMS		
Germaine Koh		
Shannon Walsh		
Tim Whiten		
Nettie Wild		
Józef Kwaterko		Governor General's International Award in Canadian Studies
Pieter Cullis	The University of British Columbia	Killam Prizes
Ajay Heble	University of Guelph	
Praveen Jain	Queen's University	
Charles M. Morin	Université Laval	
Sarah Otto	The University of British Columbia	
Terrance Snutch	The University of British Columbia	Margolese National Brain Disorders Prize
Trevor Bell	University of Newfoundland	Northern Science Award
	McMaster University	NSERC Brockhouse Prize
C20/20 Innovation Hub	University of Toronto	
	University of Waterloo	
Peter Vanrolleghem	Université Laval	NSERC Donna Strickland Prize for Societal Impact of Natural Sciences and Engineering Research
Cathleen Crudden	Queen's University	NSERC John C. Polanyi Award
Pfizer and BioNTech		Prix Galien Canada - Innovative Product Award
Oluwabukola Salami	University of Calgary	Prix Galien Canada - Research Award
Eugenia Kumacheva	University of Toronto	Royal Society of Canada Henry Marshall Tory Medal
Jacalyn Duffin	Queen's University	Royal Society of Canada Jason A. Hannah Medal



Anita Layton	University of Waterloo	Royal Society of Canada John L. Synge Award
Steven Narod	University of Toronto	Royal Society of Canada McLaughlin Medal
Abdelhamid Sayari	University of Ottawa	Royal Society of Canada Miroslaw Romanowski Medal
Tilottama Rajan	Western University	Royal Society of Canada Pierre Chauveau Medal
Emily Cranston	The University of British Columbia	Royal Society of Canada Rutherford Memorial Medals
John Smol	Queen's University	Royal Society of Canada Sir John William Dawson Medal
Michel Magnan	Concordia University	Royal Society of Canada Yvan Allaire Medal
Srividya Iyer	McGill University	Royal-Mach-Gaensslen Prize for Mental Health Research
Andrew Martindale	The University of British Columbia	SSHRC Impact Awards - Connection Award
David Dyzenhaus	University of Toronto	SSHRC Impact Awards - Gold Medal
Kang Lee	University of Toronto	SSHRC Impact Awards - Insight Award
Jeremy de Beer & Chidi Oguamanam	University of Ottawa	SSHRC Impact Awards - Partnership Award
Jessica Davis	Carleton University	SSHRC Impact Awards - Talent Award
Asim Biswas	University of Guelph	Steacie Prize for Natural Science
Véronique Dubos	Université Laval	Weston Family Awards in Northern Research
Tara Howatt	Yukon University	

CONCLUSION

2023 was another strong year for the Global Excellence Initiative and for researchers in Canada. Celebrating the achievements of the researchers in Canada who won major research awards in 2023 is one of the best ways to demonstrate to future generations of Canadians of the importance of innovation and inspire them toward excellence.

2023 brought exciting new advancements for the program: growing the team, the completion of the external evaluation, a cross-country tour, strong engagement by the canvassing committee, the launch of the quarterly newsletter and the offerings of knowledge-sharing webinars. With the significant boost in funding from the Rideau Hall Foundation, the Global Excellence Initiative is gaining momentum. As we look forward to the year ahead, we are excited to build from a strong operational foundation, strengthening our relationships with stakeholders and bringing the initiative to the next level by elevating Canada's researchers to household names.

Universities Canada, along with our partners, is proud to continue promoting the Global Excellence Initiative within the higher education sector as well as with key research stakeholders and supporters.



APPENDIX A

Background

While Canada has a strong record of research achievements, relatively few Canadians had received high recognition internationally for their contributions. The Rt. Hon. David Johnston, 28th Governor General of Canada, recognized the need for a proactive strategy to identify candidates for international awards and prizes. In 2012, he launched the Global Excellence Initiative to promote the recognition of the contributions made by Canadian researchers, both nationally and internationally. He recruited leaders from civil society, academia and government to identify, support and promote Canadian researchers in all fields of study and across all disciplines.

Over the last ten years, the initiative has been supported by numerous partners, including the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI); the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR); Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED); the National Research Council Canada (NRC); the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC); the Rideau Hall Foundation; and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

Universities Canada assumed the stewardship of the initiative upon the end of Mr. Johnston's term on October 1, 2017. With this change, support to the committees, coordination of the external review service and the promotion of winners of international awards have been centralized and streamlined.

Governance

The initiative is guided by the work of two committees:

The **CHAMPIONS GROUP**, a steering and advisory committee, is made up of the heads of the granting councils, the Canada Foundation for Innovation, the National Research Council Canada, and leaders from civil society and government representatives. This group is chaired by Gabriel Miller, President of Universities Canada.

The current membership of the Champions Group:

- **Gabriel Miller**, President and CEO, Universities Canada
- **The Right Honourable David Johnston**, Chair, Rideau Hall Foundation
- **Howard Alper**, Distinguished University Professor, University of Ottawa and Chair, Global Excellence Initiative canvassing committee
- **Alejandro Adem**, President, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council
- **Roseann O'Reilly Runte**, President, Canada Foundation for Innovation
- **Valerie La Traverse**, Vice-President Corporate Affairs, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council
- **Rob Stewart**, Deputy Minister, International Trade, Global Affairs Canada
- **Sara Wilshaw**, Chief Trade Commissioner and Assistant Deputy Minister, Global Affairs Canada
- **Tammy Clifford**, Acting President, Canadian Institute of Health Research
- **Teresa Marques**, President and CEO, Rideau Hall Foundation
- **Janet Rossant**, President and Scientific Director, the Gairdner Foundation
- **Alain Gagnon**, President, Royal Society of Canada
- **Bernard Miller**, Managing Trustee, Killam Trusts



The **CANVASSING COMMITTEE** is comprised of former Canadian university presidents, established and early-career researchers and leaders from civil society. This committee is chaired by Howard Alper, past Chair, Science, Technology and Innovation Council (STIC) and Distinguished Professor, University of Ottawa. The role of this committee is to identify potential benefactors of this program and recommend to the leader of the candidate's institution that the candidate be nominated for a specific award. The committee is dedicated to supporting the candidate and their institution throughout the application process.

- **Lenore Fahrig**, Chancellor's Professor of Biology and Co-Director of the Geomatics and Landscape Ecology Research Laboratory (GLEL), Carleton University
- **Aleeza Gerstein**, Assistant Professor, University of Manitoba
- **Simon Kennedy**, Deputy Minister, ISED
- **Jennifer Love**, Department Head and Professor, Department of Chemistry, University of Calgary
- **Gordon McCauley**, President and CEO, adMare BioInnovations
- **Robert Prichard**, Chair, Torys LLP
- **Molly Shoichet**, Professor and Canada Research Chair in Tissue Engineering, University of Toronto
- **Juan Luis Suárez**, Professor, Western University
- **Michael Woodside**, Professor, Faculty of Science - Physics, University of Alberta
- **Guy Rouleau**, Director, Montreal Neurological Institute and Hospital, Chair of the Department of Neurology and Neurosurgery of McGill University, Director of the Department of Neuroscience of McGill University
- **Christian Landry**, Professor and Principal Investigator at the Landry Lab, Université Laval
- **Suzanne Fortier**, Principal Emeritus, McGill University
- **Daniel Drucker**, Professor and Senior Investigator at the Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute, University of Toronto

Universities Canada and Dr. Howard Alper, Chair of the canvassing committee, wish to thank Colin Dodds, former President of Saint Mary's University; Cheryl Misak, Professor at the University of Toronto; and Rémi Quirion, Chief Scientist of Québec, for their participation and contributions to the committee over the last few years.





PROCESS

Identifying candidates for prestigious international and national awards and prizes is the first step in increasing the number of prizes received by Canadian researchers. Support throughout the nomination process is crucial to success.

Building on the known strengths of peer review, the external review of nominations for international prizes allows for constructive comments and feedback from experts in the field of study covered by the award, with the aim of strengthening the nomination and increasing chances of success. Reviewers are selected from a pool of national and international subject-matter experts and laureates. Reviews are anonymous and conducted in confidence unless the reviewer expresses interest in self-identifying to the nominee and nominating institution.

Universities Canada coordinates the external review of draft nomination packages from submitting institutions and serves as the liaison between nominating institutions (and their nominees), the granting councils that provide lists of potential reviewers and the reviewers offering valuable feedback.



The external review process operates in the following manner:

1

6 weeks to deadline:
dossier forthcoming

2

List of potential reviewers prepared

3

3 weeks to deadline:
dossier submitted

4

Dossier to reviewers

5

10 days to deadline: feedback from
reviewers to nominating institution

6

Modifications to dossier as desired

7

Nomination deadline



**Universities
Canada.**