

Memo

To: Deans

Cc: Associate Deans of Research; Research Officers, Research Directors

From: Amir Asif, Vice-President Research & Innovation

Date: August 30, 2023

Subject: Call for Nominations for Governor General's Innovation Awards

Governor General's Innovation Awards

The [Governor General's Innovation Awards](#) recognize and celebrate outstanding Canadian individuals, teams and organizations – trailblazers and creators who contribute to our country's success, who help shape our future and who inspire the next generation. In today's competitive and interconnected world, increasing productivity through the creation of new products and services, improving public sector performance, and building an inclusive, compassionate society will be the keys to Canada's success as a caring, efficient and prosperous nation. As innovation and an entrepreneurial spirit are fundamentally important to all Canadians and can have a transformative, positive impact—regardless of whether it is in the private, public or not-for-profit realms—the Awards encompass all sectors of Canadian society.

Each year, up to six award winners will be identified through a two-stage, merit-based selection process. The program aims to have at least one young innovator among the winners who is 30 years of age or younger and who, individually or as leader of a team and/or organization, has been undertaking exceptional transformative and innovative activities.

In addition to being assessed on whether they are truly exceptional, transformative and are having a positive impact on society, nominees are assessed on the basis of the following specific selection criteria:

- **Inspiration** – how the process leading to this innovation, its implementation and its developer(s) inspire future innovators in Canada
- **Leadership** – evidence of initiative, collaboration, risk-taking and problem-solving in the process of developing and implementing the innovation
- **Impact** – quantifiable demonstration of the impact the innovation is having because of its successful implementation in the sector, economy, society or culture

Note on Innovation Impact

For these awards, innovation is understood as addressing a pressing problem with a solution that is based on new thinking and putting that solution into action. The awards are not intended for lifetime achievement or innovations that have not yet demonstrated impact.



Nominating Partners

Unlike other awards, the Governor General's Innovation Awards seek nominations through a national network of organizations that have been designated as "nominating partners". These nominating partners are encouraged to be highly selective, and only put forward nominations that meet the objectives of the program while satisfying all of the selection criteria.

The University is annually invited to submit nominations for consideration by two nominating partners: The [Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences](#) (FHSS) and [Universities Canada](#). The FHSS solicits nominee recommendations of researchers working in the Humanities and Social Sciences with deadlines in late September, while Universities Canada initiates its call for nominees in late September/early October and is open to researchers across all disciplines.

Further to this, interested researchers who have existing relationships with other nominating partners may wish to contact them in regard to their particular nomination processes. A full list of nominating partners can be found on the [Governor General's website](#).

Internal Nomination Process

This year, York University will gather internal nominations in one round. To be considered by either the **Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences** or **Universities Canada** as York University recommendations, interested researchers should contact their Faculty Research Office to notify them of their interest in being nominated or with suggestions for nominees.

Deans' Offices are invited to submit nominations to Strategic and Institutional Research Initiatives (SIRI) Specialist Sherri Kogan (skogan@yorku.ca) by **3:00 pm, Friday, September 22, 2023**, who will then coordinate York's submission to the nominating partners. If selected by the nominating partner, SIRI and the nominating partner will work with the nominee to finalize the nomination for submission to the Governor General.

Faculty Research Offices are advised to notify Sherri Kogan (skogan@yorku.ca) of their intention to submit as soon as possible so SIRI can notify the nominees of updates from the nominating partners.

Nomination materials should consist of the following:

1. A summary explaining the nature, significance and impact of the nominee's innovation or innovative activities. (Maximum 500 characters, including spaces.)
2. Specific evidence of how the nomination addresses each of the [three selection criteria \(inspiration, leadership and impact\)](#). In order to fully inform the merit-review adjudication please address the following questions:
 - a) Inspiration** – How was the process of innovation and implementation characterized by inspiration in the use of new knowledge, technology, approaches or methods; what made this nominee's thinking process truly different and creative? (Maximum 2000 characters, including spaces.)
 - b) Leadership** – How did the nominee(s) demonstrate leadership in their work? Discuss evidence of initiative, collaboration, risk-taking and problem-solving in the process of developing and implementing the innovation. (Maximum 2000 characters, including spaces.)

c) Impact – Is the innovation in question having a positive effect in the world? Describe the successful implementation of the innovation in the sector, economy, society or culture, and the role of the nominee(s) in that implementation. If possible, please quantify the impact. For example, a nominee(s) may have created a B Corporation to market the innovation and realize social benefits at the same time, with sales of \$\$ and # of persons assisted. (Maximum 2000 characters, including spaces.)

York University has committed to furthering equity, diversity, inclusion and decolonization within the social sciences and humanities in Canada, and encourages recommendations for nominations from underrepresented groups, including women, visible minorities/racialized groups, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, and individuals from the LGBTQ2S+ community.

Important Considerations

- Nominees must be living Canadian citizens or permanent residents. Posthumous nominations are not eligible.
- In the case where a nominee is identified as a young innovator, he or she must be 30 years of age or younger at the end of the year during which he or she is nominated.
- Failure to appropriately address all selection criteria or to provide supporting evidence will weaken the nomination.
- Since the Assessment and Selection committees are multidisciplinary, the nomination material should be written for non-specialists.
- The awards are given for current or recent innovations that have a positive impact on the quality of life in Canada, whether it is in the private, public or not-for-profit realms. They are not intended for lifetime achievement or innovations that have not yet demonstrated impact.
- To respect privacy, nominations are not made public.

Contact: Sherri Kogan, Strategic & Institutional Research Initiatives Specialist, Office of Research Services, skogan@yorku.ca.