

Guaranteed Funding Packages

Program Overview

Guaranteed Funding Packages (GFPs) were first offered by the Department of Computer Science at the University of Manitoba in 2010. The program's objective is to help attract and retain top graduate students. Funding levels are \$16,000 per year for two years for M.Sc. students and \$20,000 per year for four years for Ph.D. students.

Students holding a GFP are required to work as a teaching assistant or marker in the Department of Computer Science; these duties typically require an average of six hours of work per week, for two terms per year (13 weeks per term).

Application Deadlines

Two awards competitions are held each year, with respective application deadlines of February 1 and July 1. The primary award competition is held in February, with decisions being announced by February 15. A secondary award competition is held in July, with decisions announced by July 15. The purpose of the second competition is to redistribute GFP funds that may become available for various reasons, including

1. a student holding a GFP completes his/her degree before the two/four year funding term has elapsed,
2. a GFP award is declined by a student (e.g., the student decided not to enter the graduate program in Computer Science at the University of Manitoba), or
3. a student has his/her GFP funding terminated due to failing to meet the conditions for continued funding (see below).

Eligibility

The application deadlines stated below require that a student have been accepted for admission to the program by both the Department of Computer Science and the Faculty of Graduate Studies. To ensure sufficient time for both, students should apply to the graduate program at least one month prior to the GFP application deadline.

Eligibility for Primary (February) Competition

For students starting a graduate program in September. Students must be admitted by the Department of Computer Science and the Faculty of Graduate Studies to the graduate program before February 1 of the same year to be eligible. Consequently, a student cannot have started his/her program (e.g., a student currently in the M.Sc. can apply for GFP funding for the Ph.D., but not for GFP funding for his/her current M.Sc.).

For students starting a graduate program in January. Students starting in January are eligible either in the February competition preceding their program start or in the February competition immediately following the start of their program (but they cannot be considered in two February competitions). In the first case, the student must be admitted by the Department Computer Science and the Faculty of Graduate Studies before February 1. In the latter case, the student must have begun his/her studies as planned in January to be eligible.

Eligibility for Secondary (July) Competition

Students must be admitted by the Department of Computer Science and the Faculty of Graduate Studies to the graduate program before July 1 to be eligible. To be eligible, a student cannot have started his/her program.

Support of University of Manitoba Thesis Advisor

A GFP can be awarded to a student only with the support of his/her future advisor at the University of Manitoba. Under normal circumstances, the student's advisor will be expected to contribute \$5000 per year toward the GFP.

Application Procedures

Interested students should indicate to the Department of Computer Science that they would like to be considered for a GFP by completing a [Graduate Student Funding Application](#). Applications must include:

- all academic transcripts,
- a research statement (one page limit),
- a statement of support from the student's future advisor at the University of Manitoba,
- at least one letter of reference (in addition to the statement of support), and
- a c.v., including a list of publications and previous awards received.

It suffices to submit these application materials as part of the initial application to the graduate program. The statement of support from the University of Manitoba advisor can come later (but must be received before the corresponding February/July deadline). Each application should include at least one letter of reference from someone other than the student's future advisor; students are of course encouraged to seek a second letter of reference from their advisor at the University of Manitoba (in this case, the letter of support and the letter of reference can be the same).

Conditions for Continued Funding

The GFPs are targeted for exceptional students; students not excelling in research and academics will lose their GFP funding. The awards committee will meet annually each July to individually

review the status of each GFP-funded student and determine whether funding should be continued. The committee may choose to review a student's GFP funding at additional times during the year if necessary. Excellence in research and academics is defined as the conjunction of the following conditions being met:

- maintaining a rating of satisfactory (excellent, good, or adequate) in his/her annual progress reports,
- completing at least two courses per year (not including COMP 7220) until course requirements are complete,
- receiving a satisfactory evaluation in any teaching assistant or marker duties, and
- maintaining a GPA of 3.5 or higher on courses completed during the current degree at the University of Manitoba.

Additional Awards

If a student receives an additional award (e.g., a University of Manitoba Graduate Fellowship or a NSERC Postgraduate Scholarship) in the amount of \$X per year, then his/her GFP funding will be decreased by $\$X/2$ per year, resulting in a total annual stipend of $\$16,000 + \$X/2$ per year for M.Sc. students and $\$20,000 + \$X/2$ for Ph.D. students. Also, the requirement to work as a teaching assistant or marker is dropped.