

**Royal Society of Canada College of New Scholars  
University of Guelph Guide to Preparing the Nomination Dossier**

New Scholars are Canadians and Permanent Residents who, at an early stage in their career, have demonstrated a high level of achievement. The criterion for election is excellence, and membership is for seven years. Candidates must be no more than 15 years from the conferral of the PhD or equivalent qualification. See RSC Guide [Components of a Nomination | The Royal Society of Canada \(rsc-src.ca\)](https://www.rsc-src.ca).

Primary Nomination Letter

- Your primary nominator will be the President, University of Guelph.
- The primary nominator signs a covering letter for the nomination dossier.
- RSO provides a template and will facilitate getting the letter signed.

Citation

- 70 words
- It will be provided to members when they vote on candidates recommended by the selection committee and may be used in communications; therefore, while short, it's important.
- Briefly summarize the appraisal. Focus on impact. How have you changed your field/society/the world? Think of this as your elevator pitch.
- This should be written for non-specialists – in plain language, no acronyms.
- Write this AFTER writing the detailed appraisal as it should capture the essence of your impact that is fully described in the detailed appraisal.
- RSO will provide samples (as they are publicly available).

Detailed Appraisal

- 1200 words
- Describe your impact and exceptional achievements – be explicit and detailed about the original, innovative, and significant qualities of your work; the national and/or international impact of your work; and your reputation and expertise.
- This document should be focused first and foremost on your field and societal **impact**, not a recitation of what is in your CV/what you have done.
- As a new scholar, you may not have been working long enough for long-term impact to be realized. But your impressive research achievements thus far should have the potential for significant impact. Be sure to identify those impacts.
- To narrow in on the impact of your research, it might be helpful to think about the following questions:
  - What is the broad context in which your work takes place? What big challenge(s) does your research address? Quantify those challenges when possible.
  - How has your research changed the game in your field?
    - What was missing/inadequate before your research came along?
    - How is your research innovative? Is it in the focus, the methods, the collaborations...?
  - What specifically have you done to contribute to solving the challenge(s)?
    - Did your research inform new policy?
    - Did your research lead to new programming?

- Did your research contribute to capacity-building for stakeholders?
- Did your research develop new products and bring them to market?
- Did your research drive forward public discussion in fundamentally significant ways?
- Did you make a significant discovery?
- Did your research fundamentally change the way your field understands something?
- Think about your stakeholders and end users.
  - Who benefits from your research and why?
  - Who did you collaborate with (academic and non-academic) along the way?
  - How did you disseminate research findings to non-academic partners/stakeholders?
- Be sure to identify the impact not just the output/outcome of your research. Outputs or outcomes are the short-term results of your research, while impacts are the longer-term, broader societal impacts. Impacts can be social, economic, environmental, health etc. You likely will have more than one type of impact. Examples of the difference:
  - Your innovative research and participation in government consultations led to a new national childcare policy that provides subsidized childcare spaces (outcome), enabling lower income families to move out of poverty (impact).
  - Working in collaboration with farmers, you created a sensor that can measure soil properties (outcome) giving small farmers convenient means to evaluate their soil and selectively apply nutrients/pesticides, meaning they have more productive fields while spending less money (impact).
- Do you have concrete evidence of impact? This is the hard part for most academic researchers, as they tend not to think explicitly about collecting this kind of information. But, if possible, back up claims with evidence.
  - Do government reports cite your research?
  - Has a policy been in place long enough that studies/government evaluation show its impact?
  - Do you have testimonials from stakeholders or collaborators?
  - Do you have product usage statistics from industry?
- You should highlight academic achievements such as high-profile publications, invitations to give influential lectures, election to international academic bodies, service on advisory panels, and performances and juried exhibitions, but be sure that you are not simply listing off accomplishments like a CV. Insert them strategically within the narrative to demonstrate what they mean in relation to your research and its impact. Putting them in context is important – the review panel likely will have no idea why winning an award/leading an association/publishing in a particular journal is impressive in your field. Tell them why.
- There are different ways to structure the appraisal, so it is difficult to create a template for it. In general, we suggest you open with a paragraph (or two, depending on your work) that establishes your main impact – the main reason that RSC should consider you worthy for submission. After that, you could structure a narrative chronologically, thematically etc.

Whatever showcases the impact of your work and career the most effectively. End with a short paragraph that sums up your impact.

- This should be written in plain language suitable for a multi-disciplinary evaluation panel. Do not use acronyms or technical language.
- It is not a time to be humble. You are the star in this story!
- Prepare to go back and forth with your College Research Manager/RSO multiple times to nail this document. It is the most important part of your nomination.

#### Candidate's Statement

- 500 words
- This statement details how you will contribute to the College if elected.
- The RSC suggests looking at what the RSC has done in terms of panel reports, expert papers etc. and speak to how you'll contribute or explore options for developing reports on important contemporary topics. Look up current members and think about how you might collaborate.

#### Letters of Reference (2)

- Letters are crucial; give careful thought and choose people you are confident will write strong letters of support.
- We always ask for more referees than needed. Life gets in the way (it happens!), and you do not want to be a letter short at the end or asking someone at the last minute.
- The reputation of the letter writers is important: they should be distinguished and internationally recognized leaders in your field. Prestigious institutions make a difference.
- It is not considered a conflict if the referee has collaborated with or mentored the candidate in the past — if that collaboration is disclosed. But try to limit using those with close ties.
- Letters should be no more than 750 words and address:
  - The nature and extent of their relationship to you.
  - The specific originality, significance and impact of your work.
  - Your national/international reputation.
  - Assertions should be backed up with specific examples/details.
  - Choose referees you are confident can address these three areas and can provide sufficient specificity to back up their claims.
- Letters also need to include a 250-word bio on a separate page at the end of the letter.
- RSO has a template for letter writers. You will informally ask your referees if they will participate, and RSO will take it from there to communicate timelines/instructions and collect the letters. RSO will pick the final letters, and these will be kept confidential from the applicant.

#### CV

- 10 pages max – be strategic about what to highlight.
- There is no standardized CV format. But do not use the Sedona-style CV! Whatever formatting you choose, make sure it looks professional and is easy to read.
- The CV should emphasize research excellence, not service and teaching.
- We suggest the following order:
  - Name, citizenship, languages spoken (address info optional)
  - Education

- Employment
- Career interruptions (provide a brief explanation)
- Awards and Distinctions
- Memberships/Advisory positions
- Invited talks and other indications of research excellence
- Publications – provide a summary with h-index if appropriate to your field. Consider citation #s for the 10-15 most cited articles if appropriate to your field. Bold your name and use \* for HQPs.
- HQP – this is not important to RSC. Can include but focus on graduate training. They are more interested on where your trainees are now – are they in positions to create impact because of your training and influence?
- Service – again, not as important to RSC, but can include contributions to university committees, departments. Perhaps limit to significant leadership positions.