

John Charles Polanyi Prizes, 2024-25

To honour the achievement of John Charles Polanyi, recipient of the 1986 Nobel Prize in Chemistry, the Ontario Government established a fund to award John Charles Polanyi Prizes annually to up to five outstanding researchers or scholars who are in the early stages of their careers and at Ontario universities. The prizes, each of which is valued at \$20,000, will be conferred in the fall of 2024. They are available in the areas of Physics, Chemistry, Physiology or Medicine, Literature, and Economic Science, broadly defined.

Information on recent Polanyi Prize recipients can be viewed at [Awards - Council of Ontario Universities](#).

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for an award, an applicant must:

1. be normally resident in Ontario;
2. have received their doctoral degree from any recognized university in the world on or after September 1, 2020, or, if the doctoral degree has not yet been awarded, be confident that they will have completed all degree requirements by May 31, 2024 (an applicant who was on parental leave between the time of completion of the doctorate and the time of application may have their period of eligibility extended by six months);
3. either be planning to continue to post-doctoral studies, or hold a faculty appointment, in a recognized publicly assisted university in Ontario.

Enquiries about these criteria may be directed to ExecDirectorQA@oucqa.ca.

Notes for Applicants

Application forms (in English and French) are available at <http://cou.ca/about/awards/john-charles-polanyi/>. A complete application requires:

- an application form completed by the applicant;
- the applicant's curriculum vitae (updates to which will not be accepted after submission);
- a one-page summary of the applicant's doctoral thesis, written by the applicant;
- a brief statement of the research or scholarship to be undertaken during the period of the award, prepared by the applicant and not to exceed two pages (one additional page is allowed for diagrams, bibliography, etc.);
- a non-technical summary of the statement of research or scholarship, written by the applicant and not to exceed 500 words;
- confidential letters from four assessors; at least two of the assessors must not have had any prior personal or professional association with the applicant (e.g., as a supervisor, a

member of the applicant's supervisory committee, or a co-author) and ideally are not at a university at which the applicant is, or has been, a student or an employee.

The applicant must ask the assessors to send their letters directly, and in electronic format, to the Dean of Graduate Studies of the sponsoring university (i.e., the university at which the applicant proposes to undertake the research supported by the award) by December 1, 2023, by which date the applicant must ensure that the remainder of the application package is submitted to the Dean of the applicant's sponsoring university, also in electronic format.

Notes for Assessors

An assessor's letter, signed and on letterhead, should provide an evaluation of the applicant's research or scholarship to date and the research or scholarship to be undertaken. In particular, the assessor should explain why the research is worthy of a John Charles Polanyi Prize, paying particular attention to the selection criteria outlined below. Assessor should also provide a short description of the relationship, if any, with the applicant.

Each assessor's letter should be sent electronically to the Dean of Graduate Studies of the sponsoring university (i.e., not via the applicant) no later than December 1, 2023.

Selection Criteria

John Charles Polanyi Prizes recognize truly outstanding researchers and scholars for their work during their doctoral program and, where relevant, in their research and scholarship after doctoral study. The Selection Committee, when it makes its decisions about the applicants to be awarded the prizes, reviews both the record of research and publications and the description of planned research; neither, alone, is sufficient for recognition with a Polanyi Prize.

Notes for Deans of Graduate Studies

The sponsoring university's Dean of Graduate Studies must submit all applications electronically to ExecDirectorQA@oucga.ca by January 31, 2024. Each application should be accompanied by an electronic copy of a signed letter from the Dean that, among other things, clarifies the nature of the position the applicant will hold during the period of the prize.

No more than three applications from each of the five areas of study covered by the John Charles Polanyi Prizes (Physics, Chemistry, Physiology or Medicine, Literature, and Economic Science) may be submitted by any one sponsoring university; it is therefore expected that every application will be reviewed by the university before a decision is made on which applications to submit.

Other Details

The ten members of the Selection Committee, all of them highly respected academics from Ontario's universities, are nominated by the universities' Deans of Graduate Studies, and selected by the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies. Two members of the committee come from each of the five areas of study covered by the John Charles Polanyi Prizes (Physics, Chemistry, Physiology or Medicine, Literature, and Economic Science).

The prizes, which are tax-exempt, are to be spent solely at the discretion of the recipients and may be held in conjunction with other salary and research funding support.

Enquiries and Applications

Send an email to ExecDirectorQA@oucqa.ca, or call 416-979-2165, extension 235, if you wish to enquire about any aspect of the John Charles Polanyi Prizes. To submit applications, Deans of Graduate Studies should send them to ExecDirectorQA@oucqa.ca.

Note: In our experience, most questions can be answered by reading the announcement; we do not provide advice on improving an application, or provide feedback on an application.