

Doctoral Research Leadership Award

Recognizing Doctoral Research Excellence and Emerging Thought Leadership

The Sprott Doctoral Research Leadership Award recognizes PhD students who demonstrate exceptional research excellence and an emerging ability to communicate their work with clarity, purpose, and relevance. This annual award honours doctoral researchers who bring rigour and depth to meaningful questions in their field and who show a commitment to sharing their findings in ways that inform professional practice, policy, and public understanding.

Recipients are scholars of distinction who are developing the voice and vision of a next-generation research leader. One award may be granted annually when the standard of nominations warrants recognition.

Award at a Glance

Award Value	\$500 conference travel bursary
Number of Awards	One (1) per year, when warranted
Eligibility	All current PhD students in good standing
How to Nominate	Nomination by the Graduate Program Academic Director and/or PhD faculty supervisor via web form
Application Deadline	April 10, 2026
Questions	Contact the Sprott Research Office

Purpose and Spirit of the Award

Doctoral education at Sprott produces researchers who do not simply advance knowledge within their disciplines; they develop the capacity to lead scholarly conversations and engage audiences beyond the academy. The Doctoral Research Leadership Award exists to recognize PhD students who are already demonstrating that capacity.

The award is not a prize for productivity. It is a recognition of scholarly distinction, intellectual seriousness, and the emerging voice of a researcher who understands that knowledge has the power to change how people think, decide, and act. The selection committee is interested in nominees whose research is rigorous and whose engagement with that research, whether through conference presentations, knowledge mobilization, policy engagement, or public communication, reflects a deliberate commitment to impact.

This award recognizes doctoral researchers who are not only doing excellent work, but who are beginning to lead with it. Nominators are encouraged to make the case for both the quality of the nominee's research and the clarity of purpose with which they are bringing it forward.

Eligibility

- All current Sprott PhD students in good standing are eligible to be nominated.
- There is no restriction on year of study; the award is open to students at any stage of their doctoral program.
- Students who are on an approved leave of absence are not eligible in the cycle during which they are on leave.
- Past recipients of this award are not eligible to be nominated again.

Nomination Process

This award is conferred by nomination, not self-nomination. Nominations must be submitted by the PhD student's Graduate Program Academic Director, their faculty supervisor, or both jointly. Self-nominations from students will not be accepted.

This nomination-based structure reflects the nature of what the award recognizes: doctoral research leadership is demonstrated in the work itself and in how it is perceived by those who supervise and mentor the researcher. The nominating faculty member or Academic Director is best placed to speak to the quality, significance, and trajectory of the student's contribution.

The Graduate Program Academic Director and faculty supervisors are encouraged to give active consideration to eligible students in their programs and to advance nominations on behalf of those whose research most clearly reflects the spirit of this award.

Evaluation Criteria

Nominations will be assessed on the following:

Research Excellence — Quality and rigour of doctoral research:

- *Evidence of high-quality, original research appropriate to the nominee's stage of doctoral study. This may include publications, working papers, dissertation chapters, or other discipline-appropriate scholarly outputs.*

Research Communication — Clarity, purpose, and reach:

- *Evidence that the nominee communicates their research with clarity and purpose across relevant audiences. This may include conference presentations, public lectures, policy briefs, practitioner engagement, media contributions, or other forms of knowledge mobilization.*

Emerging Leadership — Voice and vision as a developing researcher:

- *Evidence that the nominee is developing an identifiable scholarly voice and a sense of the contribution their research program is making or will make to their field. This is not about seniority; it is about intentionality and impact orientation at whatever stage the student has reached.*

Context — Stage of study and circumstances:

- *The committee interprets all evidence of achievement in light of the nominee's year of study, disciplinary norms, and any relevant personal or academic circumstances identified by the nominator.*

Nomination Package

Nominations must be submitted by the Graduate Program Academic Director, the faculty supervisor, or both jointly. The following materials are required:

1. Nomination Statement

The nomination statement is the centerpiece of the submission. It should make a compelling case for why this student exemplifies research excellence and emerging thought leadership at the doctoral level. Nominators should address the quality and significance of the student's research, the student's commitment to communicating their work with purpose and reach, and what distinguishes this nominee as an emerging research leader.

The nomination statement should go beyond general praise and speak directly and specifically to the nominee's contributions and their scholarly significance. Where relevant, nominators should provide context for interpreting the student's record (e.g., year of study, field norms, personal circumstances).

Limit: 2 pages, 12-point font, single-spaced.

How to Nominate

Submit the complete nomination package using the nomination web submission form on the [Spratt Research Office website](#). Nominators are responsible for assembling and submitting all required materials.

All materials must be uploaded and received by 11:59 PM on April 10, 2026. Late or incomplete nominations will not be considered.

Selection Process

The selection committee is chaired by the Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Research Programs. The committee reviews all eligible nominations against the evaluation criteria and makes its recommendation to the Dean. The Dean makes the final award decision. All deliberations are confidential.

One award may be granted in any given cycle. In years where the committee determines that the nominations do not meet the standard the award is intended to recognize, the award may not be given.

Award Recognition

Recipients of the Spratt Doctoral Research Leadership Award will receive:

- A \$500 conference travel bursary to support the dissemination of their doctoral research.
- A certificate of recognition presented to the recipient.
- A student profile featured on the Spratt website and across Spratt's social media channels, highlighting the recipient's research and its significance.

Recipients are also invited to share a brief reflection on their doctoral research journey and what this recognition means to them as an emerging scholar, for inclusion in Spratt's research communications.