

Supporting Ontario's AI Eco-System

Applied AI Education: Vector Scholarships in Artificial Intelligence

The Vector Institute (Vector) has been tasked with supporting Ontario's growing AI eco-system by aiding Ontario's AI companies and labs source talent. This will be achieved through a combination of three primary activities: talent placement via **internships**; networking and **AI community building**; and, **applied AI education**.

A primary goal associated with applied AI education is to increase enrolment and the number of graduates from AI-related master's programs. To support universities in achieving this goal, Vector has introduced the *Vector Scholarships in Artificial Intelligence* (VSAI) to recognize top students enrolled in AI-related master's programs.¹

The VSAI are expected to enhance recruitment of top tier students, increase the number of applicants to recognized AI programs, increase access to advanced studies in AI, and build community among scholars.

VSAI are valued at \$17,500 for one year.² Programs recognized as ensuring that all students are provided with the skills and competencies identified by industry as essential for Ontario's AI workforce may nominate meritorious candidates as per instructions (A) below. [A list of recognized programs can be found on the Vector website: <https://vectorinstitute.ai/Almasters/>]. Programs not currently listed may nominate top candidates based on each candidate's specific plan of study in AI as per instructions (B) below.

Eligibility for Scholarships

To be considered for a VSAI, candidates must meet all the following conditions:

1. Be accepted into a recognized full-time AI-related master's program with a September, January, or May start date OR into an applied master's program not currently recognized, but in which candidates will pursue an individualized study path that is demonstrably AI-focused.
2. Be registered in said program as a full-time student in good standing for the duration of the award.
3. Hold first-class standing (minimum of A- or equivalent) in the last two-years of study in an honours undergraduate program from a recognized university or in a recognized graduate degree program. Consideration will be given to candidates with upper second class standing (B+) and relevant experience or where extenuating circumstances apply (describe reason for consideration).
4. Have two referee reports that support the candidate's excellence, both demonstrated and potential, in the AI program of study.
5. Be nominated by the program in which the master's candidate will be enrolled.

A. Nomination Process for Candidates in Recognized AI-Related Programs

Each recognized master's program must submit a completed ***nomination Form A*** (<https://vectorinstitute.ai/Almasters/>) listing, in rank order from highest (1) to lowest, those eligible candidates with an offer of admission to the program who merit consideration for a scholarship. [For the 2018-19 inaugural year only, nominees may be currently enrolled in the program, newly admitted in

¹ List of recognized program and the process for acquiring recognition can be found at: <https://vectorinstitute.ai/Almasters/>.

² For program less than 12 months in duration, the value of VSAI will be corresponding prorated.

September 2018]. The selection and ranking should be conducted by committee and the nomination package submitted by the Head of Department, the Chair of the Graduate program, or their representative. The package should be a single PDF file starting with the completed nomination form (Form A) followed by supporting documents for each nominee collated in the order presented below and in ranked order.

For each nominee, the following supporting documents must be provided:

1. A copy of the official transcript(s) upon which the candidate's admission decision was made.
2. A copy of two referees' reports from the nominee's application file.
3. A statement from the applicant outlining the reason for pursuing a master's in AI, relevant AI-related experience, and career aspirations (**maximum 250 words**).

B. Nomination Process for Candidates Pursuing Individualized AI-focused Study Plan in an Applied Master's Program not Currently Recognized

For a given program not currently recognized, the program must submit a completed ***nomination Form B*** (<https://vectorinstitute.ai/Almasters/>) listing, in rank order from highest (1) to lowest if more than one eligible candidate, those with an offer of admission to the program or who were newly admitted in September 2018 and merit consideration for a VSAI. In addition, the proposed AI-focused study plan approved by the Graduate Curriculum Chair or appropriate faculty advisor must be included for each nominee.

Should ranking be required, it should be conducted by committee and the nomination package submitted by the Head of Department, the Chair of the Graduate program, or their representative. The package should be a single PDF file starting with the completed nomination form (Form B) followed by supporting documents for each nominee, collated in the order presented below and in ranked order.

For each nominee, the following supporting documents must be provided:

1. A copy of the official transcript upon which the candidate's admission decision was made.
2. A copy of two referees' reports from the nominee's application file.
3. A statement from the applicant outlining the reason for pursuing a master's in AI, relevant AI-related experience, and career aspirations (**maximum 250 words**).
4. A description of the candidate's program of AI-related study (e.g. course numbers & titles; capstone/project description) signed by the student and the Graduate Curriculum Chair or faculty advisor.

Submission

For this inaugural year (2018-19), programs are invited to nominate current students newly admitted in September 2018. The completed nomination form (A or B, as required) and accompanying documentation must be submitted to Almasters@vectorinstitute.ai by **midnight, November 19, 2018**. Incomplete nominations will not be considered. Details regarding the 2019-20 competition will be distributed early in the new year.