Psychology PhD Student Katherine Holshausen has been awarded the prestigious Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship for her project "A Step Forward for STEPS: An Investigation of the Neural and Behavioural Responses to a Novel Treatment for Functional Outcome in Schizophrenia".

"I feel incredibly privileged and honoured to have been bestowed this award. It means that I can focus more on research and studying evidence-based paradigms that inform clinical practice, and how my work can be disseminated more broadly across the globe," said Katherine. "Funding in the medical sciences is aggressively competitive and rife with sometimes seemingly insurmountable challenges; provision of funding for my passion suggests a recognition of the importance of psychosocial research and, perhaps most profoundly, gives me a sense of hope for the future of mental healthcare in Canada."

Katherine completed her Master's and is currently in the second year of her PhD, supervised Dr. Chris Bowie. Katherine's research focuses on the intersection of cognitive science and social behaviour. She is interested in understanding social behaviour and the interplay of complex exchanges involved in social interactions among individuals with schizophrenia-spectrum disorders. Ultimately, Katherine will use her research to design and evaluate evidence-based practices to improve the quality of life for individuals with severe mental illness. Katherine credits her many mentors and supervisors over the years - Drs. Chris Bowie, Kevin Munhall, and Kate Harkness of Queen's University, and Dr. Jimmy Choi of Columbia University - for playing an immeasurably integral role in supporting and inspiring her along the way.

The Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships program is administered by Canada's three research granting agencies (the Canadian Institutes for Health Research, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada). The Vanier CGS program aims to attract and retain world-class doctoral students by supporting students who demonstrate both leadership skills and a high standard of scholarly achievement in graduate studies in
the natural sciences and engineering, social sciences and humanities, or health sciences. Both Canadian and international students are eligible to be nominated for a Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship.

A Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship is valued at $50,000 per year for three years.

For more details, please visit the Vanier CGS website.