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Research Council of Canada

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PROTECTED

March 30, 2012

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Application No.: 261569-2012
Fiscal Year: 2012
Amount Awarded: \$42,000
Instalment: (1/5)
Evaluation Group: Computer Science - 1507
NSERC PIN: 166692

SUBJECT: RGPIN - Discovery Grants Program - Individual

TITLE: The Design of Information Computing Technology for Older Adults

We are pleased to inform you that NSERC has approved funding for the above-mentioned application at the level shown above. Subsequent instalments, if any, are subject to the availability of funds. Note that NSERC issues an award letter only for the first instalment of a grant. New notices will be issued only if the amount or duration of the award is changed.

Subject to the availability of funds the subsequent instalment(s) will be:

(2/5)	2013-2014	\$42,000
(3/5)	2014-2015	\$42,000
(4/5)	2015-2016	\$42,000
(5/5)	2016-2017	\$42,000

Grant funds are credited to an NSERC grant account administered by the institution that signed the application. You must authorize all expenditures in accordance with NSERC regulations.

By drawing on the funds provided through this grant or by participating in the activities supported by it, you agree to comply with the following policies and guidelines, and to any amendments to these that NSERC may adopt:

- the *Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research* posted on the Web site of the Secretariat for Responsible Conduct of Research at <http://www.rcr.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/framework-cadre/>;
- the *NSERC Program Guide for Professors* on NSERC's Web site at www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/ProgramGuide-GuideDesProgrammes_eng.asp; and
- the *Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide* at www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/FinancialAdminGuide-GuideAdminFinancier/index_eng.asp.

Isabelle Blain, Vice-President
Research Grants and Scholarships

c.c.: Research Grant Officer, Business Officer

Canada



APR 12 2012

MESSAGE TO APPLICANT

MESSAGE AU CANDIDAT

This message represents the consensus opinion of the Evaluation Group that reviewed your application.

Ce message reflète le consensus de l'opinion du Groupe d'évaluation qui a examiné votre demande.

Applicant's Name, Appl. No., Institution / Nom de famille, numéro de la demande, établissement du candidat	McGrenere, Joanna, 261569-2012, British Columbia
Type of Grant / Genre de subvention	Discovery Grants Program – Individual / Programme de subventions à la découverte – individuelles
Evaluation Group / Groupe d'évaluation	Computer Science / Sciences informatiques
Application Title / Titre de la demande	The Design of Information Computing Technology for Older Adults

The Evaluation Group rated your grant application as follows / Le Groupe d'évaluation a attribué les cotes suivantes à votre demande de subvention :

Excellence of the Researcher(s) / Excellence du ou des chercheurs :	Outstanding
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Merit of the Proposal / Mérite de la proposition :	Very Strong
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Training of Highly Qualified Personnel / Formation de personnel hautement qualifié :	Outstanding
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Cost of Research / Coût de la recherche :	Normal
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Additional Comments / Commentaires additionnels :	
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In some cases, the applicant might find that external referee reports appear to be inconsistent with the comments and/or recommendations made by the Evaluation Group. To understand this, one should take into account that most applications submitted to the Computer Science Evaluation Group are of sufficient quality to receive favourable comments from external referees. External referees, however, read a maximum of three NSERC proposals in a given year and cannot have the same comparative view as that of the Evaluation Group, which reviewed 320 Discovery Grants applications in this year's competition.



Referee Report - Application for a Grant
Rapport de l'examineur - Demande de subvention

Family name, given name and initials(s) of applicant / Nom de famille, prénom et initiale(s) du candidat McGrener, Joanna	Application no. / N° de la demande : 261569
Type of grant / Type de subvention : RGPIN	Committee / Comité : Computer Science

Confidence Level / Niveau de confiance		
I rate my ability to assess this particular application as / Mes compétences pour évaluer cette demande sont :		
High :	Satisfactory / Satisfaisantes: X	Low / Faibles:
<p>Scientific or Engineering Excellence of the Researcher(s)</p> <p>The candidate has an remarkable scientific profile. Over ten of her publications are cited over 40 times and 3 of them over 100 times. She has gained a strong recognition in the HCI community even though she is relatively junior. I note a long list of awards in the last 8 years, some of which have high visibility, namely the best paper awards for ACM CHI and ACM IUI. She has been very active in terms of funded projects, many of which are with industrial partners. I also note a strong involvement within the scientific community through organization committees of well recognized conferences and through publication reviewing in many high impact journals and conferences.</p> <p>Merit of the Proposal</p> <p>This is a very good proposal. It is well written and it addresses a relevant topic for our aging society. It contains a large array of original ideas and a good mix of theory and practical issues. The methodology is appropriate and the objectives are realistic. The candidate's publications provide a good idea of what to expect from this proposal, and provide confidence that the proposed work will be tackled with originality and scientific rigour. Given the candidate's history of collaborations with industry the prospect of technology transfer is good.</p> <p>Contribution to the Training of Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP)</p> <p>The candidate has graduated a good number of students in her last 6 years and I note that her three first Ph.D.'s now hold professor positions.</p>		



Referee Report - Application for a Grant
Rapport de l'examinateur - Demande de subvention

Family name, given name and initials(s) of applicant / Nom de famille, prénom et initiale(s) du candidat McGrenere, Joanna	Application no. / N° de la demande : 261569
Type of grant / Type de subvention : RGPIN	Committee / Comité : Computer Science

Confidence Level / Niveau de confiance		
I rate my ability to assess this particular application as / Mes compétences pour évaluer cette demande sont :		
High :	Satisfactory / Satisfaisantes: X	Low / Faibles:
<p>Based on my review, I strongly support funding for this proposal.</p> <p>1. Scientific or Engineering Excellence of the Researcher(s)</p> <p>I think that the applicant is well qualified to conduct the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The applicant has over ten years of experience in doing research on mainly human computer interaction and produced good number of journal publications and conference proceedings. - The Aphasia Project that she led provided a good base for her to do research on interfaces for healthy older adults. - The applicant's another research topic, personalization, is also relevant to the current project topic in a broad sense (e.g., personalization of interfaces for the older adults group) <p>2. Merit of the Proposal</p> <p>I think that the merits of the proposal are great in many senses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The topic about interfaces design of older adults is timely and relevant given that older population increases and the mobile devices become smaller. - As the applicant suggested, there are only few studies, which provided a piece meal finding in this topic area. I think that this would be the first research effort to address the topic in a big scale with more integrative perspective. - It seems that the potential contribution of this project is profound. This definitely can be an important addition to the knowledge of interface design principles. In fact, I think that the existing design principle is more or less biased to the younger generation. This will change the design paradigm from younger generation focused to all generations focused. - The project will contribute to enabling older adults, who used to be neglected, to use Information and Communication Technologies with less difficulty. - The methodologies look reasonable. - I hope that the applicant considers adding more underlying theories to explain older generations' 		



behaviors.

3. Contribution to the Training of Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP)

According to the applicant, two doctoral students of the applicants were placed in tenure track faculty position. Considering publications produced in recent years and evidence of former doctor students' success, I think that her contribution to the training of HQP has been excellent.

- The training plan looks appropriate.

- Though I think that the applicant should be able to handle this concern, the applicant will have to manage many students (at least one research associate, three phd students, two master students, and one undergraduate students) hence the applicant's availability to each HQP could be a potential concern.

**Referee Report - Application for a Grant
Rapport de l'examineur - Demande de subvention**

Family name, given name and initials(s) of applicant / Nom de famille, prénom et initiale(s) du candidat McGrener, Joanna	Application no. / N° de la demande : 261569-2012
Type of grant / Type de subvention Discovery :	Committee / Comité :

Confidence Level / Niveau de confiance		
I rate my ability to assess this particular application as / Mes compétences pour évaluer cette demande sont :		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	High / Elevées	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory / Satisfaisantes <input type="checkbox"/> Low / Faibles
Please assess the proposal using the evaluation criterion located in the Instructions and Conflict of Interest Guidelines found in the "My Library" / SVP, faire votre évaluation de la demande en fonction de chacun des critères situées dans les Instructions et lignes directrices sur les conflits d'intérêts sur la page " Ma bibliothèque":		
Use additional page(s) if necessary / Utiliser une ou des pages supplémentaires au besoin		
Scientific or Engineering Excellence of the Researcher(s)		
The applicant has an excellent track record that is very pertinent to the application.		
She is a researcher who investigated computer support for people with cognitive dysfunction when this field was in its infancy. She has gained awards for this work, and given many invited lectures. During this research she saw the important similarities in terms of interacting with computers between those people with aphasia and older people. Her ideas of ephemeral adaption in interfaces grew out of this work and is an example of how focussing on the needs of older and disabled people can lead to mainstream advances.		
She has a good publication list with at least one prestigious journal article a year and a commendable number of conference publications, which are mainly in well respected ACM conferences (including three best paper awards). She has made a substantial contribution to the field, and is well known and respected internationally.		

Merit of the Proposal

I have seldom read such an excellent proposal for research. It is very timely and innovative particularly in view of demographic trends of a growing elderly population, which have not yet been fully recognised within the HCI community. Its aims are excellent, the methodology sound and I am more than satisfied that she will achieve her objectives of producing “novel interfaces and interaction techniques, design guidelines for existing and future platforms, and fundamental new knowledge about human interaction capabilities”

I fully support her long-term objective of helping “to establish the field of elder-computer interaction: putting older users (65+) at the center of interactive technology design, rather than being an afterthought, which is most often the case now”, This is a very laudable aim. I wholly agree with the comments on the current state of this field which she made in the first paragraph of her proposal. Her research methodology is sound, and sensitive to the needs of the population she is investigating. This is confirmed by the papers included in this proposal. I fully concur with her paragraph on impact, and believe that the impact of this research will be substantial.

She focuses on (1) the effects of “interruptions” which is a major problem, but very under-researched challenge for older people: she is going to examine the problem and has some excellent ideas for potential solutions which she will develop during the research project (2) the different learning needs of older people which she clearly understands and has proposed some promising ideas which are sensitive to these needs (3) input methods in which she is proposing to tackle the challenges older people will have with gesture and touch screen interfaces. Although these interfaces are very popular there is little research into their impact on older people, and this is much is needed, She is questioning received truth in this area: the work she has already done is exciting and this grant would ensure that it be continued.

This work focuses on a very important (in demographic terms), but neglected, area of HCI and I would strongly recommend support for this work. It has a relatively modest budget, and is situated in a excellent research environment and represents extremely good value for money,

I note that she is making a very important contribution to the NCE GRAND project but with very little monetary support. It is vital that her strand is a influential part of this grant otherwise the GRAND research is likely to ignore the needs of a large and growing section of the population. Any further support for this work would be money well spent

Contribution to the Training of Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP)

She has supervised many graduate students, and provides them with an excellent training regime. She has a high proportion of women students which is particularly important in computing and HCI where the female voice has been under-represented.

HCI for older people is a neglected field, but socially of rapidly growing importance. Thus her training of HQP, which is based on an excellent regime, will make a much greater impact on the international research community than would be the case if this was a more popular research area