**Government of Canada (Research, Policy & Technical)**
The Process
Government positions are also posted throughout the year and you can sign up to get job postings through the government of Canada jobs [website.](https://www.canada.ca/en/services/jobs/opportunities/government.html) In general, a degree in the sciences is helpful in getting a wide range of positions in policy, biosafety, research and regulation. Keep in mind that government may maintain your application in the system (a pool) for one year if you qualify for a specific job. Your application can then be accessed for positions in other locations. **So apply for jobs regardless of location.**

For all positions, you will apply for a specific posting online where you will provide a CV and answer a series of questions related to the essential qualifications and asset qualifications. The questions will be monitored by HR and you will be eliminated from the competition if you cannot prove that you meet all of the essential qualifications. If your application goes to the next round, you may be tested for your bilingual abilities (see below), for specific knowledge (written exam), be interviewed over the phone (behavioural interview questions based on asset qualifications), or get a security check. You may go through a third round of in-person interviews which vary depending on the job in question. This entire process can take between a few months to a year and half.

How can I position myself to be marketable?
If you're not sure if you're interested in working for the federal government, it is common to ask government employees for an informational interview. Generally, this involves a conversation over the phone or in person with someone who works in a position that you're interested in or in an area that employs people with a similar educational background as you. The goal is to determine what people do in their position, if potential jobs might be coming, what experience is in demand and if you think you'd be interested in doing this type of work. It also expands your network and gives people an opportunity to get to know you. Follow up with any additional people that your interviewee suggests and repeat the process.

Another way to position yourself is to find opportunities to work in government through student co-ops, summer research programs or short-term contracts. This allows you to familiarize yourself with the types of work that people do, to gain experience in some of the more government-specific work and expand your network. Keep in mind that there are no guarantees that you will get a permanent job through these positions.

What positions are available for students?
There are occasionally calls for recent students to apply for entry level jobs though the government of Canada job bank. There's also the [Research Affiliate Program, co-ops and the Federal Work Experience Program](https://www.canada.ca/en/services/jobs/opportunities/student.html). Again, contacting people that you're interested in working with is a great way to see what opportunities are available beyond the jobs that are posted online.

How do I answer the application & interview questions?
To answer the first round of online questions for any government job application, there are a couple of tricks to remember. First, repeat the question and state exactly when and where you gained the relevant experience. For example, if they ask 'Do you have experience with running PCRs'?. You should say, 'I have experience with running PCRs through my undergraduate thesis work in Dr. Awesome's lab at Carleton University (2010-2014)'. Then give your example using the [STAR](https://www.vawizard.org/wiz-pdf/STAR_Method_Interviews.pdf) method. This method also works well for phone or in-person interviews.

**I cannot overemphasize the use of the STAR method for government applications**, even when answering simple questions. Use a specific example and give the relevant information and outcomes that can be cross-checked on your CV. The answers are likely going to be initially screened by someone who is not in your field and does not necessarily have a science background so tailor your writing appropriately.

Should I apply for jobs that have bilingual requirements if I'm unsure of my bilingual abilities?
It depends. There are different levels of fluency in English and French that are [defined by the government and you can do some self-assessment](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-service-commission/services/staffing-assessment-tools-resources/human-resources-specialists-hiring-managers/management-toolkit/bilingual-positions-federal-public-service.html)to determine which level you are at. Some departments are willing to send you for language training for your position and therefore it is worth applying for a position unless the job ad makes it clear that proficiency in both languages is an essential qualification.

How do research scientist positions differ from research faculty positions in academia?
Research scientists perform similar functions as their faculty counterparts in academia. Many research scientists hold adjunct faculty status in academic institutions and train graduate students in their labs. In general, research scientists conduct research (acquire funding, run a lab, hire and train personnel, write & review research articles, attend conferences) and may also teach in colleges or universities.  Some research scientists have additional duties such as annual monitoring of grain quality for several groups across the country.