

INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE STUDENT RECRUITMENT

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UBC CONTEXT

- Top 40 – world ranking; Top 20 – public
- 10,000 grad students – 3600 doctoral, 6400 masters
- 35% international grad students
- Almost no tuition differences domestic vs. international (research programs)
- Avg. PhD funding – \$30,000/yr (4 yrs)
- Avg. MA/MSc funding - \$17,500/yr (2 yrs)
- Recently implemented minimum PhD guarantee (\$18,000)
- Very high cost of living in Vancouver



UBC CONTEXT

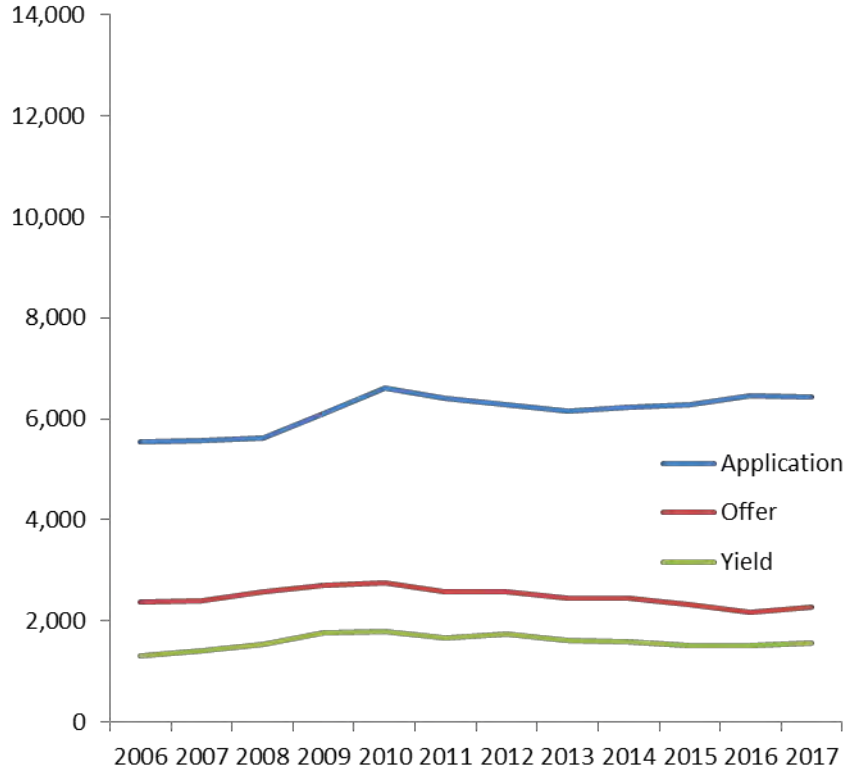


UBC CONTEXT

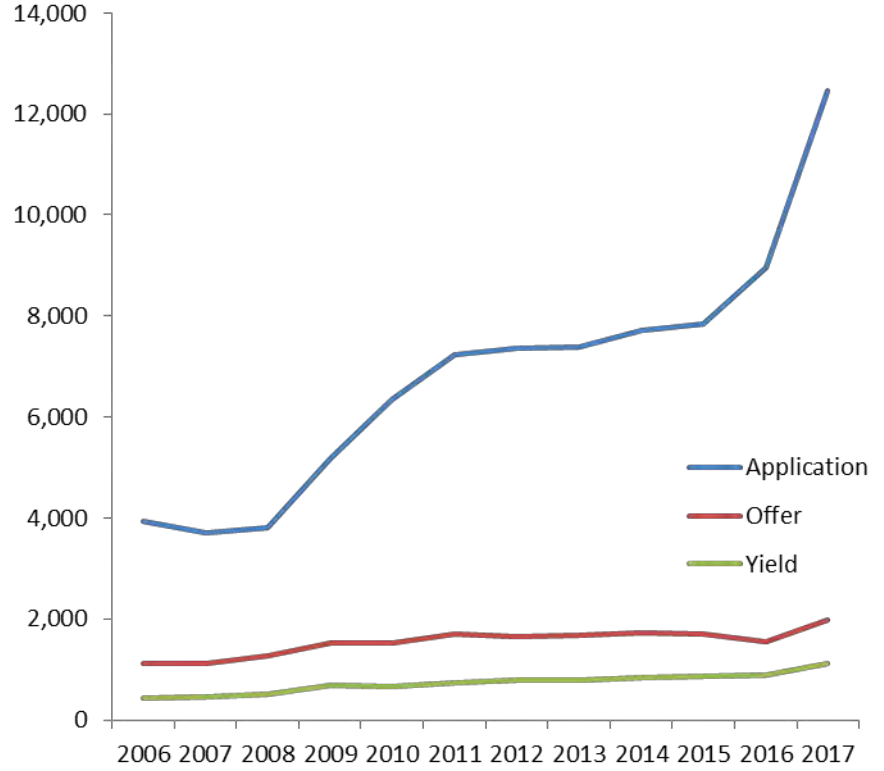
- Recruitment efforts: both centralized and decentralized
- Recruitment goals: no enrolment increase necessarily, but better students; new professional masters program recruitment



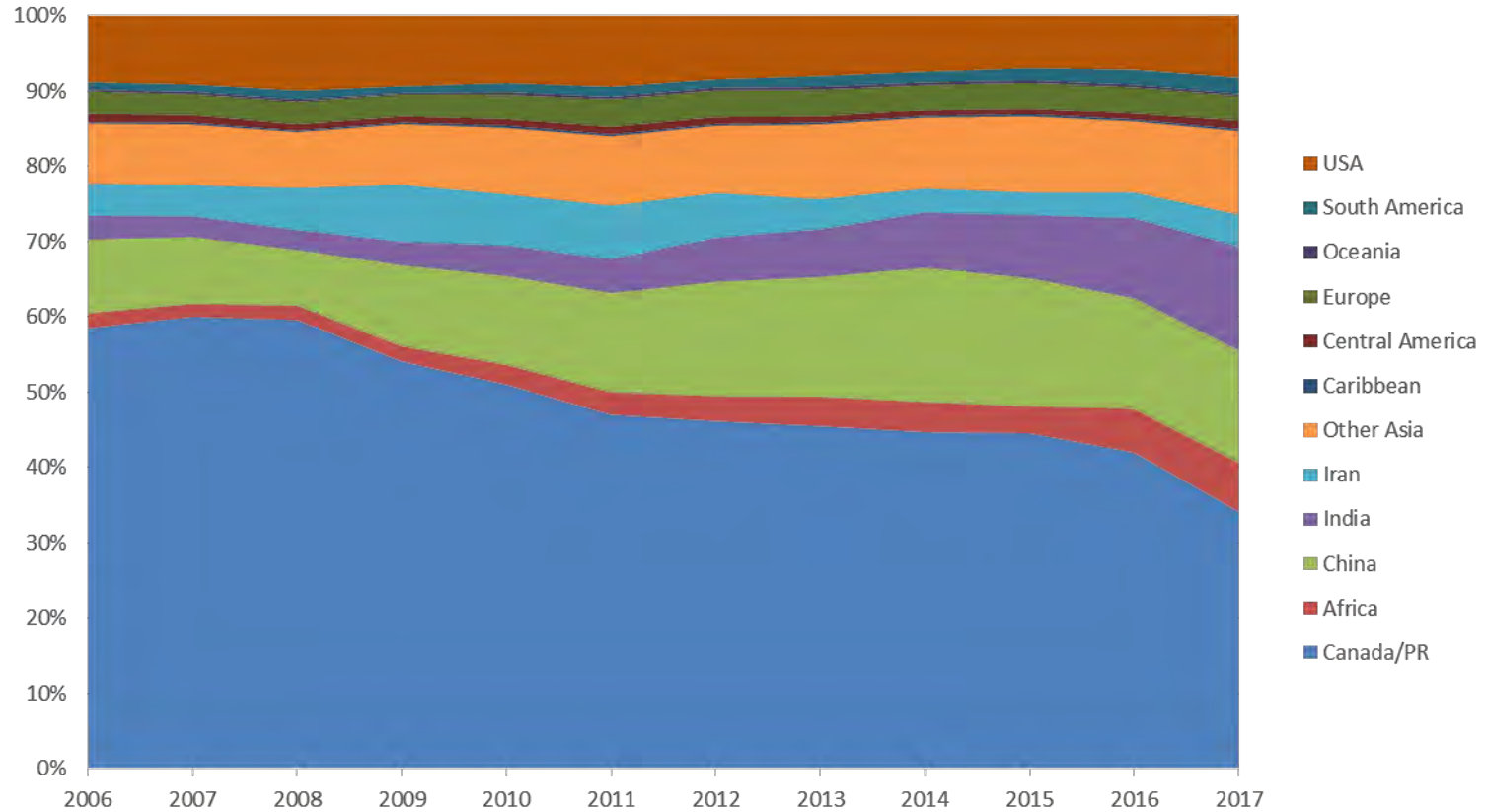
Domestic



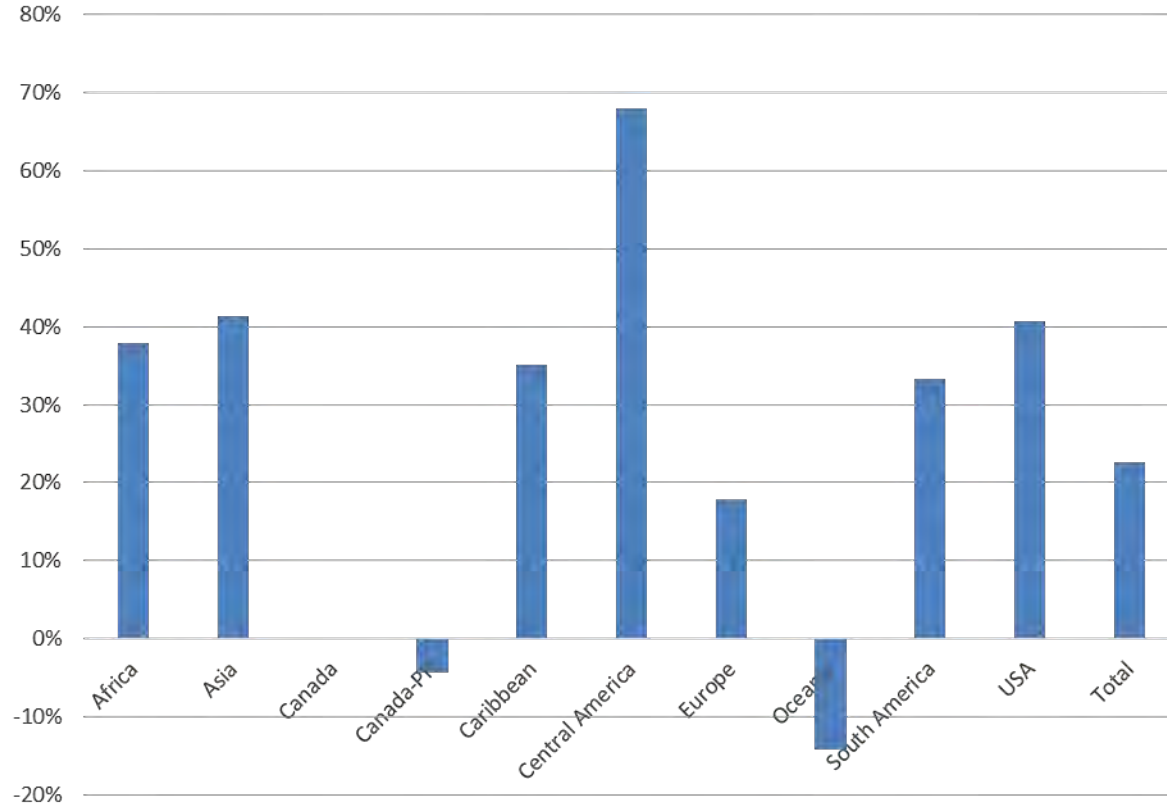
International



Applicant origins (%)



% Change in Application Numbers from 2016 to 2017



(BASELINE) APPROACHES TO RECRUITMENT

Digital

- Website (>1.5M unique visitors/yr)
- Social media

Systems/operations

- Inclusion in compilations/databases
- Funding processes, amounts
- International offices
- International partnerships, funding programs

In-person

- Provision of material for faculty events (e.g. conferences)
- Grad fairs



RECENT *ENHANCEMENTS*

Digital

- Increased advertising (social media and traditional)
- Added more, better info for prospective students
- Implemented virtual events, community forum



Systems/operations

- Increased student funding by \$8M, new \$30K int'l doctoral award
- Increased flexibility for programs' use of funds
- Implemented minimum PhD guarantee
- Extended deadlines post-Exec Order, offered 'Open Border Award'

Other

- Engage with trade commissioners
- Provided program recruitment seed funding
- Leading university-wide task force

RECENT *ENHANCEMENTS*

Added more, better info for prospective students

- How much will it cost to live here?
- How is a program different from others?
- What's the quality of a program? Attrition rate? Average times?
- What are actual & possible career outcomes for different programs?
- Can I talk to someone who went through the program(s)?

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/prospective-students/graduate-degree-programs/phd-chemistry>

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/campus-community/alumni>



RECENT *ENHANCEMENTS*

Added more, better info for prospective students

- What supervisors are available across the university?
 - What is their publication record?
 - Are they looking for students?
 - Do they have funding?
 - Who are their past students, and what did they work on?
 - Do/would they collaborate with external partners? (e.g. through PSI)
- What projects are available?

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/prospective-students/research-supervisors>

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/prospective-students/research-projects>

(>250,000 visitors in first year)



RECENT *ENHANCEMENTS*

Implemented virtual events, community forum

- Virtual Events - typically 1000 registrations each
 - “Office hours” (monthly) - virtual open-houses
 - Webinar series (helping students to write better applications)
 - Collaborative sessions with programs (theme-based)



RECENT *ENHANCEMENTS*

Implemented virtual events, community forum

- Online community forum for students offered admission (but not necessarily accepted) & current students



Practical support (e.g. housing)

I live in a 2 bedroom garden-level suite.. My current roommate is moving away, so I am looking for someone else who needs a place starting in August.

Hi [name]... I will be starting a Masters at UBC this Fall. Your place and your profile sound great. Is it still available? Is the bedroom furnished?

Degree program community

Hello everyone, I'm [name] from Iran, reading all about your interests excited me so much!My Facebook address is [-], please add me so we can be in touch. Love you all and counting seconds to start a new life with you guys.

Home country community

Hi [name], nice to know about you. I have got admission in [Masters degree]....Where are you from? i am from Ludhiana, Punjab,India

I am from Rajasthan...

RECENT *ENHANCEMENTS*

Provided program recruitment seed funding

- Promotional videos
- Outreach at conferences
- Meeting days (fly in top candidates)
- Profiles
- Open Houses
- Digital Initiatives
- Webinars



RECENT *ENHANCEMENTS*

Reimagining the PhD initiatives

Public Scholars Initiative

- Support for multisectoral collaborations, impactful non-traditional scholarship in dissertation

Killam Connection course

- Publicly-engaged multidisciplinary course on ‘grand challenge’

Graduate Pathways to Success

- Full suite of professional development offerings



WHAT WORKS?

Difficult to show causation...BUT

Macroconversions:

- Individual faculty member contacts ‘tried and true’
- A few excellent students came through ‘Open Borders’
- Increasing interest in PSI as draw to UBC
- Many IDF recipients said they wouldn’t have come otherwise
- Significant traffic from external databases (but not desired quality)



Microconversions:

- Website and ads attract many views

WHAT NEXT?

- Develop/coordinate tier 1 research partnerships
- Track conversion to application system
- Create more conversion points on website (e.g. through profile creation)
- Improve coordination with faculty on networks (travel, conferences, etc)
- Improve best practice sharing between units
- Other – depending on task force findings and \$





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