



2019-2020 NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Awards

Program Guidelines and Application Procedures

Purpose: To provide research work experience that complements the degree program which will encourage students to consider graduate studies and pursue careers in the natural sciences and engineering.

Award Value: \$4,500 plus a minimum 25% supplement (\$1,125) provided by the department

- Any Supplement above this level may be set at the department's or supervisor's discretion. Departments may provide fringe benefits
- Sources of supplements: NSERC grants, other research funds (non-NSERC) and university sources.
- Travel allowances may be granted by NSERC if the award is taken up at a university other than the one the student is currently registered. These are taxable contributions.
- The supervisor or department must cover any additional costs related to the fieldwork (e.g. travel expenses).
- NSERC will not reimburse the University for any period in which the student worked part-time. In addition, it will not approve any payment for any vacation days taken during the tenure of the award.

Duration: 16 full consecutive weeks (similar to co-op work terms)

- For USRA work terms shorter than 16 weeks: NSERC's approval is required **prior** to the beginning of the work term. Departments must submit any short work term requests along with a justification to Research Services as soon as possible.
- **No provision for sick leave, vacation or other interruptions of awards.** Should a work term be terminated early, NSERC must be informed. Contact the Office of Research Services immediately.
- Awards may not be deferred.

Tenure at Another Location: Quotas are not transferable from one university to another. Students may apply at any eligible university. The supervisor must be a faculty member at the university where the student holds the USRA.

USRA Workterm at Uoft: The University of Toronto administers this program in the **summer term** only, between May 1st and September 30th of each year.

Departmental Quota's and Deadlines: Contact the respective department Undergraduate Coordinators.

University Deadline for Departmental Nomination Packages: *March 12, 2019 (Thursday)

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR STUDENTS & SUPERVISORS

A. Student

| <i>Eligible</i> | <i>Ineligible</i> |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada. • Registered either full-time or part-time (at the time of application) in a bachelor's degree program in at least one of the two terms immediately before holding the award. NSERC, however, expects that full-time students will hold most awards. • Must have obtained, over the previous years of study, a cumulative average of at least second class (a grade of "B" or "B-", if applicable) • Must have completed, <u>at the time of application (by March 12, 2019)</u>, a minimum of <u>two</u> academic terms/semesters. • Already holds a bachelor's degree and is studying towards a second bachelor's degree in the natural sciences or engineering. • Graduating students, in the term immediately following the completion of their undergraduate program requirements, as long as they have not started a program of graduate studies. • Be engaged on a full-time basis in research and development activities in the natural sciences or engineering during the award tenure. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign or international students • Currently enrolled in an undergraduate professional degree program in the health sciences (e.g., MD, BScPhm, D.D.S., BScN) • Holds higher degrees in the natural sciences & engineering. |

Please remember:

- First-year students are excluded from the competition. Applicants must have completed a minimum of two terms at the time of submission of the application. Results for the two terms must be available in a student's transcript by the internal deadline of March 12, 2019.
- The USRA program is intended to be over and above the academic credits needed for a degree. It may be held concurrently with a co-op placement.
- Award holders should not receive academic credits for work done during the USRA workterm, i.e., they are not permitted to take courses or do thesis research during work hours throughout the work term.
- A student may hold only one USRA per fiscal year.
- A student may hold a maximum of three (3) USRAs throughout his/her university career.

B. Supervisor

| <i>Eligible</i> | <i>Ineligible</i> |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u> Holders of one or more of the following NSERC research grant(s): Discovery Grants (Individual, Group and Subatomic Physics Project, Accelerator Supplements, Frontiers and Northern Research Supplements, Ship Time); Climate change and Atmospheric Research; G8 Research Councils Initiative; Brockhouse Canada Prize; CREATE; John C Polanyi Award; Gherhard Herzberg Canada Gold Medal for Science and Engineering; Strategic Projects Grants; Strategic Network Grants; Collaborative Research & Development Grants; Idea to Innovation; Engage; Automotive Partnership Grants; DND/NSERC Research Partnership Agreements; Industrial Research Chairs; Chairs in Design Engineering; Chairs for Women in Science and Engineering; Collaborative Health Research Projects; Canada Research Chairs and Canada Excellence Research Chairs.</u> • May be the principal or co-investigator of the grant. • Must either have held an active research grant at the time a student applies for the award or have an active research grant at the time the student holds the award. • Has received an extension to use up funds from a research grant that terminated on March 31, 2017 (i.e., where the extension is active from April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2019). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researchers holding only Research Tools and Instruments, Infrastructure and Interaction, • Co-supervision by a non-NSERC grantee (e.g. a postdoctoral fellow or graduate/Ph.D. student) |

Please remember:

- Supervision of two NSERC grantees is allowed as long as they work on a “genuine” research project. However, students must not move between laboratories on different projects over the 16-week period since this would dilute the value of the experience. The supervisor must ensure that the student is properly supervised at all times, especially during fieldwork. One NSERC grantee has to be designated as the student’s official supervisor.
- Postdoctoral fellows, graduate or Ph.D. students are **NOT** eligible supervisors.
- For those awaiting the results of the 2019 Discovery Grant Competition: these will be released by NSERC in late March/early April 2019 and Research Services will be communicating them to the PIs and their departments. If they are unsuccessful, the departments can assign an alternate eligible supervisor.
- Quotas are not transferrable between departments. Therefore, researchers should supervise students at the department where they hold their primary appointments and/or where their NSERC grants are held.

Application Instructions

FOR STUDENTS (UofT & Non-UofT)

1. Contact the department Undergraduate Office where you wish to apply and inquire about supervisor and quota availability. You can apply to more than one department but can only hold one USRA.
2. Complete the latest version of the application form (Part 1) [online](#). Follow the [instructions](#) and adhere to NSERC's General Presentation Guideline. **HANDWRITTEN APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**
3. Attach a PDF copy of your transcripts to the application form (Part 1), after it has been opened and reviewed by the Undergraduate Office.
4. RSO will also require a printed hard copy of the completed application that is to be submitted to the department Undergraduate Coordinator along with a hardcopy of your most current **original** transcript.
5. A Student/Supervisor Certification form must be completed and must bear your and your supervisor's original signatures. The Student/Supervisor Certification form can be found [here](#).
6. Research Services will not accept any application that has not been endorsed by the department.

FOR SUPERVISORS

1. Once the student has completed the form online, he/she must provide the supervisor with the reference number provided by the system. Supervisors will not be able to complete Part II of Form 202 on-line if they have not received the reference number.
2. Log on to the Online System using the same account you use when applying for NSERC grants.
Complete Part 2 of the form. Once the proposed university supervisor has completed all the modules, they must go back to the My Portfolio page and select **Verify** to ensure all required information has been entered. Once verification is complete, the status of the application will be changed to "**Completed**". No changes should be made to the form once it is complete. If you need to update any information, contact the NSERC On-line Services Helpdesk.
The proposed supervisor must submit the form to the USRA Liaison Officer (RSO) at the university by selecting **Submit to LO**. Completed online applications will be submitted to NSERC by RSO.
3. Follow the application checklist carefully.
4. Print, and attach to the student's Form 202 Part 1.
5. A Student/Supervisor Certification form must be completed and must bear your and your students' original signatures. The Student/Supervisor Certification form can be found [here](#).

FOR DEPARTMENTS

1. Ensure all sections/boxes of the application form are complete using the checklists provided.
2. Check that start dates do not begin before May and on a weekend. Also, they should match the dates on the nomination table.
3. The Student/Supervisor Certification Form must accompany all applications. No one else can sign for the supervisor.
4. Submit the following by **March 12th** to Research Services:
 - Form 202 (Parts 1 & 2) of all final nominees
 - Original transcripts
 - Departmental certification printed on faculty or department letterhead and signed by the Unit Head (or his/her designate)
 - Completed nomination table (electronic and hard copy)
5. Do **NOT** include letters of applications or other documents other than items requested.
6. Applications which are not properly filled out will be returned.

Contacts

RESEARCH SERVICES

General Inquiries and Eligibility Questions:

Teresa Trimboli , Research Funding Administrator, 416-978-2525,
teresa.trimboli@utoronto.ca

Address: Research Services,
 University of Toronto
 McMurrich Building, 3rd Floor
 12 Queen's Park Crescent West
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NSERC

USRA program (and information regarding its transition to an electronic format)

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