2022 NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Awards

Program Guidelines and Application Procedures

Purpose: To provide research 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:** $6000, plus a minimum 25% supplement ($1,500) provided by the department
- Any supplement above this level may be set at the discretion of the department or the USRA supervisor.
- Sources of supplements: can include NSERC grants, other research funds (non-NSERC) and university sources.
- Travel allowances are no longer granted by under the NSERC USRA program.
- The supervisor or department must cover any additional costs related to the fieldwork (e.g. travel expenses).
- In addition, NSERC does not permit any payment for any vacation days taken during the tenure of the award.

**Duration:** 16 full consecutive weeks (similar to co-op terms)
- For USRA terms shorter than 16 weeks: NSERC’s approval is required prior to the beginning of the award term. Departments must submit any short award term requests along with a justification to Research Services as soon as possible.
- There is no provision for sick leave, vacation or other interruptions of awards. Should an award be terminated early, please contact the Research Services Office (RSO) immediately so that NSERC can be informed.
- NSERC does not permit USRA Awards to be be deferred.

**Tenure at Another Location:** The USRA Award holder and their supervisor must both be at the same university where the student holds the USRA. USRA allocations are not transferable from one university to another. Students may apply at any eligible university.

**USRA term at UofT:** The University of Toronto administers this program in the summer term only, between May 2nd and September 2nd of each year.

**Departmental Quotas and Deadlines:** Contact the respective department Undergraduate Coordinators.

**University Deadline for Departmental Nomination Packages:** April 11, 2022
# ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR STUDENTS & SUPERVISORS

## A. Student

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<th>Eligible</th>
<th>Ineligible</th>
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<td>- Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada.</td>
<td>- Foreign or international students</td>
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| - 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.  
  o A student is still eligible if they already hold a bachelor’s degree, as long as they are currently studying towards a second bachelor’s degree in the natural sciences or engineering. | - Currently enrolled in an undergraduate professional degree program in the health sciences (e.g., MD, BScPhm, D.D.S., BScN) |
| - 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) | - Holds higher degrees in the natural sciences & engineering. |
| - Must have completed, at the time of application (by April 11, 2022), a minimum of two academic terms/semesters. | |
| - 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. | |

### 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 from at least two terms must be available on a student’s transcript by the internal deadline of April 11, 2022
- Students who will graduate at the end of the term before the USRA begins (that is, who will graduate after the term in which they apply) are eligible, as long as they do not begin graduate studies while holding the USRA and meet the other eligibility requirements.
- The USRA program is intended to be over and above the academic credits needed for a degree. Award holders should not receive academic credits for research done during the USRA term
- USRA award holders are permitted to take up to maximum two courses during the award term.
- Thesis research during award term is not permitted.
- A USRA may be held concurrently with a co-op placement.
- A student may hold only one USRA per fiscal year.
- A student may hold a maximum of three (3) USRAs throughout their university career.
B. Supervisor

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<th>Ineligible</th>
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<td>NSERC considers eligible supervisors to be those who meet NSERC’s Eligibility Criteria for Faculty, and be able to independently supervise students as per their appointment with their university.</td>
<td>• Those who do not meet NSERC’s eligibility criteria</td>
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Please remember:

• Supervision of two NSERC grantees at the same time is allowed as long as they are engaged on a “genuine” research project. However, NSERC does not permit students to move between laboratories on different projects over the 16-week period since the Agency believes that this would dilute the value of the USRA experience.
• The supervisor must ensure proper supervision of the USRA Awardee 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.
• Quotas are not transferrable between departments. Therefore, researchers should supervise students at the department where they hold their primary appointment and/or where their grants are held.

Application Instructions

FOR STUDENTS (UofT & Non-UofT)

1. Contact the Undergraduate Office of the department through which you wish to apply and inquire about a supervisor and quota availability. You can apply through more than one department but can only hold one USRA.
2. Complete the latest version of the application form (Form 202, Part I) online. Follow the instructions and adhere to NSERC’s General Presentation Guideline. NSERC refuses handwritten applications.
3. Attach a PDF copy of your transcripts (or the university e-transcripts or the most recent academic history report from ACORN to the application form (Part I), after it has been opened and reviewed by the Undergraduate Office.
4. Once Form 202–Part I has been completed, provide your prospective supervisor with the reference number generated by the system so that they may complete Part II of the form.
5. Once both parts of the form have been completed and verified the supervisor can submit the USRA application.
6. If any additional changes are made by either party—you or your prospective supervisor—will require the other party’s verification and confirmation in the online system in order to re-submit the edited application.

7. In addition, your department requires a copy of your application and your e-transcripts or most recent academic history report from ACORN, which you will submit to the department Undergraduate Coordinator.

8. Complete the Student/Supervisor Certification form. It must bear both your and your supervisor’s signatures. Once signed, kindly create a PDF and submit it to the department’s Undergraduate coordinator.

9. Research Services can only accept the application that has been endorsed by the department.

FOR SUPERVISORS

1. Please be sure to follow the application checklist carefully.

2. Once the student has completed Form 202 – Part I online, they must provide you with the reference number generated by the system. You will not be able to complete Part II of Form 202 online without the reference number.

3. Log on to the Online System using the same account you use when applying for NSERC grants. Complete Part II of Form 202.

   *NOTE: The research grant application number is no longer used by NSERC. Enter 999999 or any six-digit number.

4. Once all the modules of Form 202 have been completed, you must go back to the ‘My Portfolio’ page and select Verify, which will assess whether all required information has been entered. Once verification is complete, the status of the application will change to "Completed".

5. No changes should be made to the form after it has been “Completed.” If you need to update any information, contact the NSERC On-Line Services Helpdesk. Once both parts of the form have been completed and verified, any additional changes made by either party—you or the student—will require the other party’s verification and confirmation in the online system.

6. You must submit the form to the USRA Liaison Officer, who is a designated member by Research Services, by selecting Submit to LO. Completed online applications will then be submitted to NSERC by Research Services.

7. Follow the application checklist carefully.

8. A Student/Supervisor Certification form must be completed and must bear your and your students’ signatures.

9. FOR DEPARTMENTS

Submit the electronic copies of the following to Research Services by April 11, 2022:

- Completed nomination table
- Student/Supervisor Certification Form
- Departmental Certification Form

1. It is important that you retain all hard copies and original documents in your files should NSERC ever request them.
2. Ensure all sections/boxes of the application form (Form 202) have been completed, using the checklists provided.

3. Verify that start dates are not earlier than May 2nd or on a day that falls on a weekend. These dates should match the dates on the nomination table.

4. The Student/Supervisor Certification Form must accompany all applications. NSERC does not permit delegated signatures.

5. Please do **not** include letters of support or other documents not required by NSERC’s application form. The Agency has developed the information it requires and will not consider documents beyond those required by the application.

6. Nomination submissions will be forwarded to NSERC by Research Services as they are received. By submitting your nomination table, the department is confirming that all applications have been verified for completeness and accuracy and that supervisors and students meet the NSERC USRA program eligibility requirements.