NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRA) – 2018/19

Information for Potential Project Supervisors

ELIGIBILITY

For Supervisors:

It is the Project Supervisor's responsibility to ensure they meet NSERC’s eligibility criteria to supervise a USRA student.

Project Supervisors must:

• Be faculty members who hold an eligible active NSERC research grant at the time of application.
• Be either the principal investigator or co-investigator of the grant.
• Non-NSERC CRC or CERC grant holders need to send in their research proposal ahead of time (prior to March 6, 2018) so it can be reviewed by NSERC to ensure the research is eligible under NSERC’s mandate. Please forward your proposal to the NSERC USRA Liaison Officer at nserc.usra@ubc.ca
  • In situations where the project proposal is deemed ineligible, the supervisor has the opportunity to revise and resubmit a project that is eligible under NSERC’s mandate.
• Ensure that their research project is in natural sciences or engineering and is therefore supported by NSERC. Details and general guidelines for the eligibility of subject matter can be found at Selecting a Federal Granting Agency and has been updated to provide greater clarity in determining the eligibility of applicants’ proposed research. As an additional reference, an Addendum to the Guidelines for the Eligibility of Applications Related to Health contains examples of eligible and ineligible research topics.
• *MEDICINE: TO APPLY THROUGH THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE, YOUR NSERC GRANT MUST BE ADMINISTERED THROUGH THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE.
• *MEDICINE: Unfortunately, we cannot consider supervisors who have applied for, but have not yet received, an NSERC grant by the March 6th deadline.
• *MEDICINE: A supervisor may submit only one NSERC-USRA application to the Faculty of Medicine competition each year. Co-investigators are not counted in our quota of awards, but they may apply instead of the principal investigator on their grant.

For Students:

Detailed student eligibility is outlined on the Student NSERC USRA website which can be visited at https://students.ubc.ca/career/campus-experiences/nserc-undergraduate-student-research-awards

• The USRA research is a full time activity. Students should not receive academic credits for the work done during the term of the USRA.
• Award holders may take a maximum of one course in addition to their USRA with the agreement of their supervisor. If the course is during normal working hours, special arrangements with the supervisor must be made for the student to make up the time spent on the course.
• In particular, USRA holders are not permitted to do thesis research during the term of the award.
• In addition, the USRA program makes no provision for sick leave or other interruptions of awards. Please inform the Liaison Officer immediately should a work term be interrupted or terminated early for any reason.
• NSERC encourages the participation of female students in the USRA program.
• To encourage aboriginal students to pursue graduate studies and research careers in the natural sciences and engineering, awards to aboriginal students are considered in addition to UBC’s quota.
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AWARD CONDITIONS

• Students must be engaged in research and development activities on a full-time basis (35 hours a week) during the tenure of the award (minimum of 16 consecutive weeks). Under exceptional circumstances students can work less than 16 consecutive weeks (prior approval from NSERC is needed and requests are to be submitted well ahead of the deadline for applications).

• Minimum pay: $6,356 over the 16 weeks (or $397.25/week). NSERC encourages universities to provide larger supplements if at all possible. All wages are paid out of the project supervisor’s account. $4,500 will be reimbursed to the same account two to three months after the tenure is complete. Travel allowances for non-UBC students who work with UBC NSERC grant holders can also be reimbursed (see below).

• *MEDICINE: Students and supervisors may not submit more than one application to the Faculty of Medicine each year. Students submitting more than one application and/or supervisors sponsoring more than one student to Medicine will not be considered in the competition.

• *MEDICINE: A maximum of one award per year per supervisor

Note: Students will start work on their USRA before awards are actually confirmed by NSERC. Supervisors must start payments to students with whom they have accepted an award offer, without waiting for approval of the awards from NSERC. Supervisors must also continue to employ any students whose applications are rejected by NSERC for the remainder of the work term. Award letters for the summer term will be issued in July. NSERC is unlikely to reject an award recommended by our ranking committee unless there is an eligibility issue of which UBC is not aware.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

1. The NSERC USRA program is administered and coordinated through the Faculty/School USRA Coordinators. Each faculty establishes procedures for identifying and ranking applicants and setting deadlines.

2. To apply, both project supervisors and students must complete and submit an online NSERC USRA application Form 202 part I (student) and Part II (supervisor) by clicking on “System Login” or, if you are a first time user, “Register”.
   - Instructions on how to complete the forms can be found on the NSERC USRA website.
   - Supervisors will need to include the student’s reference number on part II of the application.
   - Students also need to upload, with their application form and in a single PDF, a scanned copy of their official transcripts from ALL post-secondary institutions attended (including one copy of the back page legend(s)).
   - NSERC will not accept hardcopy forms so the official application must be completed and submitted electronically. The copies sent to the USRA Coordinator are only necessary for the internal review process.
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3. Once completed online, a copy of the forms (Part I and Part II, as well as the student’s transcripts) have to be submitted to your Department/Faculty/School USRA Coordinator for review.
   - There are a limited number of awards allocated to UBC, so USRA Coordinators have been asked to rank the eligible applications they receive. They will also create a contingency list of projects (B-list) in case higher ranked applications are withdrawn or ineligible. Deadlines for submission of all application forms are set by the USRA Coordinators. [**MEDICINE**: 4pm, March 6th, 2018].
   - **MEDICINE**: 1 copy of the full application must be submitted in a sealed envelope with the name of the student and supervisor to: i) NSERC-USRA Awards (Medicine), Attn: Linda Herbert/Deborah Giaschi, Faculty of Medicine Dean’s Office (3rd floor of Woodward IRC on UBC Point Grey campus), or ii) Dr. Deborah Giaschi (Rm E300E, Shaughnessy Building, Children’s Hospital), by 4 pm on Tuesday, March 6, 2018.
   - After you have submitted the hardcopy print-outs of Form 202 to your Faculty Coordinator, and received her approval, you will need to log into your application and ‘Submit to LO’

4. For supervisors who have been awarded an A-List placement from their faculty, they will need to ensure that an ePAF in HRMS is submitted to appoint the student. Please connect with an administrator in your department about how to submit a student appointment. Refer to the ‘NSERC USRA Appointing Students 18-19’ info sheet for detailed instructions, available through your USRA Coordinator. (Do not appoint students before you have received this information).

5. The Liaison Officer will review and confirm all applications via NSERC’s on-line portal for Summer USRAs in April. If there are any errors/omissions or the application is incomplete, the Liaison Officer will RETURN the application to the supervisor to allow the student and/or supervisor to make changes to it. If the application is returned, the faculty supervisor will receive two e-mails:
   - a generic e-mail notification from NSERC informing them that their application has been returned
   - an e-mail from the CSI&C office with details about the error or missing information, steps on how to make edits to their application and how to re-submit on-line

TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENTS

Since students from other universities are eligible to travel to UBC and hold a USRA here, NSERC will reimburse the eligible travel expenses these students incur. The maximum allowance is an amount equivalent to economy airfare between the cities where the universities are located.

In addition...
- NSERC will pay the return travel costs only if the actual period of tenure is 12 weeks or more.
- NSERC will not provide a travel allowance for a spouse or child.
- This allowance is **not** designed to offset daily commuting costs to and from the host university.
- NSERC will provide an allowance (as deemed reasonable by NSERC’s Finance Division) for ground transportation costs to and from the residence and the point of departure (e.g., airport, train station, bus station). Receipts must be provided.
- NSERC will not provide an allowance for the cost of transporting excess baggage or removing household effects.
- Frequent flyer points will not be reimbursed.
- NSERC will not reimburse travel expenses to and from field research locations other than the UBC campus.
Travel reimbursement procedures:

- The department collects all eligible travel receipts from the student and reimburses the student first by completing a travel requisition form.
- All copies of the travel receipts, a copy of the travel requisition form, and proof of reimbursement to the student (i.e. copy of your FMS ledger) should be forwarded to the Liaison Officer at the Centre for Student Involvement & Careers (see contact information below) no later than one month after the end of the student's award.
- The Liaison Officer will claim these expenses from NSERC and, in turn, reimburse the faculties/departments (allow a few months of processing time).

**IMPORTANT DATES - 2018/19 USRA COMPETITION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSERC USRA Application Period</th>
<th>Students and supervisors must register or log onto the <a href="#">NSERC on-line system</a> to complete Form 202 Part 1 (student application) and Form 202 Part II (supervisor application) <strong>between January 2018</strong> and the March 6th deadline.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A&amp;B List - Recommended Applicants</td>
<td>Faculty coordinators to e-mail list of students wishing to hold an award in either Summer 2018, Fall 2018, or Winter 2019 to the Liaison Officer by <strong>Friday, March 23, 2018.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USRA Placements</td>
<td>Summer Term (May 1 – August 31, 2018) - *May 14, 2018 Fall Term (Sept 1 – Dec 31, 2018) - *September 4, 2018 Winter Term (January 1 – April 30, 2019) - *January 8, 2019 *latest a student can start working on their award (Regardless of the term in which you plan to hold the award, all applications are due by the deadline of March 6, 2018.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Appointment Forms</td>
<td>Students must be submitted as an <strong>ePAF</strong> in HRMS. your <strong>payroll rep</strong> should you have any questions regarding ePAFs in HRMS. The student’s official start/end dates should match the start/end dates on the appointment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2018</td>
<td>April 6, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall 2018</td>
<td>August 15, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter 2019</td>
<td>December 7, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Claim Forms (visiting students)</td>
<td>Department to forward copies of travel receipts, <strong>travel requisition form</strong>, and proof of reimbursement to the student to the CSI&amp;C Office (1036 Brock Hall, Attn: NSERC USRA Liaison Officer) by <strong>Monday, September 10, 2018.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reimbursements</td>
<td>The CSI&amp;C office will reimburse department accounts in the amount of $4,500 for each USRA and for any eligible travel claims.</td>
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<td>Summer term – October/November</td>
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<td>Fall term – February/March</td>
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<td>Winter term – June/July</td>
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QUESTIONS?

If you have read (i) the above material, (ii) information on the NSERC website, and (iii) information on the UBC Career Services website, and you still have questions, please contact your Faculty Coordinator (Dr. Deborah Giaschi; giaschi@mail.ubc.ca). As a second resource you can also contact:

NSERC USRA Liaison Officer / UBC Centre for Student Involvement & Careers / nserc.usra@ubc.ca