



NSERC USRA Program – Summer 2022

Applications due: further extended to Friday, 11 March 2022

NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRA) are meant to nurture interest and develop potential for a research career in the natural sciences and engineering. They are also meant to encourage students to undertake graduate studies in these fields.

Duration: Awards are for **14 to 16 consecutive weeks (May-August)** and are considered **full-time employment**.

Value: The full award includes \$6,000 from NSERC coupled with a minimum supplement (\$1381 for 14wks, \$1909 for 15wks and \$2436 for 16wks, at 35 hours per week) from the faculty supervisor. The combined funding covers both student salary (min wage plus 4% vacation pay) and mandatory employment-related costs of 8.5% (EI, CPP, WC). The funding is considered employment income and is taxable.

Eligible, self-identified Indigenous students are encouraged to apply for an award; these applications are approved by NSERC and are in addition to Acadia's current quota of 11 NSERC USRA awards. To further advance **equity, diversity and inclusion** in awards at Acadia, a number of the USRA awards will be allocated to other under-represented or under-served groups, as done in 2021. All applicants will be contacted soon after the application submission due date with a link to a form to voluntarily and confidentially self-ID.

STEP 1: Students eligible to apply, must at the time of application submission:

- be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada or a Protected Person under subsection 95 (2) of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (Canada).
- be registered in coursework towards a bachelor's degree and have completed all the course requirements of at least the first year of university study (or two academic terms). You may already hold a bachelor's degree and be studying toward a second bachelor's degree. A USRA may also be held during a co-op placement.
- have obtained, for courses completed, a Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of at least 3.00 (B average).
- Award holders are not permitted to do thesis research for course credit during the term of their award. However, it is permitted to use research data generated during a USRA term as the basis of a thesis, so long as registration in the thesis course starts after the USRA is held.
- NEW! Awardees may undertake a maximum of 2 non-thesis courses during the tenure of an award.

STEP 2: The application process

There are 3 Parts to the USRA application. To complete the required online NSERC USRA application sections (Parts I and II), go to http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/students-etudiants/ug-pc/usra-brpc_eng.asp

- Form 202, Part I – Application for an Undergraduate Student Research Award (Student to complete)
- Form 202, Part II – Application for an Undergraduate Student Research Award (Proposed Research Supervisor to complete)
 - Please read all online instructions carefully. If not already in the NSERC system, register as New User.
 - **NOTE:** Applicants must upload official, up-to-date transcripts of ALL university records (including Acadia transcript) with the on-line application.
 - Ensure transcripts are scanned as a black and white printed document and, whenever possible, in portrait style, clear, and include a copy of the grade scale information (usually found on the back of the document).
- **Form Part III: Research Aptitude/Potential** section needs to be completed by both student and supervisor; locate form at https://research.acadiau.ca/Undergraduate_Student_Honours_Research.html

STEP 3: Internal adjudication

- USRAs are competitive. Only 11 USRAs are available at Acadia in 2022 (not including Indigenous USRAs).
- Applications are adjudicated by a committee of Acadia science and engineering faculty, chaired by the Associate Vice-President Research and Dean of Graduate Studies or designate.
- When confirmed as eligible, the primary assessment criteria, as requested by NSERC, are student academic excellence (Cumulative GPA, relevant experience), research aptitude/potential, and the expected quality of the training and mentorship to be received. Equity, diversity and inclusion will also be a consideration in award decisions.
- Notification of decisions will be in early April.