



## NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Awards 2023 - 2024 Information for Potential Faculty Supervisors

### Eligibility for Supervisors

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

Faculty Supervisors must:

- Be faculty members who are authorized to independently supervise students deemed by their home institution
  - As part of UBC's requirement, eligible faculty will need to continue holding an active NSERC grant from the [Research Grant List](#). Faculties/Schools have the ability to endorse non-NSERC grant holders to apply for the award, on the approval of the Associate Dean or appropriate designate.
  - Please check with your Faculty/School/Department Coordinator if you have queries on the process in your faculty/school/department for non-NSERC grant holders.
- Ensure that the proposed research is in an area of natural sciences or engineering supported by NSERC. The eligibility guidelines in the [Selecting the Appropriate Federal Granting Agency](#) document have 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.
- Institutions are required to supplement the award and should comply with their provincial employment standards ([BC Employment Standards Act](#)).
  - The institution will be responsible for supplements to the weekly value and fringe benefits (if applicable).
- Remote work will continue to be acceptable going into 2023/24 with supervision expected on a frequent basis.
- The full value (\$6,000) of the USRA award will be honored once the application is approved by NSERC.
  - Please note that the program makes no provision for sick or vacation leave, or for other types of interruptions. In the case of early termination of your student who is holding an approved USRA award, the supervisor may be required to pay the student the full value of the award.



## Eligibility for Students

Detailed student eligibility is outlined on the [Student NSERC USRA website](#).

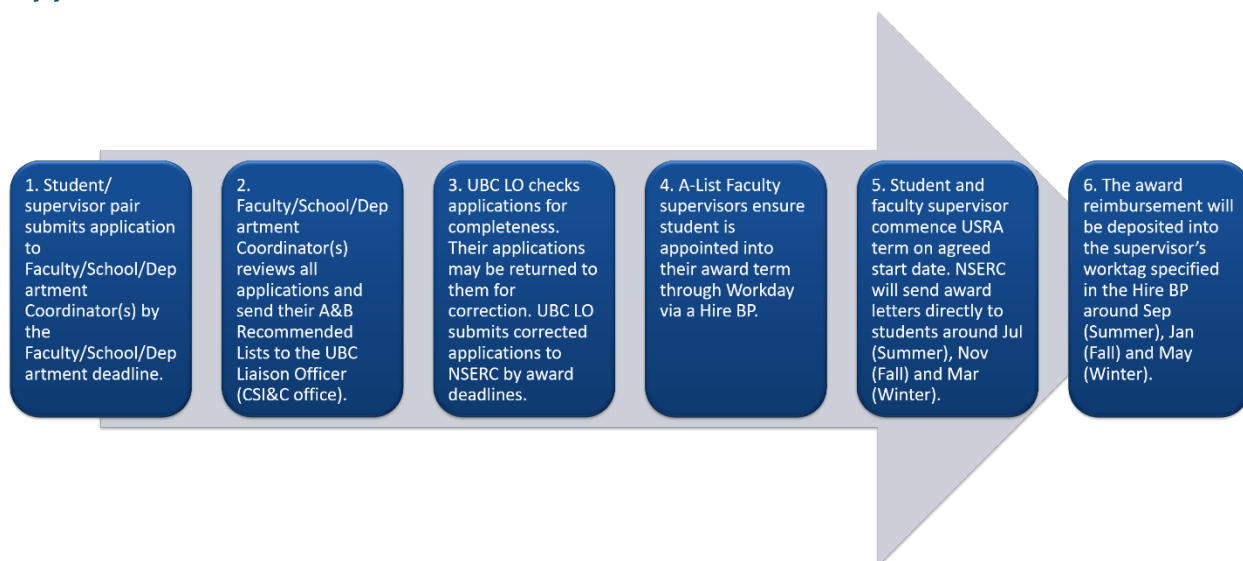
- The USRA research is a **full-time activity**. Students should not receive academic credits for the work done during the term of the USRA.
- For the duration of the award, **USRA recipients will be employees of the host institution and employed full time in eligible research and development activities in the natural sciences and/or engineering.**
  - The activities will be governed by the terms and conditions of employment of employees engaged in similar work.
- Award holders may take a **maximum of two (2) courses during the tenure of award.**
  - If the course(s) 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.
- 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 UBC Liaison Officer immediately should a work term be interrupted or terminated early for any reason.**
- Students need to be registered (i.e. registered in courses) as of the deadline date for applications at the university in a bachelor's degree program to be eligible to apply. UBC's deadline for applications is in Winter Term 2 (Jan - Apr). Therefore, students **need to be registered in courses in Winter Term 2** in order to be eligible to apply.
- Students graduating this May are eligible to apply for the NSERC USRA provided they are registered in courses in **Winter Term 2 (Jan – Apr 2023)** and **meet all the other eligibility requirements stated at our NSERC USRA [website](#)**. For students graduating this May, they can hold the award in Summer (May 1 to Aug 31) or Fall (Sep 1 to Dec 31) terms, as long as they have not started a graduate studies program.
- Students studying at a foreign institution who are a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada may be eligible for USRA provided they meet all other eligibility requirements.
- In accordance to [UBC HR hybrid work guidelines](#), NSERC USRA students are required to work in British Columbia, Canada. Remote and on-campus work are subject to the same regulatory and statutory obligations.
- First year students are eligible to apply for the NSERC USRA provided they meet the eligibility requirements stated at UBC's [NSERC USRA website](#). NSERC requires first year students to have completed all the course requirements of at least the first year of university study (or two academic terms) of your bachelor's degree before they can hold the award. For this requirement, first year students will need to include the registered courses in Winter Term 2 under their transcript when they submit their application in order to be eligible.



- First year students who are successful in the competition will be asked to provide updated transcripts that show they have successfully completed one year, or two academic terms, of study.

To encourage Indigenous students and Black students to pursue graduate studies and research careers in the natural sciences and engineering, awards to Indigenous students and Black students are considered *in addition to* UBC's quota.

## Application Procedures



The NSERC USRA is administered and coordinated through the Faculty/School/department USRA Coordinators. Each Faculty/School/department establishes procedures for identifying and ranking applicants and setting deadlines. For resources on the NSERC USRA application process at UBC, please visit our [webpage](#). The following [Selection criteria and indicators for USRA applications](#) contains suggestions for evaluating the three selection criteria when reviewing supervisor/student applicants:

- **Academic excellence** - As demonstrated by past academic results, transcripts, awards and distinctions:
  - Academic record
  - Scholarships and awards held
  - Duration of previous/current studies
  - Type of program and courses pursued
  - Course load
  - Relative standing in program (if available)
- **Research potential** - As demonstrated by the applicant's research history, and their interest in discovery.



- **Expected quality of the training and mentorship to be received** - As demonstrated by the proposed supervisor's plan for the student described in Form 202 Part II:
  - Exposure to research team
  - Training in research techniques, skills
  - Expected contributions to research output
  - Proposed supervisor's past supervisory experience
  - Etc.

As per NSERC's recommendations, institutions are encouraged to consider the above evaluation methods when determining A-List/B-List candidates.

1. To apply, both the faculty supervisor and student 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](#).
    - Please also review the [NSERC USRA Form 202 Common Errors](#) for guidance on form completion.
  - If you already have an eligible student that you would like to work with, you will need to include their **reference number** on your application.
  - Students also need to upload, with their application form, a copy of their official, up to date transcripts from ALL post-secondary institutions attended (including transcript legend(s)). Please refer your student to the [Enrolment Services Ordering a Transcript webpage](#) for details on how to order their official UBC transcript.
    - These need to be attached in a single PDF.
    - ALL post-secondary institutions attended must be cited in the student's Academic Background.
  - NSERC USRA offers a [video tutorial](#) for completing the application forms
    - Guidance for supervisors on completing Form 202 Part II starts at 05:22.
  - **NSERC will not accept hardcopy forms so the official application must be completed and submitted electronically.**
2. 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 Faculty/School/department USRA Coordinator for review.
  - There are a limited number of awards allocated to UBC. 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. All application forms have to be submitted **by March 24, 2023**.

3. The UBC Liaison Officer checks the supervisor and student USRA application forms before they are submitted to NSERC. The Liaison Officer will review and confirm all applications via NSERC's online portal for Summer USRAs in April, Fall USRAs in August, and Winter USRAs in December.
  - If there are any errors/omissions or the application is incomplete, the Liaison Officer may **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 online.
4. The UBC Liaison Officer will notify the supervisor that their application has been successfully submitted, and they will need to submit the appropriate hire BP through Workday in order to appoint the student. Please connect with an administrator in your department or your Faculty/School/Department Coordinator to submit a student appointment. Refer to the *NSERC USRA Appointing Students 2023-24* for instructions – **these appointment sheets will be updated in March 2023**.
5. Students and supervisors will begin their USRA term as per the agreed start date.
  - **Note:** *It's usually the case that students will start work on their USRA before awards are actually confirmed by NSERC. Supervisors must start payments to students 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 directly to students in July. Award letters will be issued directly to students one month after the university term starts in Fall and Winter.*



## Questions?

You are encouraged to contact your [Faculty/School/department USRA Coordinator](#) in case you have any further questions. As a second resource you can also contact: **UBC NSERC USRA Liaison Officer** | UBC Centre for Student Involvement & Careers: [nserc.usra@ubc.ca](mailto:nserc.usra@ubc.ca)

## Important Dates - 2023/24 USRA Competition

<b>NSERC USRA Application Period</b>	<p>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) <b>starting January 2023</b>. Faculties/Schools/departments set their own <a href="#">internal deadlines</a>.</p> <p>*UBC holds one annual competition a year for the Summer 2023, Fall 2023 and Winter 2024 terms. Applications for <u>ALL</u> terms must be submitted during this period.</p>						
<b>USRA Award Terms</b>	<p>Summer 2023 (May 1 – August 31) - *May 12, 2023          Fall 2023 (September 1 – December 31) - *September 5, 2023          Winter 2024 (January 1 – April 30) - *January 9, 2024  <i>*latest a student can start working on their award</i></p>						
<b>Student Appointments</b>	<p>All appointments must be submitted via Workday. Please contact your <a href="#">payroll rep</a> or <a href="#">UBC IRP</a> should you have any questions. The student’s official start/end dates should match the start/end dates on the appointment.</p> <p><b>Deadlines to submit student appointments:</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="561 1480 1140 1617"> <tr> <td>Summer 2023</td> <td>May 12, 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fall 2023</td> <td>September 15, 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Winter 2024</td> <td>December 8, 2023</td> </tr> </table>	Summer 2023	May 12, 2023	Fall 2023	September 15, 2023	Winter 2024	December 8, 2023
Summer 2023	May 12, 2023						
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<b>Award Reimbursements</b>	<p>The CSI&amp;C office will arrange to reimburse supervisor accounts (grant) in the amount of \$6,000 per student. These funds will be transferred to the Worktag that is used to pay the student’s salary in Workday.</p>						