

FACULTY OF SCIENCE


Office of the Dean

4700 KEELE ST.
TORONTO ON
CANADA M3J 1P3
T 416 736 5051
F 416 736 5950

sciadres@yorku.ca
www.science.yorku.ca

Memorandum

To: Distribution

From: Vivian Saridakis, Associate Dean – Research & Graduate Education


Date: February 1, 2022

Subject: NSERC USRA - Summer 2022

I am pleased to announce the call for applications to the 2022 NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRAs). York's quota for 2022 is 48 awards. The Faculty of Science will also be responsible for the adjudication of NSERC USRAs for LAPS, Schulich and FEUC. Awards will be distributed according to the number of active NSERC grants per department/Faculty. Please bring these awards to the attention of qualified students as soon as possible.

Further information on NSERC USRAs can be found on the NSERC website: <https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/UG-PC/>

The application form and [instructions](#) (Form 202) are now available on the NSERC website and must be filled out using [NSERC's online system](#). Both students and supervisors will have to register online to be able to complete the application. Please read all instructions before beginning. An information session will be held on Thursday, February 10th 2022 at 10:00 am via zoom, link below.

<https://yorku.zoom.us/j/93560030617?pwd=eTU0Z09wN3REMzIXbnZPcEp3SkFXZz09>

Meeting ID: 935 6003 0617

Passcode: 863673

I. Changes to the 2022 program

- (a) Institutions are required to supplement the award and should comply with their provincial employment standards. Supervisors will be required to contribute \$2,400 in addition to the \$6000 provided by NSERC. In an effort to alleviate undue stress on the supervisor's budget, those who are in need of subsidy may submit a request for partial financial assistance at this [link](#). There are very limited funds available.
- (b) Remote work is acceptable with supervision expected on a frequent basis.
- (c) A maximum of two (2) three-credit courses are allowed during the tenure of award, with approval from the supervisor and NSERC -according to the instructions below.

- (d) EDI information should be collected, monitored and reviewed for implementation of future measures.
- (e) NSERC selection committee should follow [NSERC guidelines](#), follow EDI guidelines and have EDI training: [Unconscious Bias](#) and [Sex and Gender](#) Training. NSERC encourages institutions and departments to publish the names of selection committee members on their websites.

II. Changes to the 2021 program

The NSERC portion of the award was increased from \$4,500 to \$6,000.

III. Changes to the 2020 program

- (a) Professors do not need to hold an NSERC grant when supervising a USRA student.
- (b) NSERC recommended that USRA applications be assessed on the following criteria:
 - Academic record (transcripts).
 - Research aptitude (Research Interest Statement)
 - Expected quality of the training to be received (Training Plan provided by supervisor in Form 202).
- (c) Travel allowance was discontinued; travel expenses will no longer be reimbursed.

IV. Application Instructions

1. Students:

- Fill out [PART I of Form 202](#)
- Forward Reference Number to supervisor
- NEW: In a separate document, provide a Research Interest Statement (1 page, 12pt Times New Roman, 1 inch margins) describing their research interest in the professor/research group, past experience (lab or course-related) and skills they will bring to the project, benefits they will gain from the USRA experience and how the training environment they selected aligns with their career goals and academic interests.

2. Supervisors:

- Fill out [PART II of Form 202](#)
- Appropriate Reference Number forwarded from student.
- Specific, detailed research proposal (max. 1800 characters)
- Description of student's role (max. 500 characters)
- NEW: As per the new guidelines, the quality of the training environment will be used to assess the application. Please include a brief training plan, either in the research proposal or student's role section, that describes the proposed training including the type and extent of supervision and mentorship, the activities the student will participate in, the skills and other outcomes they will gain. Note that the

inclusion of EDI considerations in research design makes research more ethically sound, rigorous and useful. Describe how these aspects will be addressed in the research design if applicable.

- Students are encouraged to work 16 consecutive weeks. May 2nd, 2022 will be the suggested start date for all awardees unless special arrangements are made with the supervisor. August 19th, 2022 will be the end date for the complete 16 weeks. For the SU2022 term, remote work is acceptable with supervision expected on a frequent basis.

- Research subject code: This must be from the list located https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/help-aide/scholarshipcodes-codespourbourses_eng.asp

3. Submission

A completed and signed application package must be submitted electronically (submission link and website is forthcoming) by Friday March 4th, 2022. Full application packages must include:

- Form 202: Part I (student) & Part II (supervisor, including research project & training plan).
- 1 page Research Interest Statement (student)
- Original transcripts are required for non-York students, which must be sent directly to the potential supervisor from the Registrar's Office of the student's home institution.

V. Instructions for Departmental Rankings

- (a) Each department prepares a departmental summary (in excel format) of the students' records which should include for each student: name, student number, department, cumulative GPA, supervisor's name, research subject code (from the list included in the instructions supplied with Form 202), university attended, 'year' level, if previous NSERC recipient.
- (b) Each department prepares a departmental ranking sent, along with the departmental summary, to the FSc Research Office (fscro@yorku.ca) by 4:00 pm on Friday March 18th, 2022.
- (c) The Faculty Research and Awards Committee will review the rankings and adjudicate the awards.

***It is essential that all departments ensure the students are qualified to apply for the awards and that the supervising faculty member has sufficient funds to provide operating support for the duration of the student's project. NSERC provides \$6,000 per student. The supervisor must contribute \$2,400 per student over the 16 weeks. In an effort to alleviate undue stress on the supervisor's budget, those who are in need of subsidy may submit a request for partial financial assistance at this [link](#). There are very limited funds available. If a student is selected from another university to hold their award at York, the supervisor will be responsible for paying 4% vacation pay and 10% for benefits. ***

VI. NSERC USRA in Universities

- (a) The NSERC USRA provides a stipend of \$8,400 for 16 weeks of full time (35 hours per week) work. NSERC provides \$6,000 and the supervisor provides \$2,400.

- (b) This call is for awards that will be held during the summer 2022 semester. We will send additional communication if awards become available for the Fall or Winter semesters.
- (c) Typically, NSERC encourages students to work the full term, so the awards are for the full-time work over the 16 week. Shorter work terms require approval from the Dean's Office and NSERC prior to application. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, students might have limited access to laboratories but are encouraged to contribute to literature reviews, manuscript preparation and data analysis.
- (d) Applications (both Part I and Part II) must be completed online by Friday March 4th, 2022. Non-York applicants must order their official transcripts from the Registrar's Office to be sent directly to their potential supervisor at York by the above deadline. (At most Canadian institutions, transcripts issued directly to students are not considered official.) All successful applicants will be instructed on attaching their transcripts as PDF documents to their on-line applications at a later date. Department.
- (e) Students are required to include a Research Interest Statement (1 page) describing their research interest in the professor/research group, past experience (lab or course-related) and skills they will bring to the project, benefits they gain from the USRA experience and how the training environment they selected aligns with their interest and goals.
- (f) Notification of awards will be issued by early-mid April 2022.
- (g) Students will have one week to accept or decline the award from the date of notification. Students who accept the award are encouraged to participate in an Undergraduate Research Conference in the third week of August 2022 to present their research in a poster or oral presentation.
- (h) Recipients must devote their full time to research and are not permitted to take any additional summer research opportunities. Recipients may be permitted to register for two (2) 3-credit courses during the tenure of the award provided it is justified and approved by the supervisor. An approval request to NSERC must come from the Liaison Officer and conditions for attending course lectures outside of regular working hours must be set by the supervisor to ensure that full time work hours are not affected.
- (i) Students may not hold more than three USRA awards during their university career.
- (j) Applicants must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents and must be registered as full-time students in an eligible bachelor degree program in the natural sciences, and must have completed all the course requirements of at least the first year of university study (or two academic terms) of a bachelor's degree by April 30, 2022.
- (k) Candidates who hold higher degrees in natural sciences or engineering, or are candidates for an undergraduate professional degree in health sciences (e.g. M.D., D.D.S., B.Sc.N.) are not eligible. Female applicants are especially encouraged to apply.
- (l) In continuation of its incentive for Aboriginal undergraduate students to pursue graduate studies and research careers in the natural sciences and engineering, NSERC asks each university to actively promote the availability of USRAs to qualified Aboriginal students. Awards that are made to Aboriginal students will be in addition to the university's quota of awards.