

# 2017-18 NSERC UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH AWARDS

## Program Goals and Scope

The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) subsidizes eligible professors to hire domestic students to work on their research projects through the Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRA) program. These merit-based awards are meant to stimulate interest in research in the natural sciences and engineering, encourage students to undertake graduate studies and pursue a research career in these fields. In 2017/18, UBC received 247 awards (valued at \$4,500) for both campuses (UBC-V & UBC-O) which were distributed across 14 faculties/schools.

## Facts & Figures

Total Number of Student Participants	259
Aboriginal Students	16
Visiting Students	31
Female	115
Male	144
Summer (May – Aug)	240
Fall (Sep – Dec)	12
Winter (Jan – Apr)	7

## Award Allocations by Faculty/School

Faculty/School	NSERC Undergrad Student Research Awards Used
Applied Science (UBC-V & UBC-O)	48
Arts	16
Dentistry	1
Education	1
Forestry	10
UBC-O Health & Social Development	3
UBC-O IKB School of Arts & Science	12
Kinesiology	6
Land and Food Systems	6
Medicine	39
Pharmaceutical Sciences	2
Sauder School of Business	4
Science	99
<b>Total</b>	<b>247</b>

Faculty/School	Female	Male	Aboriginal	Total
Applied Science (UBC-V & UBC-O)	13	35	-	48
Arts	13	4	2	17
Dentistry	-	1	-	1
Education	-	1	-	1
Forestry	4	7	2	11
UBC-O Health & Social Development	3	3	-	6
UBC-O IKB School of Arts & Science	8	7	1	15
Kinesiology	5	1	3	6
Land and Food Systems	4	4	-	8
Medicine	22	18	2	40
Pharmaceutical Sciences	2	-	-	2
Sauder School of Business	2	2	-	4
Science	39	61	6	100
<b>Total Student Participants</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>259</b>

## Student Learning

Students agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements about their USRA experience:

- 96% gained skills that helped them apply academic learning to a professional or work environment.
- 98% gained practical experience that has helped them feel more prepared for their career.
- 94% influenced their confidence in interacting with faculty members.
- 99% gained help to reflect on, and refine their academic and/or career goals.

Students indicated their participation in the USRA program had a high impact in developing or improving the following competencies:

- 96% Research skills
- 91% Analysis and problem-solving
- 90% Adaptability

My NSERC USRA role ....	% students agree or strongly agree
Helped me build a network of connections with faculty, staff and/or students	90
Was related to or helped me refine my career goals	95
Was related to my academic field of study	92
Helped me gain research-related experience	95
Helped me develop transferable skills (e.g. communication skills, public speaking, teamwork, etc.)	90
Gave me opportunities for mentorship	88



Students reported the following activities supported their learning on the job

- 90% Discussion of work expectations at the beginning of the term.
- 91% An orientation to the workplace including introductions to key people, important tools/resources, safety procedures, and basic unit information.
- 94% Regular/on-going feedback about their work performance.

What students like BEST about their NSERC USRA position

"...I felt I was participating in the cutting edge of the field. I found it really rewarding to be able to pursue my own ideas day to day. We were working on a project with a high-level goal, however the nitty-gritty implementation was totally up for discussion. Having that high level goal kept me focused on the long term, but allowed me freedom in the short term."

"Independence, flexibility, and the novelty of the work. It was very interested to explore a field very different than anything I had worked on until now, and to gain experience working with stakeholders from very different areas of expertise."

Gain valuable help in furthering your research and support students in their learning.

Contact your Faculty/School/Department Coordinator to learn more about hiring a student.