

NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRA) – 2019/20

Information Sheet for Faculty/School/Department Coordinators

COORDINATORS' ROLES

- Act as the main liaison between your Faculty/School/Department's project supervisors, students, and the Centre for Student Involvement & Careers (CSI&C) office.
- Promote this program within your Faculty/School/Department and ensure that all project supervisors and students who apply meet the [program eligibility criteria](#).
- Determine how the awards will be distributed within your Faculty/School/Department within the quota distribution.
- Ensure that student/supervisor pairs complete the electronic [NSERC USRA application \(On-line System Login\)](#) and determine the A&B list of recommended applicants (A list applicants are forwarded to NSERC by the Liaison Officer in accordance with the University's quota; B list applicants are eligible alternates in the event that an A list applicant is no longer able to hold the award).
- Process travel requisition forms for visiting students.
- Forward your A&B List of Recommended Applicants, student appointments (ePAFs), and copies of travel claims to the CSI&C office by deadline dates provided.

INTEGRATING AN INTERNATIONAL COMPONENT INTO THE USRA

Students may spend a portion of their USRA period undertaking research at a university abroad.

Benefits:

- Have your student access resources or equipment not available at UBC during their research.
- Have your student work directly with collaborating researchers at another university.
- Student gains international research experience and expanded academic network.
- Students are eligible for \$2,000 in funding through the UBC Go Global Award to support travel costs.
- Go Global can assist with logistical planning, student pre-departure preparation and administration.

Requirements:

- Host University must be an accredited university.
- International component must be a minimum of 4 weeks in length and a maximum of 8 weeks
- UBC USRA Supervisor must maintain prime supervision of the student and ensure a coherent research experience.
- There must also be an identified co-supervisor at the host institution to ensure student support and access to resources.
- Basic student travel costs (flights and accommodations) must be covered by UBC and **not** by the student or their USRA minimum salary of \$7474.25 (summer term), with an increase of at least \$484.75 for each additional week or \$96.75 for each additional day
- For example, they may be covered through a combination of the Go Global award (\$2,000) and additional funding from the supervisor, department of Faculty/School.
- UBC degree-seeking student in good standing

Questions about integrating an [international component](#) into the USRA?

Contact Laurinda Tracey, Advisor, Student Safety Abroad at laurinda.tracey@ubc.ca.

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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 or when the student holds the award.
- Be either the principal investigator or co-investigator of the grant.
- Non-NSERC CRC, CERC or NCE grant holders need to send in their research proposal to our office ahead of time (prior to March 22, 2019) 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. An alternate supervisor who is eligible can replace the supervisor or alternatively, another student/supervisor pair can be substituted as long as applications have not been submitted to NSERC.
- Ensure that their research project must be 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](#).

For Students:

Detailed student eligibility is outlined on the Student NSERC USRA website which can be visited [here](#).

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

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PROCEDURES

1. Promote the program within your Faculty/School/Department, advise students and potential supervisors of the application process, and collect and review NSERC USRA application forms (copies of Form 202 part I and II).

Form 202 part I and II

- 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](#).
 - In addition to Form 202, students must upload a copy of their official transcripts with their application, including the legend on the back.
 - Once both parts of Form 202 are completed online, the applicants will need save and submit a copy of the forms to you for review. You can choose to receive the copies either by hardcopy or softcopy.
2. Determine how the awards will be allocated within your Faculty/School/Department within the quota distribution. Applications should be assessed on the basis of the student’s academic record and research aptitude. You will probably receive more NSERC USRA applications than quota spaces. If this is the case, you must rank the eligible applications and create a priority list (A-list) and contingency list (B-list) of applications. In past years a number of A-list students and/or project supervisors withdrew their applications and were replaced by B-list applications.

Supplementary Quota – NSERC may release a small number of supplementary quota spots if finances permit, for each of the Fall and Winter terms. These awards will be in addition to our regular quota spaces UBC has received for fiscal year 2019 - 2020 and can be used only in the fall or winter. NSERC will inform us if there are additional funds available for the Fall term in mid-August, and in December for the Winter term. As such, please kindly indicate which candidates on your ‘B’ list are also eligible and willing to hold a NSERC USRA in the Fall (September - December 2019) or Winter (January - April 2020) terms.

Note: The Careers job posting site ([CareersOnline](#)) is a great (free for UBC employers) resource for posting employment opportunities and recruiting qualified students. Please contact the NSERC USRA Liaison Officer at nserc.usra@ubc.ca for more information.

3. Ensure that both students and supervisors **meet all eligibility criteria and that all the forms are completed correctly and submitted electronically**. **NSERC will NOT accept hardcopy forms so the official application must be completed and submitted electronically.**

Note: It is usually the case that students will start work on their USRA before awards are actually confirmed by NSERC. If eligibility criteria are not met and the student starts his/her award tenure, the student would still be expected to finish their award and be paid the full amount, although a reimbursement will not be issued and the supervisor will be responsible for the students’ full wages. Award letters for the summer term will be issued in July.

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4. Submit to Liaison Officer:
 - A template will be provided by the Liaison Officer. Clearly indicate which applicants are A-List and which are on the B-List (for ALL terms – Summer 2019/Fall 2019/Winter 2020), and which B-List candidates are able to hold the award in the Fall/Winter term should NSERC release any supplementary quota spots in August or December. UBC holds one annual competition a year for the Summer 2019, Fall 2019 and Winter 2020 terms. Applications for ALL terms should be considered during this period.
5. The Liaison Officer will review and confirm all applications via NSERC's on-line 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 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
6. Supervisors to submit an [ePAF in HRMS](#). Please refer to the [NSERC USRA Appointing Students 19-20](#) information sheet for detailed instructions.
7. The CSI&C office will arrange to reimburse supervisor accounts in the amount of \$4,500 per student, and for any eligible travel claims at the end of the work placement.

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. [See travel reimbursement eligibility.](#)

- The faculty/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 (ie. copy of your FMS ledger) should be forwarded to the Liaison Officer at the Centre for Student Involvement & Careers office by the deadline date provided.
- The Liaison Officer will claim these expenses from NSERC and, in turn, reimburse the faculties/departments (allow a few months of processing time).

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IMPORTANT DATES – 2019/20 USRA COMPETITION

	Deadline
<p>List of A&B Recommended Applicants A template will be provided by the Liaison Officer. Clearly indicate which applicants are A-List and which are on the B-List (for <u>ALL</u> terms – Summer 2019/Fall 2019/Winter 2020), and which B-List candidates are able to hold the award in the Fall/Winter term should NSERC release any supplementary quota spots in August or December.</p> <p>*UBC holds one annual competition a year for the Summer 2019, Fall 2019 and Winter 2020 terms. Applications for <u>ALL</u> terms should be considered during this period.</p>	Friday, March 22, 2019
<p>Student Appointments 2019 Info Sheet for Appointing Students</p> <p>All appointments must be submitted as an ePAF in HRMS. Please contact your payroll rep should you have any questions about submitting ePAFs in HRMS.</p> <p>The student's official start/end dates should match the start/end dates on the appointment. The latest a student can start working on their award to meet the minimum 16-week requirement:</p> <p>Summer Term (May 1 – August 31, 2019) - May 13, 2019 Fall Term (September 1 – December 31, 2019) - September 4, 2019 Winter Term (January 1 – April 30, 2020) - January 10, 2020</p>	<p><u>Summer 2019:</u> April 10, 2019</p> <p><u>Fall 2019:</u> August 14, 2019</p> <p><u>Winter 2020:</u> December 11, 2019</p>
<p>Travel Requisition Documents (copies) Faculty/School/Department to forward copies of travel receipts, travel requisition form, and proof of reimbursement to the student to the CSI&C Office (1036 Brock Hall, Attn: NSERC USRA Liaison Officer).</p>	<p><u>Summer 2019:</u> September 13, 2019</p> <p><u>Fall 2019:</u> January 13, 2020</p> <p><u>Winter 2020:</u> May 11, 2020</p>

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