

2008 NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRA) Program Guidelines and Application Procedures

1. ABOUT THE PROGRAM (http://www.nserc.ca/sf_e.asp?nav=sfnv&lbi=1a)

Purpose To stimulate interest in research in the natural sciences and engineering at the undergraduate level and encourage undergraduate students to undertake graduate studies and pursue a research career in these fields.

Award Value \$4,500/award with a minimum 25% supplement (i.e., \$1,125) provided by the department

- ❖ Any supplement above this level may be set at the department's or supervisor's discretion. NSERC grants, other research funds (non-NSERC) and university sources can be used to supplement the award. Departments may also provide fringe benefits.
- ❖ Travel allowances may also be granted by NSERC (see #6 below). However, any additional costs related to the field work (e.g., travel expenses) must be covered by the supervisor or department.
- ❖ NSERC will not reimburse the University for any period in which the student worked part-time. Also, it will not approve any payment for any vacation days taken during the tenure of the award.

Duration 16 full consecutive weeks (similar to co-op work terms)

- ❖ The program makes **no provision for sick leave or other interruptions** of awards. Should a work term be interrupted or terminated early for any reason, NSERC must be informed immediately through the Office of Research Services.
- ❖ Awards may not be deferred. All efforts must be made to give the awards to students who can complete or commit to a 16-week work term.
- ❖ For **USRA work terms shorter than 16 weeks:** NSERC's approval is required prior to the beginning of the work term. Departments must submit any shorter-term work requests along with a justification to Research Services as soon as possible.

USRA Workterm The University of Toronto administers this program in the **Summer term only** between May 1st and September 30th of each year.

Departmental Deadlines Contact the respective department Undergraduate Coordinators/Counsellor(s).

University Deadline for Departmental Nomination Packages **FRIDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2008**

2. **PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENTS:** Below are some of the departments/units which are accepting student applicants with their corresponding contact persons and/or links to their websites. Students may also contact other departments and inquire about the availability of awards. Please note that the number of awards vary by department.

DEPARTMENT	CONTACT PERSON / WEBSITE
Aerospace Studies	Prof. Jim Davis, Aerospace Option Chair, jwdavis@starfire.utoronto.ca
Biochemistry	Brenda Bradshaw, Undergraduate Affairs Secretary, brenda.bradshaw@utoronto.ca ; 416-978-2700; www.biochemistry.utoronto.ca
Canadian Institute for Theoretical Astrophysics	www.cita.utoronto.ca/index.php/working_cita/nserc_summer_undergraduate_awards
Cell & Systems Biology	Janet Manone, Undergraduate Coordinator, janet@csb.utoronto.ca ; 416-978-8879

DEPARTMENT	CONTACT PERSON / WEBSITE
Chemistry	Armando Marquez, Undergraduate Counsellor, undergrd@chem.utoronto.ca ; 416-978-6033; www.chem.utoronto.ca/~undergrd/Summer/Summer_Fellowship.htm
Civil Engineering	www.civil.engineering.utoronto.ca/site4.aspx
Computer Science	http://web.cs.toronto.edu/dcs/index.php?section=156
Dentistry	Shahenaz Malek, Research Grants Administrator, shahenaz.malek@dentistry.utoronto.ca ; 416-979-4900 x 4442
Ecology & Evolutionary Biology	Anne Pound, Undergraduate Program Advisor, undergrad@eeb.utoronto.ca ; 416-946-8612
Forestry	Kathy Penner, 416-978-5751, kathy.penner@utoronto.ca ; 416-978-5751
Geography	www.geog.utoronto.ca/
Geology	Lynn Slotkin, Student Affairs Officer, slotkin@geology.utoronto.ca ; 416-978-1240
Laboratory Medicine & Pathobiology	Louella D’Cunha, Undergraduate Office, louella.dacunha@utoronto.ca
Mechanical & Industrial Engineering	www.mie.utoronto.ca/
Molecular Genetics	Prof. Andrew Wilde, andrew.wilde@utoronto.ca ; www.utoronto.ca/medicalgenetics/
Nutritional Sciences	www.utoronto.ca/nutrisci/
Pharmacology	www.pharmtox.utoronto.ca/programs/undergraduate/awards.htm
Pharmacy	www.pharmacy.utoronto.ca/
Physics	www.physics.utoronto.ca/graduate/nserc_summ_intro.html
Physiology	www.uoftphysiology.com/
Psychology	Tamara Ferguson, Undergraduate Advisor, undergrad@psych.toronto.edu ; 416-978-3407; http://home.psych.utoronto.ca/site3.aspx
Statistics	www.utstat.utoronto.ca/
UoFT Mississauga	Carmen Bryson, Financial & Administrative Officer, carmen.bryson@utoronto.ca ; 905-828-5413
UTSC Biological Sciences	Karen Choo, Course Coordinator, kchoo@utsc.utoronto.ca ; 416-287-7404; www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~biosci/
UTSC Computer & Math Sciences	Katheleene Smith, Business Officer, kasmith@utsc.utoronto.ca ; 416-287-7268; www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~csms/
UTSC Physical & Environmental Sciences	Rose Jones, Chair’s Secretary, rjones@utsc.utoronto.ca ; 416-287-7196; www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~physsci/
UTSC Psychology	Hanan Kayyali, Course Support & Program Advisor; kayyali@utsc.utoronto.ca ; 416-208-4867; www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~psych/

Departments have set their own selection process and internal deadlines for receipt of applications. Students must comply with these and are advised to check with the Undergraduate Offices.

3. STUDENT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

ELIGIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada. ▪ Must have obtained, over the previous years of study, a cumulative average of at least second class (a grade of "B" or "B-", if applicable) as defined by the University. ▪ Registered (at the time of application) in a bachelor's degree program (and not holding higher degrees) at an eligible university in the term immediately before holding the award. ▪ Already holds a bachelor's degree and is studying towards a second bachelor's degree in the natural sciences or engineering. ▪ Graduating students, in the term immediately following the completion of their undergraduate program requirements, as long as they have not started a program of graduate studies. ▪ Be engaged on a full-time basis in research and development activities in the natural sciences or engineering during the award tenure.
INELIGIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Currently enrolled in an undergraduate professional degree program in the health sciences (e.g., M.D., D.D.S., B.Sc.N.). ▪ Holds higher degrees in the natural sciences or engineering.

Please note the following:

- *A student may hold only one USRA per fiscal year (i.e., April 1 to March 31).*
- *A student may hold a maximum of 3 USRAs throughout his/her university career.*
- *For questions on student eligibility, please contact Research Services.*

4. ELIGIBILITY OF SUPERVISORS

ELIGIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Holders of an active NSERC <u>research</u> grant(s) in any of the following programs: Discovery Grants (Individual, Group and Subatomic Physics Project and Northern Research Supplements); Collaborative Health Research Projects; Special Research Opportunity; CRYSTAL (Centers for Research in Youth, Science Teaching and Learning); Strategic Projects Grants; Strategic Networks Grants; Collaborative Research & Development Grants; Idea to Innovation Program; NSERC/Canada Council for the Arts New Media Initiative; Research Partnership Agreements (RPA); Industrial Research Chairs; Chairs in Environmental Design and Engineering; Chairs in Design Engineering; Northern Research Chairs Program; Chairs for Women in Science and Engineering; University Faculty Awards; and Canada Research Chairs. ▪ May be the principal investigator or the co-investigator of the grant. ▪ Must either have held an active research grant at the time a student applies for the award or have an active research grant at the time the student holds the award. ▪ Supervision of two NSERC grantees (NOT graduate/Ph.D. students or postdoctoral fellows) is allowed as long as they work on a “genuine” research project allowing them to be exposed to all aspects of the research process. However, students must not move between laboratories on different projects over the 16-week period since this would dilute the value of the experience. It is expected that the supervisor ensures that the USRA holder is properly supervised at all times, especially during field work. One NSERC grantee has to be designated as the student’s official supervisor. ▪ Has received an extension to use up funds from a research grant that terminated on March 31, 2006 (i.e., where the extension is active from April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008).
INELIGIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Researchers holding only Research Tools and Instruments and Infrastructure Grants are not eligible. ▪ Co-supervision by a non-NSERC grantee is not acceptable.

Please note the following:

- *If the supervisor is awaiting the result of his/her Discovery Grant application, the confirmation of the USRA award will be put on hold until the result is released by NSERC in March 2008. In the event that his/her Discovery Grant application is not funded, the department would have the opportunity to propose alternate eligible supervisors or alternate students.*
- *Research Services does not release information on NSERC grantees. Students should contact the department (through the Undergraduate Coordinator/Counsellor) where they wish to apply.*
- *For questions on supervisor eligibility, please contact Research Services.*

5. **TENURE AT ANOTHER LOCATION:** Quotas are not transferable from one university to another. Students may apply at any eligible university and be considered within the internal process at that university. In other words, students must apply at the university where they want to hold the USRA. The supervisor must be a faculty member at the university where the student holds the USRA.

6. **TRAVEL ALLOWANCE:** NSERC may approve a travel allowance for the actual costs incurred by the student to get to the host university if it is different from the one they are attending at the time of the award.

- The maximum allowance is an amount equivalent to economy airfare between the cities where the universities are located. To request a travel allowance, apply to your host university upon arrival.
- NSERC will pay the return travel costs **only** if the actual period of tenure is 12 weeks or more.
- NSERC will not provide a travel allowance for spouse or children.
- This allowance is not designed to offset daily commuting costs to and from the host university.

- NSERC will provide an allowance (receipts must be provided) for ground transportation costs to and from residence and point of departure (e.g., airport, train station, bus station).
- NSERC will not provide an allowance for the cost of transporting excess baggage or removing household effects.
- Travel claims must be submitted no later than one month after the completion of the USRA work term.
- Frequent flyer points will not be reimbursed.

7. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR UoFT & NON-UoFT STUDENTS & DEPARTMENTS

(NOTE: Research Services will not accept any application that has not been endorsed by the department.)

UOFT STUDENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact the department Undergraduate Office where you wish to apply and inquire about availability of awards and supervisors. Complete the 2006 version of the application form (Form 202, Parts I and II). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Electronic form (http://www.nserc.ca/forms/formtable_e.htm): This can be filled out directly by clicking on <i>Login to the system</i> or <i>Register as a New User</i>. Filling out the form online will not transmit it electronically to NSERC. – PDF format: http://www.nserc.ca/forms/pdf/F202-1_e.pdf (Part 1 to be completed by the student) and http://www.nserc.ca/forms/pdf/F202-2_e.pdf (Part II to be completed by the supervisor). – Instructions: http://www.nserc.ca/forms/instructions/202/e.asp. – Use the List of Research Subject Codes for Scholarships and Fellowships (http://www.nserc.ca/sf_e.asp?nav=sfnv&lbi=codes) for the research subject codes. – Please adhere to the General Presentation Guidelines set by NSERC. NSERC WILL NO LONGER ACCEPT HANDWRITTEN COMPLETED FORMS. 2. Submit the completed forms to the department Undergraduate Office, along with your most current (original) transcript.
NON-UoFT STUDENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Non-UoFT students should contact the University of Toronto department (c/o the Undergraduate Office Coordinator or Counsellor) where they wish to apply and check if a USRA quota has been assigned to that department and ask to be connected to potential supervisors. They must comply with the department's internal selection process and meet internal deadline(s) and their eligibility confirmed/verified by the University of Toronto to hold an award. 2. Complete the 2006 version of the application form (Form 202, Parts I and II). 3. Submit the completed forms to the UoFT department Undergraduate Office.
DEPARTMENTS: SUBMISSION OF NOMINATION PACKAGES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submit Form 202 Parts I & II of all nominees, original transcripts, the completed Nomination Table (electronic and hard copy), and one (1) set of photocopied applications to Research Services by 15 February 2008. You <u>may include a waiting list</u> in the event unused/extra awards become available. <u>Please do not include letters of applications and/or support with the package.</u> 2. Please ensure that all sections of the application form are complete. The Department Chair or head must sign all applications. If the Chair/Head is also the supervisor, his one-up should sign the application. 3. NSERC has identified the most common errors and omissions made on application. Please use these checklists to ensure the forms are in order before submitting them to Research Services to avoid delays in processing and confirmation of awards. Research Services will forward all completed applications in one package to NSERC.

- 8. NOTIFICATION OF AWARDS TO STUDENTS FROM NSERC:** NSERC will send the award letters for all students through the Office of Research Services no later than July for the summer term and will be forwarded to each department for distribution to students. NSERC will also notify the University about applications that have been rejected. Departments must be prepared to continue to employ any students who may be rejected.

9. **OTHER NSERC OPPORTUNITIES AND INCENTIVES FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS:** The following programs can be combined with the USRA program. Most of these programs require students to hold a USRA. For more information, please visit the respective websites which have been provided below. **Please note that the Office of Research Services does not administer these programs directly; therefore, no applications should be forwarded to our office.**

PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION & CONTACTS
Industrial Undergraduate Student Research Awards	Offers students an opportunity to work on a challenging research project in either a university or an industrial environment. Students should apply directly to organizations using Form 202. The list of NSERC-eligible organizations participating in the program can be found in: http://www.nserc.ca/programs/sf/alpha.PDF
Northern Research Internships	Helps senior undergraduate students, graduate students and postdoctoral fellows by facilitating extended stays and subsidizing costs associated with research in the North.
Shad Valley Program	Combines entrepreneurship with science and technology. USRA holders may interrupt their research project for the month of July to work as a Program Assistant at a Shad Valley Campus. Check website for details.
Canadian Distributed Mentor Programme	Intended to encourage undergraduate women in computer science and computer engineering to pursue graduate studies. It matches female students who have completed their 2 nd or 3 rd year of undergraduate studies with female professors for a summer of research or mentoring. Please refer to the program website for more details.
RISE Canada Program	A summer exchange program for undergraduates in the chemical sciences who will have completed the equivalent of two or three full years of study by the end of the school year they apply. Successful applicants will be awarded summer employment in the research group of a RISE group member at one of the participating institutions (not their own) plus a small travel allowance.
Radian Biophysics Award	Two qualified Aboriginal USRA holders will be selected each year by the Biophysical Society of Canada to attend the Herman R. Branson Summer Mini-Course in Biophysics (assuming program funding is approved). For further details, please contact Cathy Morris, cmorris@ohri.ca , or Jenifer Thewalt, jthewalt@sfu.ca .
NSERC-CMS Math in Moscow Scholarships	NSERC and the Canadian Mathematical Society will offer three scholarships each year to support Canadian undergraduate students registered in a mathematics or computer science program to attend a semester at the Math in Moscow Program.
Environment Canada Atmospheric and Meteorological Undergraduate Supplements	Provides financial support to high-calibre students working toward degrees in the atmospheric or meteorological sciences or related fields. These are available only to students awarded a USRA in a university or industry.

K. CONTACTS

Office of Research Services Simcoe Hall, Room 133S 27 King's College Circle Toronto, ON M5S 1A1	NSERC Scholarships and Fellowships Programs 350 Albert Street Ottawa, ON K1A 1H5
Angie Agulto Research Grants Officer Tel. no.: 416-946-7517 E-mail: angie.agulto@utoronto.ca	Gillian Cooper Program Officer, USRA Tel. no.: 613-996-1597 E-mail: gillian.cooper@nserc.ca
Christine Kwan Awards Administrator Tel. no.: 416-946-0246 E-mail: c.kwan@utoronto.ca	Anne-Marie Copeland Program Assistant-USRA Research Grants and Scholarships Tel. no.: 613-947-0428 E-mail: anne-marie.copeland@nserc.ca