Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRA):

USRA is part of Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) undergraduate programs. These awards are meant to stimulate your interest in research in the natural sciences, engineering and math and to encourage you to pursue graduate studies and careers in these fields.

If you would like to gain research work experience that complements your studies in an academic setting, these NSERC awards can provide you with financial support.

What is the value of the award?

These awards have a value of $6,000 for a 14 to 16-week period, plus your supervisor's contribution.

Am I eligible for an award?

Students who self-identify as Indigenous are encouraged to apply.
To be eligible to **hold** an award, you must:
- be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada or a Protected Person under subsection 95(2) of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (Canada), as of the deadline date for applications at the institution
- have completed all the course requirements of at least the first year of your bachelor's degree (or two academic terms) by the time you actually hold the award.
- hold a cumulative average of at least 72%.

Complete eligibility requirements at http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/students-etudiants/ug-pc/usra-brpc_eng.asp

Who is not eligible?

Pharmacy and Optometry students are not eligible to apply as they are registered in an undergraduate professional degree program in the *health sciences*.

Duration of awards

The duration of the award is 14 to 16 weeks on a full-time basis. You may hold an award in any terms of the year, however:

- You may hold only one USRA per cycle. 1 cycle being Spring-Fall-Winter terms.
- You may hold a maximum of three USRAs throughout your university career.

While holding an USRA, you may take a maximum of 2 courses. If you are a co-op student, PD courses don't count toward this maximum. This course load restriction is NSERC imposed and is NOT negotiable.

New for 2022-23: Interdisciplinary applications
Students are encouraged to work under the supervision of a researcher outside of their home faculty.

How to apply?

You must find a faculty member who will supervise the research project you will be working on during the tenure of the award.

Contact a Department coordinator if you need help finding a supervisor.
See list of coordinators at:
https://uwaterloo.ca/research/natural-sciences-and-engineering-research-council-canada#3rd%20prog

Fill out an application form (you complete part 1 whereas your supervisor completes part 2) and attach your **unofficial** transcript.
All applications must be submitted electronically at
https://ebiz.nserc.ca/nserc_web/nserc_login_e.htm

Application process

- Student fills out part 1 of form 202 and attaches an unofficial transcript that could be downloaded from Quest. Student's **uwaterloo email address must be used** in the application.
- Student emails his/her reference # located at top left corner of form 202 part 1 to his/her supervisor
- Supervisor creates form 202 part 2 using the student's reference #. This will link both forms.
- Supervisor submits form online and let Department coordinator know that their application is ready.
- Department coordinator sends nomination to Faculty coordinator to be approved by Associate Dean, Grad Studies or Associate Dean, Research.
- Approved nominations are sent to the Office of Research.
- Office of Research sends an offer letter (via email) to each approved student with copy to Supervisor and Department coordinator.
- Student has 2 business days to accept or decline the award.
- Once the student accepts the award, form 202 may be returned to the system so that any corrections can be made.
- Form has to be resubmitted by supervisor even if corrections are on the student's side only.

Application deadline

Deadlines are early and vary by department.

Office of Research contact:

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