

Summer Undergraduate NSERC USRA Awards

Objective: To stimulate student's interest in research in the natural sciences and engineering, and to encourage students to undertake graduate studies and pursue a research career in these fields.

Tentative Value and Duration: The total value is \$9800 (+ vacation pay and fringe benefits), with \$6000 provided by NSERC, \$1120 top-up by Queen's VPR, and the remainder paid by the supervisor (\$3072 + + 4% vacation pay + ~10% fringe benefits). Students are paid a minimum of \$17.50 per hour x 35 hours x 16 weeks, for a total of \$9800. USRA award recipients are expected to work full time (35 hours per week) for 16 consecutive weeks.

Terms:

- Students must work 16 consecutive weeks (35 hours per week)
- Students are not permitted to do thesis research while holding an award;
- Students are not permitted to take courses during working hours throughout the term of their award.

Process: The selection process normally involves a combination of cumulative GPA for completed courses and a research interest statement (responses to four career-oriented questions). The Internal Application Form is to be submitted by 3:00pm, January 17, 2025. In the meantime, you are welcome to discuss possible opportunities for supervision of summer research projects with Biology faculty members ahead of time and you should be aware that faculty members are under no obligation to make any promises to students until students have been nominated. Do not fill out the official NSERC application form until you are asked to complete it (you will only be asked if your application is successful - nominations will be made mid-February). You will find a listing of biology faculty and their research interests at <https://biology.queensu.ca/people/department/professors/>

Deadline: Completed Internal Application Forms must be submitted electronically to ug.biology@queensu.ca by 3:00pm, January 17, 2025. Successful candidates will be notified the first week of February 2025. At the February stage, successful candidates will need to secure a supervisor and complete Part II of the Internal Application Form (which will be sent out with nomination letters) and the official NSERC application form.

Supervisor Eligibility: The holder of a USRA must be supervised by a biology faculty member. New since 2020, supervisors are no longer required to hold an active grant when applying to supervise a USRA student. There is no restriction on who can supervise a USRA student, provided the university deems the faculty member eligible to supervise students and providing they can support their portion of the student award.

Eligibility for Applications:

- Students must be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada;
- Must be registered in an honours degree program in BIOL at the time of application and must be in at least year 2 of study;
- Must have obtained at least a cumulative GPA of 3.3 for completed courses.
- If you are registered in health sciences (M.D., D.D.S., and B.Sc.N.) or have a higher degree in the natural sciences or engineering you are NOT eligible. Graduating BIOL students are eligible providing they have not started a program of graduate studies.
- Queen's University and Queen's Biology is committed to equity and diversity in all programs and activities and welcomes applications from women, visible minorities, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ persons.

To hold an award students will meet the following criteria:

- be registered full-time/part-time in the term immediately before holding the award (Queen's and NSERC expects that most awards will be held by full-time students);
- not have started a program of graduate studies;
- be engaged in research and development activities in the natural sciences or engineering on a full-time basis during the tenure of the award;
- not take courses during working hours throughout the term of the award;
- work 16 consecutive weeks on a full-time basis.

Note: If you have been registered as a full-time student throughout your program but are now only registered as part-time in order to finish off the requirements of the degree, you are still eligible to apply. The award will be held immediately after your final session/year. Students may hold one USRA per fiscal year (April 1 to March 31). Although we endeavour to distribute awards widely, students may hold a maximum of three USRAs throughout their university career.