

2026 Undergraduate Student Research Awards

Purpose / The Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRA) program supports more than 3000 students annually and is administered jointly by Canada's three research granting agencies: the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). There will be 5 NSERC USRA positions available with an additional 1 SSHRC focused USRA positions offered to Black students and 1 CIHR award for eligible Black students, which is adjudicated at the university level.

Information about the awards is available at the [NSERC USRA website](#)

Student Eligibility / The applicant:

- Be a Canadian citizen, a permanent resident of Canada, or a Protected Person under subsection 95(2) of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (Canada) as of the application deadline.
- Registered in a bachelor's degree program at an eligible university as of the application deadline.
- Have a cumulative GPA equivalent to a B (3.0 at TMU) over the previous years of study.
- Completed all the course requirements of at least your bachelor's degree's first year of university study (2 academic terms). Preference will be given to students entering their 3rd and 4th year of study.
- Be engaged on a full-time basis in research and development activities in your proposed field of research during the tenure of the award.
- Not hold more than 3 USRAs throughout your (undergraduate) university career.

Preference will be given to students entering their 3rd and 4th year of study.

NOTE – The applicant is **ineligible** if:

- Currently enrolled in an undergraduate professional degree program in the health sciences (e.g., MD, DDS, BScN) (does not apply to CIHR USRAs) or
- Currently registered or have been previously registered, at any time, in a graduate program in the same field of study.

For CIHR and SSHRC USRA: Applications for these opportunities are exclusively for **Black student researchers**. To be eligible to apply for these awards, you must self-identify as Black by checking the relevant box within the application Form. Your application will be shared with the OVPRI (TMU) which is governing the CIHR/SSHRC USRA. If you are not selected for these grants, you will still be eligible and considered for the NSERC USRA.

Faculty Supervisor Eligibility / All tenured and pre-tenure faculty members are eligible to serve as supervisors. Supervisors no longer need to hold an active grant.

For NSERC USRA: The proposed research project must clearly lie within the [natural sciences and/or engineering \(NSE\)](#)

Projects deemed outside of the NSE will be deemed ineligible, and the application will be withdrawn from the competition.

Amount / \$6,000 from the Agency plus the supervisor's contribution (\$3,917.60 for 14 weeks, \$5,334.40 for 16 weeks). Contribution by the supervisor is not optional. The minimum hourly base rate (not including benefits and vacation pay) is \$17.60 but supervisors are encouraged to offer a higher wage than minimum wage to their student. The duration of the award is 14-16 weeks on a full-time basis. **Any overages will be the financial responsibility of the faculty supervisor.**

Review Process / The USRA applications will be jointly adjudicated by the Associate Dean of Arts, Undergraduate Studies and the Associate Dean of Arts, Research and Grant Development. The adjudication criteria include:

1. The quality of the research experience being offered to the student (40%)
 1. Specific research skills to be developed/enhanced.
 2. Opportunity to develop increased understanding of the depth and breadth of the student's academic field.
 3. Direct supervision and mentorship by the faculty member/supervisor and interaction with research team members.
 4. Consideration of EDI-focused measures in place.
2. Enhanced academic and career opportunities made available to the student (30%)
 1. Potential for conference attendance, participation in research seminars, and/or an advanced training opportunity.
 2. Potential for continued involvement in research and co-authorship on papers or presentations.
 3. Potential for developing post-graduation employment contacts/preparation for graduate school.
3. Excellence of the student (20%)
 1. Based on GPA, or a combination of GPA with demonstrated research interest and/or community or research experience.
4. Quality and completeness of the application (10%)
 1. Strength and likelihood of success of the project.

Due to the limited number of awards, CIHR and SSHRC USRA applications (for self-identified Black students on the student application form) will be assessed and awarded at the university level using the above criteria.

Responsibilities / Unused agency funds cannot be banked for other purposes. Successful faculty and student applicants must sign the Mutual Expectations Checklist (to be provided) prior to the start of the project.

USRA student is responsible for finding a supervisor/faculty member, discussing the proposed project and secure the supervisor's agreement to sponsor the application.

Application / Students must complete the online application below in consultation with their potential supervisor. The URO/USRA supervisor form must be completed by the Faculty supervisor and attached to the student's online application. Please note that USRA applications that are missing information or do not include the completed URO/USRA supervisor form will not be considered. The USRA student is responsible for finding a supervisor/faculty member, discussing the proposed project and secure the supervisor's agreement to sponsor the application.

New: USRA student applicants are now required to upload their transcript and a one-page student statement. Please consult the

[URO/USRA Application Upload Attachment Instructions](#) for detailed instructions.

Successful student and faculty applicants must complete Form 202 on the [NSERC On-Line Services Portal](#) by April 17, 2026 (instructions will be provided).

Deadline / Closing date: March 31, 2026.