

NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Awards 2021 Competition

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS

This document is intended to provide assistance to students interested in applying for the NSERC USRA at Ryerson University.

The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) has established a program of research awards for undergraduates. While ultimate selection of award recipients lies with NSERC, the university has been given the responsibility of forwarding a list of recommended candidates.

Information about the awards is available at:

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

You can go on-line to this site to complete an application form (Form 202):

http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/OnlineServices-ServicesEnLigne/Index_eng.asp.

Ryerson NSERC USRA 2021 Application Form: <https://forms.gle/ib13jdL51cjTyrWn6>

Award Eligibility

To be eligible to **apply and hold** an award, you must:

- Be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada;
- Be registered, at the time you apply, in a bachelor's degree program at an eligible university
- **Have obtained over the previous years of study a cumulative GPA of 3.67**
- Have completed all the course requirements of at least the first year of university study (2 academic terms) of your bachelor's degree;
- Be engaged on a full-time basis in research and development activities in the natural sciences or engineering during the tenure of the award

Academic Record (i.e., Grade Point Average - GPA)

NSERC specifies that eligible students must have “obtained, over the previous years of study, a cumulative average of at least second class (a grade of ‘B’) as defined by your university.” However, it is at the University’s discretion to create its selection criteria. For Ryerson, due to the historically high caliber of applicants for this competition, the **minimum cumulative** GPA that we will be accepting this year is **3.67**. As with any award of this sort, the odds are that the higher your marks, the better your chances of being recommended for an award. However, GPA is not the only criterion used in the selection process. Year of study will also be considered in the ranking process - **Priority will be given to students entering into their 3rd and 4th year of study.**

Prior NSERC Undergraduate Awards

Part of the NSERC mandate is “to stimulate your interest in research in the natural sciences and engineering. These awards are also meant to encourage you to undertake graduate studies and pursue a research career in these fields.” We consider these NSERC undergraduate awards a very important part of the development of future research scientists. Consequently, we would like to see as many students as possible have an opportunity to participate in what is a unique experience at the undergraduate level. **All other factors being equal, we would recommend a candidate who has never held a NSERC USRA over one who has previously received one.**

Choosing a Supervisor

You must work under the supervision of a Ryerson University faculty member who has **a research project that clearly lies in the natural sciences and/or engineering** [i.e. aligned with NSERC’s mandate].

It is not necessary for the proposed supervisor’s research program to be exclusively within the NSE.

Multiple Applications

Whether or not you have applied for a USRA at another university has no bearing on your Ryerson application. However, **we will accept only one application per student for the 2021 competition.** In other words, you cannot apply through more than one supervising professor at Ryerson.

Research Project Description

A brief description of your proposed summer research project is required on Form 202 Part II. You should fully understand the contents of this outline and we assume collaboration between student and professor in preparing this part of the application. There **must** be a statement of your involvement in the project, as well as to the expected quality of the training to be received. The Form 202 Part II should include:

- An outline of the possible methodology for your proposed research project.
- A statement of the purpose of your research - i.e., what you hope to achieve/potential impact.
- An outline of the your (the student) role in the project (the application is not complete without this).
- An outline of the expected quality of the training to be received (the application is not complete without this).

Student Statement

In order to assist the selection committee to rank the NSERC USRA applicants, each applicant is asked to submit a 1-page statement [single-spaced, 12pt Times New Roman, 2cm margins all around], as a supplement to your completed Form 202, that describes why you want to undertake this research project and how it and the NSERC USRA relate to your future academic/career plans. If you have previously held an NSERC USRA (or have previous research experience), describe what your role in the previous project was, what you learned from the experience (including your involvement in publications, posters, and presentations), **and why you should be considered for another NSERC USRA award.** This statement is to be written by you alone, not in collaboration with your supervisor.