

University of Saskatchewan NSERC USRA Adjudication Committee Terms of Reference

Updated December 2023

MANDATE

The University of Saskatchewan NSERC USRA Adjudication Committee adjudicates applications to the USask NSERC USRA competition and provides recommendations for funding to the Coordinator for Undergraduate Research, Scholarly, and Artistic Work.

MEMBERSHIP

The USask NSERC USRA Adjudication Committee is comprised of up to 15. Members plus two Committee Chairs. Members apply to serve on the committee through an open call and are selected based on their expertise in natural sciences and/ or engineering research from a range of NSERC-fundable disciplines and to support the creation of a representative and equitable committee. The Committee should include at least 25% of members from an Engineering related discipline and 25% of members from the natural sciences.

Committee Co-Chairs:

- The Committee will select two Chairs – one with expertise in the natural sciences and the other in Engineering or applied sciences. The Chairs will work with the Committee Coordinator to assign reviewers to applications. The role of the Chairs are further outlined under Review Process.

Committee Members:

- Must qualify to apply for NSERC funding, with a preference given to those who have held Tri-Agency funds;
- Demonstrate a commitment to mentoring and training undergraduate student researchers;
- Must be affiliated with the University of Saskatchewan in a tenure, tenure track or term position.

The Committee should reflect the diversity of the community we serve and include researchers at all stages of their careers. The Committee values interdisciplinarity and welcomes researchers with experience with SSHRC and CIHR in addition to NSERC.

The USask NSERC USRA Adjudication Committee is coordinated by the Coordinator, Undergraduate Research, Scholarly, and Artistic Work (Coordinator) and receives administrative support from RASI.

APPOINTMENT

Committee member terms are appointed for 3-years, renewable once upon approval by the Chairs. One- or two-year term appointments may be made to ensure that turnover for the Committee does not exceed one-third in any given calendar year.

REVIEW PROCESS

The Committee Chairs will work with the Coordinator to assign at least two committee members per application for adjudication reviewers. Applications will be reviewed using the provided rubric.

A Committee member cannot review or vote on applications from his/her department. In cases where committee members are applying for a USRA with a student from a different department, they may not review or vote on applications from their proposed student's department. In the case of applications received from the same College/School as a Committee member, a member may review or vote if deemed appropriate by the Chair.

In cases when the Committee is split on its decision to support the application, the Chairs may solicit a third review from the Committee membership.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Committee Members must disclose any conflicts of interest, or perceived conflicts of interest to the Chairs.

Adjudicators may still put forward student applications to the NSERC USRA process but must excuse themselves from any committee discussion relating to their students.

MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES and MEETING SCHEDULE

The Committee will meet in January / February to review the adjudication process and calibrate their application of the rubric.

Committee members will have at least one week to evaluate their assigned applications. The Committee will meet in February to discuss the ranking of students and any close or contentious applications. A second meeting will be held if more time is required to finalize decisions. The Adjudication meetings will be scheduled at least one month in advance.

REVIEW

This Terms of Reference should be reviewed annually.