

# Introduction to USask's NSERC Undergrad Summer Research Awards Program

Be sure to register with  
your **USask email** in order  
to receive the meeting link!



 **December 4, 2024**  **11:30 AM-12:30 PM**  **Online, via Zoom**



BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

1

## Territory Acknowledgement

As we gather here today, we acknowledge we are on Treaty 6 Territory and the traditional Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

The Undergraduate Research Initiative is committed to reconciliation in our research, scholarly, and artistic work. This means always learning and relearning, supporting work that is led by Indigenous peoples and communities, and committing to work that is beneficial and accessible to Indigenous communities.

2

## Session Overview

What is the NSERC USRA Program?

NSERC USRAs at USask & Application Tips

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

3

## How familiar are you with the NSERC USRA program?



- A. I am very familiar and have held an NSERC USRA before.
- B. I'm familiar with the program but have not held an NSERC USRA before.
- C. This is all new to me!

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

4

## Canada's Tri-Agency

**Natural Sciences and  
Engineering  
Research Council  
(NSERC)**

**Social Sciences  
and Humanities  
Research Council  
(SSHRC)**

**Canadian  
Institutes of  
Health Research  
(CIHR)**

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

5

## What is a Tri-Agency USRA?

**Award's support  
full time research  
work (for 14-16  
weeks).**

**Students can  
apply at any  
Canadian  
Institution. The  
institution sets  
the process and  
timelines for  
applications. You  
apply to the  
institution that  
the faculty  
member is at.**

**You apply for the  
award with a  
faculty  
supervisor. Part  
of the application  
is completed by  
the student and  
part by the  
faculty  
supervisor.**

**The award  
provides \$6,000  
towards paying  
for your work  
term. The rest is  
paid for by your  
faculty  
supervisor.**

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

6

## Award Eligibility – To Apply

- Be a Canadian Citizen, Permanent Resident, or have Protected Status. **International Students are not eligible for this award program.**
- Be registered in a bachelor's degree program at the application deadline (January 2025)
- Have a cumulative average of at least a B- (or 70).
- You cannot be enrolled in an undergraduate professional degree program in the health sciences (MD, DDS, or BScN) to hold an NSERC. **(Does not apply for CIHR USRAs).**
- You cannot have been registered at any time in a graduate program in the same field of study (for example, you cannot have started a graduate program in the natural sciences or engineering and apply for an NSERC USRA).
- You can only hold 1 NSERC USRA per fiscal year (April 1 – March 31)
- You can only hold 3 NSERC USRAs in their undergrad career.
- If you already hold a bachelor's degree and are studying toward a second bachelor's degree, you may still apply to this program.

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

7

## Award Eligibility – To Hold the Award

- Have completed at least two semesters of university.
- You can hold the award if you have completed your degree (for example if you convocated in the spring).
- You are expected to engage on a full-time basis in research and development activities during the tenure of the award.
- Award recipients may take a maximum of two courses during the tenure of the award if special arrangements to make up the time have been made with the supervisor.
- Students meet the eligibility criteria listed above and the proposed research project must be for **14-16 weeks of full-time work** in a subject matter appropriate to the award.

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

8

## Our Award Allocations for Last Year (Summer 2024)– We are Still Waiting For Information for This Year (Summer 2025)

**NSERC USRAs**  
60 Awards for USask

**NSERC USRAs for Indigenous Student Researchers**  
Unlimited Awards

**NSERC USRAs for Black Student Researchers**  
Unlimited Awards

**SSHRC USRA For Black Student Researchers**  
2 Award for USask

**CIHR USRA for Black Student Researchers**  
2 Award for USask

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

9

## USask USRAs Summer 2025

Projects must be supervised by a USask professor

Projects must be 14-16 weeks, for full time work (37.5 hours)

Students are paid \$15 – 20.41 / hour plus benefits. Your rate of pay is set by your faculty supervisor. The \$6,000 award pays part of your wage

Applications will be due in January.

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

10

## Application Process



BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

11

**Award eligibility is set by NSERC – but we have information on our website.**

**If you have any questions regarding your eligibility – please reach out to our team!**

**If NSERC offers awards for Black and Indigenous Students this year, there will be additional eligibility requirements for those awards.**

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

12

## Finding a Supervisor

- You will need to find a faculty supervisor before applying for these awards. That faculty member will complete part of the application.
- Know what USRA you are interested in applying for (and make sure that you are eligible).
- You will have to reach out to that professor to ask if they are taking summer students and if they would be interested in working with you on an application for an NSERC USRA. A professor agreeing to apply for an NSERC USRA with you does not mean that they will be able to hire you if you do not receive the award. Discuss with the professor what opportunities are available if you are successful and if you are not successful.

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

13

## Finding a Supervisor

Start with who  
you know!

Think about your  
interests & who  
would be a good  
mentor for you.

Give yourself  
lots of time – this  
is the step to  
start working on  
now!

Be prepared!

Be formal /  
professional in  
your  
communications.

Review slides-  
how to talk to a  
Professor / watch  
recording.

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

14

## Complete the Application

Applications Submitted Through Canvas (successful applicants will be required to submit to the NSERC Portal but will receive support to do this!). Students from other institutions will have to email their applications.

You do not have to provide USask transcripts. If you have attended other universities, you will have to provide official transcripts for those institutions.

Minor updates to student application form from last year to add clarity. Some updates to faculty application form related to NSE Eligibility and Hiring Info (in case you are selected).

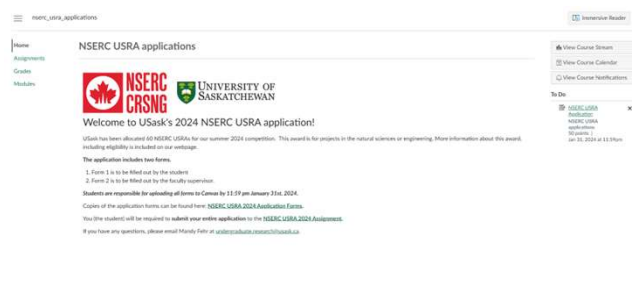
Review the Rubric!

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

15

## Application – Canvas

- The application portals for each award are separate. Students should select the award that is the best fit for them and only apply for one award.
- Click on the link to add yourself to the Canvas Course for the Award you plan to apply for.
- The Canvas Course includes the application forms and the rubric. It is where you will submit all parts of your application as an assignment by the deadline.
- All of the forms and rubric will be posted on our website.



BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

16



# Application Canvas

mserc\_usra\_applications > Assignments > NSERC USRA Application

Inmersive Reader

- Home
- Assignments
- Grades
- Modules

## NSERC USRA Application

Start Assignment

Due Jan 31, 2024 by 11:59p.m. Points 50 Submitting a file upload File Types doc, docx, and pdf Available until Jan 31, 2024 at 11:59p.m.

### Submit Application for NSERC USRA

Please submit your application here. Your application should include:

1. Student Application Form.
2. Faculty Application Form (Form 202 Part II).
3. If applicable: If you attended a university or universities other than USask, you will need to upload official transcripts from those universities. If you only attended USask, you do not need to attach USask transcripts.
  - Please attach all required files in one submission attempt (Use + Add Another File).
  - You may submit files as .doc, .docx, or .pdf
  - For information on how to submit an assignment and how to add multiple files to the same assignment submission see: [How do I upload a file as an assignment submission in Canvas?](#)

### NSERC USRA 2024 Competition Rubric

Criteria	Ratings						Pts
Academic Performance	15 to +12.0 pts Exceptional The student's overall academic performance is exceptional for their program and year of study; or has maintained an exceptional average over for the past two years - showing improvement. Or a student	12 to +9.0 pts Excellent The student's overall academic performance is excellent for their program and year of study; or has maintained an excellent average over for the past two years - demonstrating improvement. Or a	9 to +6.0 pts Good / Satisfactory The student has a good overall average for their program and year of study; or has maintained a good average over for the past two years - showing improvement. The student shows	6 to +3.0 pts Needs Improvement The student almost has a 70 % average; or has started to show improvement in grades but has not sustained improvement for 2 years. The student shows a	3 to +0.0 pts Unsatisfactory The student almost has a 70 % average; The student does not show improvement and may or may not provide an	0 pts Missing	

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

17

# Application Forms

## Student Application Form

1. Info related to eligibility, and contact info
2. Awards (please list all)
3. Required questions re. experience and skills
4. Optional question to contextualize academic performance (this will be different from last year)

## Faculty Application Form

1. Completed by your potential supervisor
2. You will submit the form through Canvas

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

18

## Application – Adjudication & Rubric

### 1. Academic Potential 30%

Not just grades but looking at improvement over time; awards; and any personal context that you provide (this is optional and will be a more structured question).

### 2. Quality of the Research Experience & Anticipated Mentorship (40%)

This is based on the Faculty Application Form. It includes the quality of the research experience; the feasibility of the research experience; the outline of the student's role, and the quality of the training/mentorship.

### 3. Student Research Potential (30%)

Based on student answers to the 3 required student statement of interest questions on the Student Application Form. Each question is worth 10%. We will have a workshop in January on how to write about your skills. It's important that this section connects to the project description provided by your supervisor.

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

19

## Results & Requirements for Successful Applicants

Our goal is to notify successful applicants as soon as possible. We are planning to combine the Award letter with the letter of offer for your summer position.

Successful applicants will be required to submit their application to the NSERC Portal (there will be workshops / supports).

Successful applicants will be signed up for SURE Newsletters and expected to attend 4 workshops during the summer.

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

20

## Focus on the parts of the application where you have control!

1. Find a supervisor and work with that supervisor on your application. Even though there is a student form and a faculty form – a strong application will have clear connections between the two forms.

2. Review the rubric – and try applying it to your own application. If you have questions – come to one of our drop-in sessions or contact us!

3. The Adjudicators do not know you / your work. Can you make it as easy as possible for them to see how you meet the criteria! This includes following guidelines around word limits etc.

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

21

## Student Supports & Resources

<b>How to Talk to a Professor About a Research Position</b>	Workshop Held Yesterday	Slides will be posted soon! You can also check out our recording of the session provided last year.
<b>SURE Session – Identifying and Writing About Research Skills for Applications</b>	Early January	TBD
<b>NSERC Application Support Sessions for Students</b>	January	In-Person, Room TBD

We will be updating our website as soon as we launch the program for 2025 and will include information about upcoming events and supports for students. Please sign up for our newsletter and / or follow us on Instagram to keep up to date.

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

22

What questions do you have?

What else would support you to  
complete your application?

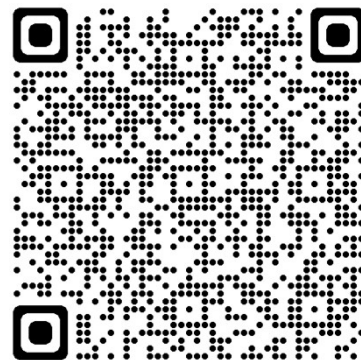
BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

23

## Contact Information

Questions? Send an email!

Mandy Fehr  
Coordinator, Undergraduate  
Research, Scholarly, and Artistic Work  
[Undergraduate.research@usask.ca](mailto:Undergraduate.research@usask.ca)



BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

24