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INTRODUCTION TO THE NSERC USRA PROGRAM

Undergraduate Research Initiative

Wednesday at 4:30 pm, December 6 (In-person)

Thursday at Noon, December 7 (Virtual)

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.

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Our goal is for all undergraduate students to have an authentic mentored research, scholarly, or artistic experience by the time they finish their degree!

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH INITIATIVE

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Opportunities for Students

In-Class Opportunities Such as the First Year Research Experience (FYRE)

Co-Curricular Training in our SURE Program & Summer Symposium.

Student Jobs!

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Canada's Tri-Agency

Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC)

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)

Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)

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Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRA) Summer 2024

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 1 Award for USask

CIHR USRA for Black Student Researchers 1 Award for USask

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USRAs Summer 2024

Projects must be supervised by a USask professor

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

Students are paid $14 - $16.96 / hour plus benefits. $6000 is paid by the award and the rest by your faculty supervisor.

Applications due by 11:59 pm Jan 31st, 2024

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USRA Program - 2024

Review Eligibility Criteria

1. Are you eligible for this award?

Find a Supervisor

2. How do you find a faculty supervisor?

Complete the Application

3. How do you apply?

Changes have been made for 2024!

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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 31st 2024)
- 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.

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.

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Award Eligibility- USRAs for Black Student Researchers

CIHR and SSHRC USRAs are, at the present time, exclusively for Black student researchers. To be considered for these awards or the NSERC USRA for Black Student Researchers, you must self-identify as Black. Applying for this award means that you self-identify as Black and that you consent to this information about your identity being shared with NSERC and, if awarded, publicly.

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Award Eligibility- NSERC USRA for Indigenous Student Researchers

Only Indigenous Students may apply for the NSERC USRA for Indigenous Student Researchers. Only First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada are eligible for this award. Verification of Indigenous Membership/Citizenship at the University of Saskatchewan is led and determined by the **deybwewin | taapwaywin | tapwewin: Indigenous Truth policy** and Standing Committee in accordance with the processes developed to enact the policy. **Verification of Indigenous Membership/Citizenship with documentation** is a condition of receiving this award.

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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.

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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.

Attend our “How to Talk to a Professor” Session Next Week!

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Complete the Application - Changes for 2024

Applications Submitted Through Canvas (successful applicants will be required to submit to the NSERC Portal)

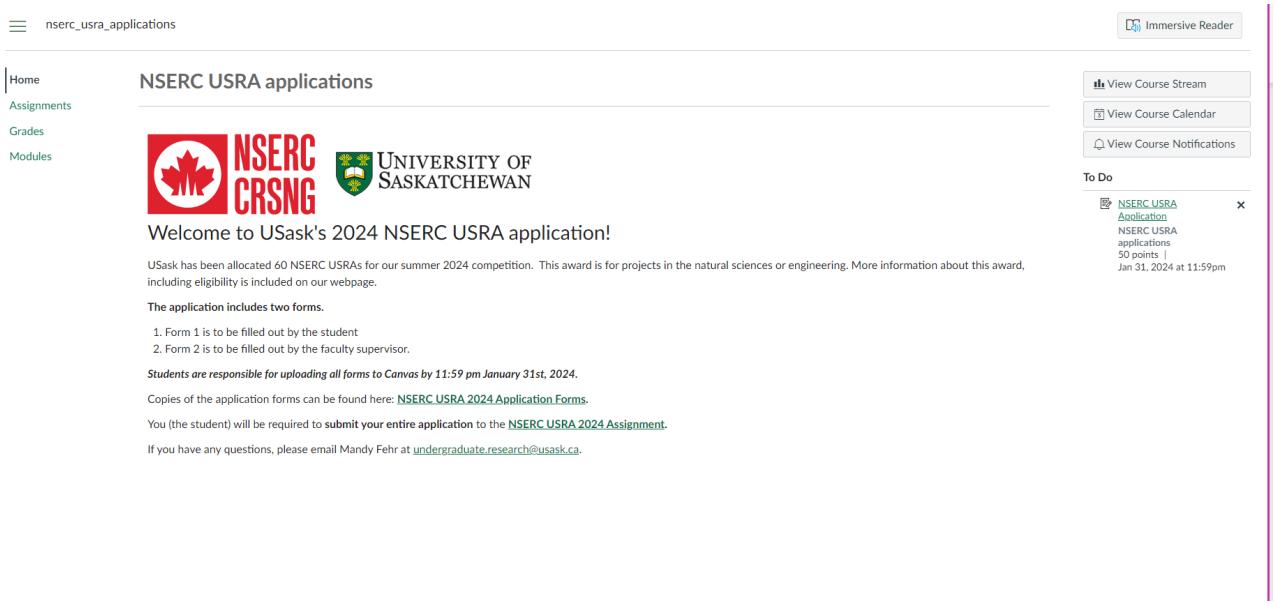
You do not have to provide USask transcripts. If you have attended other universities, you will have to provide official transcripts for those institutions.

Changes to Student Application Form to combine into one form. The statement of interest component is now broken down into more specific questions.

The evaluation weighting is the same as last year, but a more detailed rubric has been developed.

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 11:59 pm on January 31st 2024.



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Application Canvas

nserc_usra_applications › Assignments › NSERC USRA Application

Immersive 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 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**	

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Application Forms

Student Application Form

1. This year combined into one form
2. Info related to eligibility, and contact info.
3. Awards (please list all)
4. Last year's statement of interest is now 3 questions and an optional 4th

Faculty Application Form

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

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Student Application Form – Updated Questions

1. What experiences (academic, work, extracurricular, volunteering) or skills do you have that would support you to complete your summer research project. Please provide specific examples.
2. How will your summer research project help you to practice and develop research skills and other competencies? Please provide specific examples.
3. Why do you want to complete your research project and how will it contribute to your future education or career? Please provide specific examples
4. Optional. Is there anything else that you would like our adjudicators to know to help them to evaluate your academic performance (grades and awards)? This could include explaining any challenges that you have faced or explanations for lower grades. It could also include letting us know about your successes, such as maintaining an excellent average while having extra responsibilities such as work or volunteering. This question can help our adjudicators to understand your academic story and can be factored into their evaluation of your academic excellence.

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Application – Adjudication & Rubric

1. Academic Potential 30%

Not just grades but looking at improvement over time; awards; the context of different departments / programs; and any personal context that you provide (for example, challenges).

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%.

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Results & Requirements for Successful Applicants

All applicants will be notified of results during the February break. Successful waitlisted applicants will be notified by early March.

All students will receive your score and general feedback.

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.

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Upcoming Student Events

Introduction to USask's NSERC USRA Program - Virtual Session	Thursday, December 7, 2023 | 12:00 PM	Online
SURE How to Talk to a Professor About a Research Position - In-Person Session	Tuesday, December 12, 2023 | 12:00 PM	Arts 104
SURE How to Talk to a Professor About a Research Position - Virtual Session	Thursday, December 14, 2023 | 4:30 PM	Online
SURE Session – Identifying and Writing About Research Skills for Applications	Early January	TBD
NSERC Application Support Sessions for Students	January	In-Person, Room TBD

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What questions do you have?

What else would support you to complete your application?

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Contact Information

Questions? Send an email!

Mandy Fehr

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Research, Scholarly, and Artistic Work

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https://vpresearch.usask.ca/students/undergraduate/undergrad-research-opportunities/nserc-usras.php