

Call for applications: Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRA) for Black student researchers

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) have launched [USRAs for Black student researchers](#).

For NSERC USRAs: Institutions may recommend applications from self-identified Black student researchers for USRAs beyond their allocations of awards. Please refer to [UPEI's call for NSERC USRAs](#).

At the present time, **CIHR and SSHRC USRAs** are exclusively for Black student researchers. UPEI has received a quota of 1 CIHR USRA and 1 SSHRC USRA for 2024.

Eligibility and UPEI requirements:

- be registered in a Bachelor's degree program at an eligible university as of the deadline date for applications

Please note that students from other institutions remain eligible to apply to UPEI; however, UPEI students will be given priority and non-UPEI students will only be considered if a justification can be made based on a student's specialized area of expertise

- have completed at least 1 full year (10 courses) in a bachelor's program of academic study as an undergraduate by May 2024
- must not intend to begin a graduate program in the summer of 2024
- have not held more than 2 previous USRA awards in total
- be a Canadian citizen, permanent resident of Canada, or a Protected Person under subsection 95(2) of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (Canada)
- have obtained, over the previous years of study, a cumulative average of at least 80% (cGPA 3.7), &
- meet all other eligibility criteria as described in the Undergraduate Student Research Awards program description (https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/UG-PC/USRA-BRPC_eng.asp)

Students cannot apply for both USRA and a UPEI Engineering or Science Undergraduate Student Research Award (EURA/SURA). UPEI will allow supervisors to apply for one USRA for CIHR and SSHRC and two applications for NSERC; however, priority may be given to supervisors who haven't received awards in other streams (including UPEI EURA and SURA competitions).

Award information:

- Applicants must be available to work 14 to 16 consecutive weeks (with no holiday time) in the summer of 2024.
- Recipients will be paid by an hourly rate as UPEI employees. The agency's contribution is \$6000, and supervisors will be required to provide a top-up amount to ensure compliance with UPEI student pay rates based on 14-16 weeks of full-time employment (37.5 hours/week). The expectation regarding the duration of the award (14, 15, or 16 weeks) should be discussed between the supervisor and student before applying.

Students will be required to submit a brief report, highlighting the project's progress and outputs, upon completion of the award term.

Objective of the program	The objective of the USRA program is to provide research experience that complements the degree program to encourage students to consider graduate studies and/or a research career.
Award Information	1. USRAs have a value of \$6,000 for a 14-16-week period . Supervisors are required to supplement the award to ensure compliance with UPEI student pay rates based on 14-16 weeks of full-time employment (37.5 hours/week). 2. The program makes no provision for sick or vacation leave, or for other types of interruptions. Awards may not be deferred.
How to apply: Use Form 202 available at: www.nserc.ca	Note: Students can pick only one supervisor and project. Supervisors are allowed to submit a maximum of one application to CIHR and one application to SSHRC, and a maximum of two applications to the NSERC USRA program . Supervisors do not need to be agency grant holders. 1. Students will fill out Part 1 electronically and provide their supervisor with their reference number. Note that students must upload their transcripts as a single PDF file. Transcripts can be unofficial, but successful applicants may be asked to submit the official hard copies of their transcripts for verification before taking up the award. Degree Audit reports will NOT be accepted in lieu of transcripts. To be eligible to apply for these awards, students must self-identify as Black by checking the relevant box within the application form. 2. Supervisors will fill out Part 2 then submit the completed application on-line. 3. As part of the application process for UPEI, students are asked to write a Letter of Interest with the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research project: demonstrate an understanding of the research project; • Experience: describe previous research or relevant experience, especially funded through the USRA program; • Expected outcomes: describe the potential impact of the project as well as expected outcomes including but not limited to research paper, presentation at scientific events, reports and posters; • Career objectives: describe how a USRA would further the applicant's career and professional objectives. This part of the application is limited to one page (excluding references), to be submitted electronically to Research Services (researchservices@upei.ca) by the competition deadline. 4. Students will be required to submit a brief report, highlighting the project's progress and outputs, upon completion of the award term.
UPEI requirements	

UPEI DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF ALL DOCUMENTS: February 20, 2024 by 4:00pm
Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted.

An **information session** regarding undergraduate student research awards will be held on Friday, **January 26, 2024, from 2:00 to 3:00pm** in Kelley Building room 210. Students and supervisors are encouraged to attend.

For more information: Leslie Cudmore | 902-566-0709 | lcudmore@upei.ca
Research Grants Coordinator, Office of Research Services