Hi students:

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY:

MBB DEADLINE for students and supervisors:

By Thursday, January 24, 2019 at 9:00 am NSERC USRA applicants must submit their online application to NSERC and a paper copy to the MBB office, and VPR/KEY Big Data USRA applicants must submit their paper application, to the MBB office. Note that this include uploading transcripts and having a supervisor complete form 202 (Part II).

NOTE: The MBB department has a different process and deadlines are different from what is posted on the Graduate Studies website. ENSURE you follow the MBB process and deadlines in this email. Interested students have to find a supervisor first and then apply. Make sure to email your supervisor to complete Part II of Form 202 before you submit your final application to NSERC and the MBB office.

About the Awards

The USRAs are granted to undergraduate students working in a research capacity with an academic supervisor for a 16 week duration. While meant to stimulate interest and encourage undergraduate students to pursue graduate degrees and/or a research career, they are also a great way to recruit students into our graduate programs.

There are three types of USRA Sciences available:

- NSERC USRA Program
- VPR USRA – Sciences
- KEY Big Data USRA

Value & Tenure of USRA (Sciences)

The award portion of the USRAs is $4,500 for the 16-week period at 35 hours per week. The student must also receive a faculty supplement valued at a minimum $2,584 + 8% benefits.

Basic Eligibility

1. NSERC USRA Program (full student eligibility on NSERC’s website):
   - be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada;
   - be registered in a bachelor's degree program (at time of application);
   - have been registered in at least one of the two terms prior to the award term;
   - have obtained a CGPA of at least 2.67;
   - hold the USRA for full time research activities in the natural sciences or engineering, with a supervisor who holds an NSERC research grant (Research Tools and Instruments, and/or Infrastructure Grants are not eligible);
   - not have started a program of graduate studies in the natural sciences or engineering at any time while applying for or holding the USRA.

2. VPR USRA Sciences Program (full student eligibility on Grad Studies website):
   - be an SFU undergraduate student;
   - be registered in a Bachelor's degree program (at time of application);
   - have been registered in at least one of the two terms prior to the award term;
   - have obtained a CGPA of at least 2.67;
   - hold the USRA for full time research activities in the natural sciences or engineering with a supervisor who holds major grant funding.
3. **KEY Big Data USRA Program**
- same eligibility as the VPR USRA Sciences program but student must be incorporating big data tools, approaches and analysis into their research.

**Student Eligibility: More information**
- If you are eligible to apply to the NSERC USRA you need not apply to the VPR awards. If you are B-listed and not successful at NSERC you will be considered for the VPR award.
- Applicants who only apply to the VPR/KEY awards need only provide unofficial transcripts. Make sure you choose **UNOFFICIAL** and **NOT** Advising transcript when printing your transcripts.
- When submitting the paper copy of your application to the MBB office, students applying to the NSERC USRA need only provide a copy of your official transcripts. You can keep the original for your records.
- **Regarding transcripts:** The NSERC website states: "Official, up-to-date transcripts for all university programs must be provided. In this context, official transcripts are those that show the name of the institution, the program in which you are enrolled, your complete course of study, your marks and the legend explaining acronyms etc. Therefore, you need to request official transcripts. Be sure to also upload the legend on the back of the transcripts - only upload the legend once at the end of your transcripts.
- **For NSERC USRA:** applicants must email the selected supervisor to complete Form 202 Part II well in advance of the deadline date; the supervisor will need to know the applicants reference number to do so. The proposed supervisor must complete Form 202 Part II online. The supervisor submits their form online.
- **For VPR/KEY USRA:** applicants and the supervisor complete and print the form found at: [http://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/awards/undergraduate-awards/sciences-awards.html](http://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/awards/undergraduate-awards/sciences-awards.html)

**USRA student enrolment**
Although Canadian/PR students do not have to be enrolled full time while holding the award, there are some options for enrollment:
- a co-op term if you run your USRA program through co-op;
- **UGRAD 401** (undergraduate research term); this is a full time/0 unit course. There are student fees for the term and a U-Pass charge, totaling approx. $200.

USRA students with study permits must comply with conditions of their temporary resident status and ensure they have the proper work authorization. Note that:
- To hold a USRA, international students must show full time registration; both co-op and UGRAD 401 are considered full time.
- International students must have a valid co-op work permit if they are to be enrolled in a co-op placement to hold their USRA
- If NOT using UGRAD 401 - International students can hold a USRA in the Summer term, as a “regularly scheduled break”. To be eligible, they must have maintained their full-time enrollment in the previous Spring and upcoming Fall terms.
- Prior to accepting the USRA, international students are advised to check with an International Student Advisor at [intl_advising@sfu.ca](mailto:intl_advising@sfu.ca) to confirm their work eligibility

**Payment – Award Portion**

**For SFU students:** The $4,500 award portion will be paid through go.sfu.ca in one lump sum payment in the first month of their appointment. The funds will be applied to their SFU account, paying any fees owing; remaining funds will be processed by direct deposit or via check.

**For non-SFU students:** non-SFU students will be paid their award portion through payroll as a ‘national scholarship’. They will receive a lump sum payment of $4,500 in the first month.

Students will receive a T4A slip (instead of a T4 slip) for the NSERC or VPR award portion ($4,500).
**Student Eligibility:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quick Summary</th>
<th>NSERC USRA</th>
<th>VPR/KEY USRA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can International students apply?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can non SFU students apply?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does funding held by the Supervisor have to be an NSERC grant?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can the student take courses while holding award?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How to Apply**

Students eligible for both NSERC and VPR/KEY awards should create an NSERC Online Account and complete the application for an Undergraduate Student Research Award Form 202 (Part I).

Students who are **only** eligible for a VPR/KEY USRA must complete the application form found on the Grad Studies website: [http://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/awards/undergraduate-awards/sciences-awards.html](http://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/awards/undergraduate-awards/sciences-awards.html)

**Eligibility (for the Supervisor/Co-supervisor)**

Students holding NSERC USRAs must be supervised by faculty members holding NSERC research grants. Supervisors must either have held an active research grant at the time a student applied for the award or have an active research grant at the time the student holds the award. Researchers holding only Research Tools and Instruments, and/or Infrastructure Grants, are not eligible.

Contact time between the USRA holder and supervisor is the key to the program’s success. The supervisor must be accessible in person on a regular basis. NSERC allows USRA students to work under the supervision of two NSERC grantees as long as they work on a genuine research project allowing them to be exposed to all aspects of the research process. However, students must not move between laboratories on different projects over the 16-week period since this would dilute the value of the experience. **One NSERC grantee must be designated as the student’s official supervisor. Co-supervision by a non-NSERC grantee is not accepted.**

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Please contact me if you have any questions.

Regards,

Mimi

mbb@sfu.ca

December 19, 2018