Hi students:

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY (there is a lot of information):

There are two types of USRA available for MBB:
- NSERC / CIHR USRA Program - applications to both of these are submitted to NSERC website
- VPR USRA – Sciences - applications are submitted to MBB Dept

Student Eligibility:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quick Summary</th>
<th>NSERC / CIHR USRA</th>
<th>VPR USRA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can International students apply?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<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>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

MBB DEADLINE for students and supervisors:
By Wed, February 15, 2023 at 10:00 am NSERC USRA applicants must submit their online application to NSERC and an electronic copy to me at mbb@sfu.ca, and VPR USRA applicants must submit their electronic application, to me at mbb@sfu.ca. 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 and Postdoctoral Studies" website. ENSURE you follow the MBB process and deadlines in this email. Interested students have to find a supervisor first and then apply. (If the supervisor has a joint appointment with another department or faculty, you must apply to their home department or faculty.) Make sure to email your supervisor to complete Part II of Form 202 before you submit your final application to NSERC and an electronic copy to me at mbb@sfu.ca.

About the Awards
The USRAs are granted to undergraduate students working in a research capacity with an academic supervisor for a 16-week duration. Meant to encourage undergraduate students to pursue graduate degrees and/or a research career, this is also a way to recruit students into graduate programs.

Flexibility is given in terms of delivery method. The NSERC / CIHR and VPR USRAs can be conducted in-person or remotely, at the discretion of the supervisor.

Value & Tenure of USRA (Sciences)
The award portion of the USRAs is $6,000 for the 16-week period at 35 hours per week. The student must also receive a faculty supplement valued at a minimum $2,764 + 14.18% employment benefits in accordance with BCs minimum wage.

NEW this year:
The award portion will no longer be applied to a student’s goSFU account; it will now be paid through payroll with the supervisor top-up portion.
Basic Eligibility Requirements

1. **NSERC / CIHR USRA Program** (full student eligibility on NSERC’s [website](https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/students-etudiants/ug-pc/usra-brpc_eng.asp)): 
   - 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 (for NSERC) or in health (for CIHR), with a supervisor who holds major grant funding or other funds to pay the student’s supplement;
   - **not** have started a Graduate Program at any time while applying for or holding the USRA.
   - not enrolled in a thesis course during the USRA term.
   - *Additionally, this year CIHR USRAs are reserved for Black students doing health research*

2. **VPR USRA Sciences Program** (full student eligibility on Grad Studies [website](https://www.sfu.ca/grad-studies/)): 
   - 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 or other funds to pay student supplement.

**Student Eligibility: More information**

- If you are eligible to apply to the NSERC / CIHR USRA you need not apply to the VPR awards. If you are not successful at NSERC you will be considered for the VPR award provided you are an SFU student.
- If you apply to the CIHR USRA but are not successful in that competition, you will still be considered for the NSERC USRA competition provided your research has a component in natural sciences or engineering.

**HOW TO APPLY**

**Students eligible for NSERC / CIHR awards** should create an NSERC Online Account (see: [https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/students-etudiants/ug-pc/usra-brpc_eng.asp](https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/students-etudiants/ug-pc/usra-brpc_eng.asp)) and complete the application for an Undergraduate Student Research Award Form 202 (Part I). The choice of agency (NSERC or CIHR) is made on the Form 202; CIHR USRA applicants must self-identify as Black in their application form. *Students submitting Form 202 do NOT need to complete a separate application for a VPR USRA.*

Students who are eligible **only** for a VPR USRA (i.e. international SFU students) must complete the application form found on the Grad & Postdoc Studies website: [Choose a USRA - Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies - Simon Fraser University (sfu.ca)](https://www.sfu.ca/grad-studies/)

**Application process: More information**

- While applications containing unofficial transcripts will be accepted, you should note that submission of an application will continue to serve as a formal attestation that you have provided true, complete, accurate information in the application and its related documents. Make sure you choose **UNOFFICIAL** and **NOT** Advising transcript when printing/saving your transcripts.
- **For NSERC / CIHR 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 USRA**: applicants, and the supervisor complete, and sign the form, and email me at mbb@sfu.ca, found at: [VPRS_USRA_Application.pdf](https://www.sfu.ca/grad-studies/)

**Payment Information**

**Payment – Payroll**
Payroll processes both components of the payroll appointments, and students will start receiving biweekly deposits in their bank account (with mandatory deduction and personal income tax withholding if applicable).

**Enrolment Information for USRA holders**
Although students cannot be enrolled in classes full time while holding the award, undergraduate students can get Co-op work term credit for a USRA towards their Co-op degree designation. By enrolling in a Co-op practicum course, students maintain their full-time status and are eligible for U-Pass, health plan, etc. Please contact Susan Wiggins, MBB Co-op Coordinator at susan_wiggins@sfu.ca for further details.

**USRA Students with Study Permits**
International students must comply with the conditions of their temporary resident status and ensure they have the proper work authorization.

Requirements for international students holding a USRA vary depending on the term:

- **Fall or Spring terms:** International students must show full-time enrolment through Co-op.

- **Summer term:** International students can hold a USRA in the Summer term, as either:
  - A "regularly scheduled break" without the requirement of full-time enrollment
  - To be eligible, they must have maintained their full-time enrollment in the previous Spring and upcoming Fall terms; OR
  - As a co-op work term.

**Holding a USRA as a Co-op work term:**
Students may hold their USRA in a co-op practicum course as part of the SFU Co-op Program.

*Note: the student must have previously joined the co-op program and have a valid co-op work permit at the time of the USRA offer acceptance. Students must apply to join the co-op program, which is typically done two terms in advance of their desired co-op work term period. This is to allow sufficient time to secure the required co-op work permit prior to the start of their employment. If this is not the case, the USRA must be deferred to a subsequent term.*

Prior to accepting the USRA, international students are advised to check with an International Student Advisor, Immigration Specialist at intl_advising@sfu.ca to confirm their work eligibility, and review Co-op Program requirements at www.sfu.ca/coop/apply.

Please contact me should you have any questions.

Regards,

Mimi Fourie

**Graduate Program Assistant**
Department of Molecular Biology and Biochemistry
Faculty of Science | Simon Fraser University
T: 778 782 5631 | E: mbb@sfu.ca

I respectfully acknowledge that SFU is on the unceded ancestral and traditional territories of the səl̓ ilw̓ ətaʔɬ (Tsleil-Waututh), Sḵwx̱ wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) and kʷikʷəƛ̓əm (Kwikwetlem) Nations.