

YORK UNIVERSITY

Office of the Dean

FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

MEMORANDUM

TO: Distribution

FROM: Michael De Robertis, Associate Dean (Research & Faculty Affairs)

DATE: December 3, 2010

SUBJECT: NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Awards (NSERC USRA)

It is a pleasure to bring to your attention that for 2011-2012 York has been allocated 41 NSERC USRAs. Considering not all offers will be accepted, we should try to recruit at least 70 qualified applicants. Please bring these awards to the attention of qualified students as soon as possible.

Further information on NSERC USRAs can be found on the NSERC website: http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/UG-PC/USRA-BRPC_eng.asp. The application form and instructions (Form 202) are now available only on the NSERC website and can be filled out then printed from there. Please read all instructions before completing the application form.

I. NSERC USRA in Universities

- (a) The value of the award from NSERC is \$4,500 for 16 consecutive weeks. Faculty members must pay the student at least 25% (\$1,125) on top of this. If a student is selected from another university to hold their award at York, the supervisor will be responsible for paying at least \$787.50 extra; i.e., 4% vacation pay and 10% for benefits. Travel allowance may also be available when applicable.
- (b) At York, the award can only be held during the summer session.
- (c) **NSERC expects students to work the full term.** NSERC *may* approve shorter tenure in *exceptional* circumstances (these circumstances must be approved by NSERC), so the departments must make the students aware that the awards are for the full 16 weeks, full-time hours.
- (d) Students must return the completed applications to their departmental offices by **January 24, 2011**. Transcripts for York students can be printed by the departments as NSERC does not require that an official transcript be sent to them (*please print the transcript, not a list of courses*). Departments must submit their completed applications and transcripts, along with their rankings, to my office no later than **February 8, 2011**.
- (e) Notification of awards will be issued by early March, 2011.
- (f) Students must accept/reject the awards by March 11, 2011.
- (g) Recipients must devote their full time to research and are not permitted to take any additional summer employment (assistantships, etc.). Recipients may be permitted to register for one degree credit course during the tenure of the award, outside of regular working hours. They may not hold more than three USRA awards during their university career.

- (h) Applicants must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents and must be registered as full-time students in an eligible bachelor degree program in the natural sciences or engineering and must have successfully completed at least 18 credits of their degree program by **December 31, 2010**. Up to 15% of the total awards will be available for final-year students.
- (i) Students must work under the supervision of a faculty member who holds an active NSERC research grant (research, collaborative opportunities or collaborative health, genomics, research partnerships) either at the time of the application or when the award is held.
- (j) Candidates who hold higher degrees in natural sciences or engineering, or are candidates for an undergraduate professional degree in the health sciences (e.g. M.D., D.D.S., B.Sc. N.) are not eligible. Female applicants are especially encouraged to apply.
- (k) In continuation of its incentive for Aboriginal undergraduate students to pursue graduate studies and research careers in the natural sciences and engineering, NSERC asks each university to actively promote the availability of USRAs to qualified Aboriginal students. Awards that are made to Aboriginal students will be in addition to the university's quota of awards.

Note: Although up to 15% of the USRAs will be available to final year students this year, they should still be encouraged to apply to the USRA in Industry.

II. Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRA) in Industry

This award is very similar to the USRA in universities except that for the duration of the award students will be full-time employees of eligible companies. A list of such companies is available on the relevant NSERC website http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/UG-PC/USRAI-BRPCI_eng.asp. Students must complete Form 202 and submit the completed application along with their official transcript to the company of their choice. NSERC has a limited number of awards available. They will support up to 15 students per eligible company per fiscal year, on a first-come, first served basis, subject to the eligibility conditions and subject to availability. **The Industrial USRA program awards are not counted as part of York's USRA quota.**

III. Procedures

HAND WRITTEN APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Departments should ensure that students and faculty members are informed of the above program. In order to expedite the selection procedure, the following items are to be sent to this office:

1. the **original completed and signed** application, Form 202 ([On-line registration](#)), including a printed copy of the student's transcript (original transcripts for non-York students from their home university).
2. a one-page departmental summary (e-mailed, in excel format) of the students records which should include for each student: name, student number, department, cumulative GPA, supervisor's name, **active** NSERC research grant application number, research subject code (from the list included with the instructions supplied with Form 202), university attended, 'year' level, if previous NSERC recipient.

3. The departmental ranking.
The Faculty Research and Awards Committee's selection criteria will be based primarily on GPA, but may also take the departmental ranking into account.

Finally, **you are reminded** that it is absolutely essential that all departments ensure the students are qualified to apply for the awards and that the supervising faculty member both holds an active NSERC grant (either at the time of application or when the award is held) and has sufficient funds to provide operating support for the duration of the student's project. Faculty funds are not available to support these awards.

PLEASE NOTE

When completing Form 202 Part II – Proposed Location of Tenure and Research Project (to be completed by the proposed supervisor), keep these things in mind:

1. **Proposed starting date of award:** May 2, 2011 will be the start date for all awardees unless special arrangements are made with the Dean's Office. August 19, 2011 will be the end date for the complete 16 weeks.
2. **Proposed Research Project:** The specific, detailed research proposal must include the student's role in the project.
3. **Research Subject Code:** This must be from the list located at http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Help-Aide/ScholarshipCodes-CodesPourBourses_Eng.asp
4. **Grant Application Number:** This refers to the grant number on the letter from NSERC that the faculty members receive when they are notified that their grant is successful (NOT their budget #).
5. **Personal Identification Number:** This is the faculty member's NSERC PIN.
6. **Signature:** The form must be signed by both the proposed supervisor and the Chair of the Department before it is forwarded to the Dean's Office.

MDR/jh

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