

TERMS OF REFERENCE UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH EXPERIENCES (UREX) AWARDS

Purpose

The Undergraduate Research Experiences (UREX) Award enriches and extends undergraduate learning at the University of Calgary by funding opportunities for UCalgary undergraduate students to conduct research, scholarship, and creative activities with a supervisor over the spring and summer. These opportunities are a mentored experience and are designed as experiential learning rather than employment, thus encouraging students to explore personal research interests and to develop their abilities to collaborate, think critically and creatively, acknowledge multiple ways of knowing, and communicate with their research community under the guidance and mentorship of a supervisor.

Award Value

UREX Awards are funded for 16 weeks, 12 weeks, or 8 weeks between May and August. 16-week awards are in the amount of \$7,500, 12-week awards in the amount of \$5,625, and 8-week awards in the amount of \$3,750. Students holding UREX Awards will be paid \$1,875 from the Office of Signature Learning once a month for the duration of the studentship, in accordance with the award values.

Application Deadlines

Student and supervisor award applications are to be submitted via the online summer studentship application portal prior to the summer studentship application deadlines. Deadlines are determined each year prior to the opening of the application.

Student Eligibility

The following are student eligibility requirements for a UREX award:

- Be currently enrolled as an undergraduate student at the University of Calgary, including international students presently studying at the University of Calgary.
- Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 in their current program. Student GPA calculations include Fall semester grades of the academic year in which they are applying for a UREX award. Cumulative GPAs are rounded up to the nearest tenth of a decimal.
- Maintain status as a student in good standing at the University of Calgary during the period of the studentship.
- UREX Awards are only available to continuing undergraduate students in the following Fall academic term. Students who have completed the requirements for their degree program are not eligible for a UREX Award. Students who are graduating in June are not eligible.
- Students who have previously conducted student research through UREX may reapply in subsequent years following the eligibility guidelines.

Supervisor Eligibility

A supervisor can be listed on the application for **two** students in the summer studentships application portal. To be eligible to support a student's UREX award application, a supervisor must be a full-time University of Calgary academic staff member.

Eligible:

- Full-time UCalgary Academic Staff
- Assistant, Associate, and Full Professors (Research stream)

- Assistant, Associate, and Full Professors (Teaching stream)
- Clinical Assistant, Associate, and Full Professors
- Librarians, archivists, curators (who are full-time academic staff)

Co-supervisor Eligible: UCalgary academic staff who are not full-time can co-supervise but will require an eligible full-time academic staff member to co-supervise and be listed as the primary reference on the application.

- Sessional Scholars or Associates
- Adjunct Professors/Affiliated Instructors
- Postdoctoral students
- Professors Emeritus with an active UCID

Non-Eligible:

- Non-UCalgary Researchers

Adjudication Criteria

Applicants must meet eligibility and submission requirements as described above. All eligible applications will be assessed using the criteria in the UREX Award Program Rubric (Appendix A). These criteria include:

- Project description
- Originality, creativity, and significance
- Student preparedness & relevant experience
 - Potential benefits
 - Background preparation
- Mentorship and research environment
 - Quality of research experience

Student applications are assessed with a rubric that includes the assessment of the proposal abstract, creativity of the research question or method, potential benefit to the student, mentorship and research environment, and relevant experience. The adjudication of the UREX Award Program applications is conducted through faculty-based committees, and UREX Awards are disbursed by the Office of Signature Learning Experiences. Successful students will be notified by early April in coordination with other summer studentship awards. Unsuccessful students will be notified before May.

UREX Award Application Process: Student

Candidates must apply for the UREX award through the online summer studentships application portal and submit their application by 11:59 PM on the day the application is due. Proposals for UREX Awards program research projects must originate from and be drafted primarily by the student applicant.

In addition to the UREX award, students' applications will be considered for multiple awards through the summer studentship application portal, including the Alberta Children's Hospital Research Institute (ACHRI) award, the Alberta Cancer Foundation (ACF) award, NSERC and SSHRC Undergraduate Student Research Award (USRA), Alberta Innovates Summer Research Studentships (SRS), O'Brien Centre Summer Studentships (OCSS), the Libin Cardiovascular Health Research award, and other awards.

Students will automatically be considered for multiple awards in the summer studentship application portal. Eligibility will be determined based on the qualifications of the awards. Successful applicants may only hold one summer studentship award during the same award cycle.

UREX Award Application process: Supervisor

After submitting a student application, supervisors will be asked to comment on the merits of both the applicant, the research project, and the mentorship environment through the online summer studentships application portal. Supervisors will have some time after the student submission deadline to complete their review.

UREX Award Holder responsibilities

- Students must submit the required banking information to the University of Calgary to receive UREX Award funding.
- Students holding UREX Awards will be registered in a section of the RVST 598 shell course by the UREX Awards Program Administrator to ensure compliance with University of Calgary insurance guidelines.
- Students must remain in good standing; this includes having no outstanding fees or fines that preclude registration in the RVST 598 shell course.
- Students must connect with their supervisor to discuss the daily and weekly expectations of their UREX research term commitment; hours should not exceed 35 per week.
- To make the most out of the UREX research experience, it is strongly recommended that students take no more than one course throughout their research term. Students are expected to commit full-time to their UREX research and are encouraged to discuss workload and expectations with their supervisor if they wish to take a spring or summer course during their research term.
- Students offered a UREX award will be required to accept or decline the offer by a date specified in the offer notification.
- UREX award holders cannot hold another summer studentship award during the same award cycle.
- No academic course credit will be awarded for work funded by UREX Awards.
- Research funded by a UREX award must comply with all University of Calgary guidelines concerning the conduct of research. In particular, all research projects involving the use of human subjects must be reviewed and certified as acceptable by the appropriate University Research Ethics Board, and any research involving animals must be certified by the appropriate Animal Care Committee. The supervisor and UREX student jointly share the responsibility for adhering to these guidelines.
- Indigenous research: All research projects involving Indigenous peoples must be reviewed by the Indigenous Research Support Team (IRST).
- UREX award holders are to conduct their research safely and ethically under the guidance and mentorship of their supervisors. They are expected to follow the procedures and rules of the research environment in which they conduct their research and regularly interact with their supervisor.
- During their research term, UREX students must complete an entry and end-point evaluation survey. Following the completion of their term, they are asked to submit a report of their experience and must ensure it meets the expectations of UREX and the supervisor. Failure to submit a final report may render a student ineligible for future awards.

UREX Award Supervisor responsibilities

- Supervisors will be entered into a pool of reviewers for the summer studentship competition and will be required to review applications of students other than their own.
- The supervisor of a UREX award holder is expected to mentor and support the student, providing an opportunity for the student to learn and develop research skills.
- The supervisor must ensure the student can conduct their research experience in a safe and ethical environment, following the procedures and rules of the University of Calgary and, if applicable, those of the specific research environment in which the student is engaged.
- The supervisor is to meet regularly with the student and provide regular feedback and support to the student and the student's research project.
- The supervisor is to review and approve the student's final UREX report to ensure the report adequately explains the award holder's research successes and challenges.

UREX Awards Program Learning Outcomes

- *Develop* a research plan, *identify* a specific area of inquiry, *assess* the viability and suitability of research practices, *carry-out* the research plan, and *communicate* research findings.
- *Collaborate* with other researchers in designing, planning, and implementing a research, scholarly, or creative project.
- *Describe* the importance of your research to communities on- and off-campus; effectively *communicate* the value and impact of your research and conclusions to various audiences.
- *Reflect* on and *articulate* the impact of the UREX research experience on research skill development and researcher identity.
- *Reflect* on and *articulate* the impact of the UREX research experience on academic and professional growth and career goals.
- *Establish* and *participate* in a community of scholars, *developing* a network of undergraduate, graduate, and faculty researchers across campus and beyond.
- *Appreciate* the value of diverse perspectives throughout all aspects of a research project.
- Feel *welcomed* into a community of scholars that actively recognizes stereotype threat, bias, and microaggressions and acknowledges intersecting professional and personal identities.