2022-2023 Social Sciences Undergraduate Student Research Award (USRA)

The McMaster Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRAs) are supported by the Office of the Vice-President, Research, and the Faculty of Social Sciences.

The USRAs cultivate and support research partnerships between undergraduate students and faculty members. These awards provide an opportunity for students to complete a research project of between 12 and 16 weeks under the mentorship of a faculty member, and for faculty members to advance their research projects and programs through student involvement. The USRA should not be used in lieu of a Research Assistantship, and should prioritize the development of the intellectual curiosity and independent research skills of the student. The outcome of the USRA will be a research poster presented by the student at the annual USRA poster symposium.

As a student, USRAs allow you to:

- obtain funding for meaningful research-based activities with a faculty member
- explore career opportunities in a research environment
- develop skills and gain experience
- learn more about a specific area of interest; and,
- foster a positive working relationship with a faculty member, research team, and/or other professionals.

USRAs are valued at $7,500. Application deadlines occur twice annually on March 31\textsuperscript{st} and October 31\textsuperscript{st} (or the following Monday if these dates fall on a weekend). USRA projects normally take place over approximately 16 weeks, with students expected to devote 10-20 hours per week to research activities. In consultation with your supervisor, USRAs can be taken up in the Fall/Winter, or Spring/Summer terms.

USRAs are submitted to the Arts Research Board (ARB) review committee by the faculty supervisor after completing the application form with the student. If a faculty member and/or student are successful in their Fall USRA application and wish to apply for the Spring competition, the proposal must be for a different project.

Interested students are encouraged to contact a faculty member about the prospects of their being involved in their research well in advance of USRA application deadlines.

To be eligible for the USRA, students must:

- Be registered as a student in the Faculty of Social Sciences (including combined honours students with a program in another Faculty);
- Be in good academic standing with the university (not on academic probation);
• Be in good financial standing with the university (no outstanding financial accounts on the student record);
• Have received fewer than two (2) USRAs to this point in your studies at McMaster;
• Work with an eligible supervisor in the Faculty of Social Sciences at McMaster. Eligible supervisors include: all full-time faculty members; associate faculty members; adjunct professors; and contractually limited appointments (CLAs) whose appointments run in the Faculty of Social Sciences through the duration of the award.

Completed USRA applications are to be submitted electronically by the faculty supervisor, as a PDF, to Chris Hollins (hollinc@mcmaster.ca). Applications submitted after 4:00pm on the due date and incomplete applications will not be considered. It is the joint responsibility of the student and supervisor to ensure that applications are complete, and that all information is accurate.

USRA applications are reviewed by a committee of faculty members. Only the most meritorious will receive funding. Applications will be evaluated based on clear articulation of: 1) the overall project description; 2) the potential significance of the research; 3) the fit of the project within the supervisor’s larger research program; and 4) the feasibility of executing the project within the proposed timeline.

**Students from equity-deserving groups are strongly encouraged to apply for a USRA.**

For further information please contact:

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