

HYRS/SRS Guidelines Package: Post-Secondary Institutions

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Programs Overview

Background

Developing the next generation of health research and innovation leaders to accelerate discoveries into care is a core mission for Alberta Innovates and its partners. In the following guide, we describe two programs that are administered by post-secondary institutions (PSIs):

- 1. Summer Research Studentship (SRS):** The SRS program provides undergraduate students (or those in relevant diploma or certificate programs) with paid experiential learning opportunities at post-secondary institutes in Alberta, enhancing their interest and success in health research and innovation. For examples of how past post-secondary institutions have administered SRS, please visit the following websites: [University of Alberta](#), [University of Calgary](#), and [University of Lethbridge](#).
- 2. The High School Youth Research Summer Program (HYRS):** HYRS provides exceptional Grade 11 and 12 students in the province with paid experiential learning opportunities at post-secondary institutes in Alberta, enhancing their interest and success in health research and innovation. For examples of how past post-secondary institutions have administered HYRS, please visit the following specific websites: [University of Alberta](#), [University of Calgary](#), and [University of Lethbridge](#).

The objectives of the programs are to:

- Increase awareness and interest in R&I careers – particularly at the intersection of health and emerging technologies.
- Create opportunities for emerging talent to acquire experience and connections in Alberta's health R&I ecosystem.
- Increase the competitiveness of Alberta as a destination for R&I talent
- Leverage partner relationships to advance Digital Health innovation in Alberta.

PSI administration responsibilities and timelines

PSI's administer the programs in their own institution. This includes:

- Recruiting eligible staff (e.g., professors, instructors, postdocs) who are willing to supervise a HYRS or SRS student and put together a project for the student to work on over the summer months;
- Running a fair and transparent process (e.g., studentship competition) in which students can apply for studentship opportunities and be matched to a supervisor;
- Paying the studentship funding (provided by Alberta Innovates) to studentship recipients;
- Ensuring students and supervisors comply with the rules set by Alberta Innovates;
- Reporting on program administration.

A full list of responsibilities can be found in supplemental documentation: Schedule A, Section 2.

PSI's may choose to participate in one or both programs. An important difference between the programs is that HYRS involves minors, is shorter in duration, and often require more administrative activity and formal programming (e.g., team events, career development events).

Finally, an important component of the administration of these programs is the selection of student projects that align with Alberta Innovates' priority areas: Digital or Data Driven Health Research, Commercialization, and Health System Transformation. The quotas and detailed definitions of each of the priority areas can be found in Schedule A, Section 5.

Funding

The total program budget for this competition is \$4 Million. PSIs may request a minimum block grant of \$50,000 and a maximum of \$1,900,000 (to be used over two years for the Summer 2024 and Summer 2025 program cycles). PSI Applicants must justify their budget ask. The budget awarded for approved applications is based on a competitive review of applications and may be less than the amount originally requested.

Eligibility

To be eligible to hold block grant funding for either the HYRS or SRS program, an institution must be an Alberta-based post-secondary institution in any of the following tiers: Comprehensive Academic and Research University (CARU), Undergraduate University (UU), Comprehensive Community Colleges (CCCs).or Polytechnic Institution (PI) based on the Government of Alberta's classification system available [here](#).

Evaluation process

Alberta Innovates will conduct a review of each application submitted. The review committee will use the following scale from 1 (Unacceptable) to 5 (Outstanding) and the following criteria to evaluate each application:

Evaluation Pillar
<p>Relevance to Program Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of opportunities to introduce emerging talent in related fields of study (e.g., business, technology, life sciences, or health care) to health research and innovation related concepts and activity through summer projects (e.g., developing, testing, or using advanced digital or data enabled innovations in the life sciences or health sector sectors, participating in research, helping identify develop or test new models of care) • Identification or relevant hubs, resources, or faculty specializations at the institution that will be encouraged to participate in the program(s) (e.g., innovation centers, research centers, connections with the health system)

<p>Evidence of diverse career development activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of relevant professional development activities that are beyond research training (e.g., learning about health innovation, design thinking, or commercialization, participating in networking and knowledge translation events) • Identification of career development resources on or off campus that will be engaged (e.g., career development talks or events).
<p>Evidence in Support for Institutional Capacity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance History: Identification of past success in administering studentship programs (either from Alberta Innovates or elsewhere). • Adjudication Details: Provision of some details on how the institution will run a fair and transparent studentship competition.
<p>Team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of an appropriate team to administer the program(s). • Identification of any anticipated team changes over the duration of the project
<p>Budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate justification of the proposed budget • Appropriate justification and alignment with expenditure guidelines outlined by Alberta Innovates (Appendix A). • Proposed award stipend amounts are reasonable (e.g., no less than minimum wage, comparable to other major studentship programs). • The institution has explained an appropriate contingency plan for spending should it not be able to recruit the number studentship applications and/or supervisors anticipated.

How to apply to Alberta Innovates for HYRS and/or SRS Funding:

A single application is required. Interested PSIs will be invited to apply through Smart Simple, the Alberta Innovates grants and administrative system. The following steps are required to apply:

1. Decide who will serve as your organization’s Applicant Representative (AR). The AR will have the responsibility of submitting the application, and serving as the main contact for reporting and administration if funding is approved. The AR will need to create an account by registering on [SmartSimple | Alberta Innovates](#). The “register” button is in blue at the bottom of the home page.
2. Once registered, notify Alberta Innovates so it can invite the AR to the application. The application will not be visible until Alberta Innovates completes this step.
3. The AR will use Smart Simple to complete two components:

i. **Initial section (to be filled directly in Smart Simple):**

Project Title

Example: Administering the Alberta Innovates SRS Program at the University of _____

Non-Confidential Summary

Example: This project consists of administering the Alberta Innovates SRS Program at the

University of __. The SRS programs provide summer job opportunities for undergraduate students across the province with a focus on cross-disciplinary training in health and emerging tech (e.g., ICT/digital). Students work with a supervisor to complete a project. Supplemental skills development and networking opportunities are also provided through program specific workshops, speakers, career mentorship, and prize-based pitch competitions).

An **application worksheet** that outlines details around budget and team structure (see template under Supplementary Documents, p. 12)

ii. **Attach one document:**

A **funding letter request** that outlines: i) your institutions' interest in becoming an administering institution for the program; ii) institutional fit/capacity (e.g., relevant faculties, ability to hold a competition in a fair and transparent way for studentships). The funding letter request needs to be signed by a member of senior leadership. For example, in CAREU institutions, the Vice President of Research typically signs the funding letter request.

Applications must be submitted by **October 30, 2023, at 3:00 PM MT (no exceptions or extensions).**

For additional questions or information, please e-mail Noor Al-Zanoon (noor.al-zanoon@albertainnovates.ca), Senior Business Partner- Health Innovation Talent

Supplementary Documents

Schedule A

SCHEDULE A – PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Program Description and Objectives

The Summer Research Studentships (SRS) and High School Youth Researcher Summer (HYRS) programs [The Programs] provide summer job opportunities for undergraduate and exceptional grade 11 and 12 students across the province with a focus on cross-disciplinary training in health and emerging tech (e.g., ICT/digital). Students work with a supervisor to complete a summer project. Supplemental skills development and networking opportunities are also provided through workshops, speakers series, career mentorship, and other events approved by Alberta Innovates.

The Programs serve as important mechanisms for engaging top talent early on in their training trajectories, enhancing their capacity to identify and prepare for high impact careers in Alberta's research and innovation (R&I) ecosystem.

The objectives of the SRS and HYRS programs are to:

- Increase awareness and interest in R&I careers – particularly at the intersection of health and emerging technologies.
- Create opportunities for emerging talent to acquire experience and connections in Alberta's health R&I ecosystem.
- Increase the competitiveness of Alberta as a destination for R&I talent.
- Leverage partner relationships to advance Digital Health innovation in Alberta.

2. Responsibilities

Alberta Innovates will:

- (a) set the objectives and guidelines for the Programs, with a focus on supporting talent development in areas of strategic importance to the province;
- (b) collaborate with participating post-secondary institutions to promote the Programs and curate relevant skill and career development opportunities; and
- (c) monitor the impact of the investment.

The Applicant will administer the Program(s) for which it secured funding in accordance with Schedule A. The Applicant is solely responsible for the following activities:

- (a) setting up an application process for the Studentships;
- (b) ensuring all promotional material references the financial support of Alberta Innovates;

- (c) using all reasonable measures to transparently define and communicate a fair process for adjudication to potential Studentship Applicants;
- (d) working through the Applicant's relevant administrative department (e.g., Office of the Vice President (Research), Research Services Office) or appropriate delegate, to oversee and conduct a competitive review process for the Studentships in accordance with the eligibility criteria and priority areas outlined in Schedule A. The Applicant must use impartial reviewers who are subject to confidentiality and conflict of interest policies. Competition results will be communicated by the Applicant in a format that is available to the public.
- (e) maintaining a list of Studentship Applicants and Studentship Recipients that includes contact information, supervisor information, and project details, using the excel templates provided by Alberta Innovates;
- (f) keeping the application process free of charge for all Studentship Applicants;
- (g) determining the eligibility and rank order of Studentship Applications;
- (h) sending a letter to each Studentship Recipient confirming the amount and the term of the Studentship;
- (i) providing information to Studentship Recipients as required;
- (j) informing Studentship Recipients that the Applicant and Alberta Innovates reserve the right to publish or disseminate information regarding the Studentship Recipients and their Studentship projects;
- (k) monitoring the satisfactory progress of the Studentship Recipients, ensuring that progress is being made towards research goals stated in the approved Studentship Application. It is also the responsibility of the Applicant to clearly outline the process for managing non-performance by communicating to the Studentship Recipients that the Studentship may be terminated in the case of non-performance;
- (l) participating in check-in meetings with Alberta Innovates, and preparing and submitting an Interim and a Final Report, in accordance with Schedule B;
- (m) informing Studentship Recipients that post-Studentship reports must be submitted as requested by Alberta Innovates, in a form to be determined by Alberta Innovates;
- (n) notifying all Studentship Recipients of their obligation to complete post-Studentship surveys from Alberta Innovates. Alberta Innovates may survey Studentship Recipients for up to five years following the Studentship completion to measure the impact and benefits of Alberta Innovates' Investment; and
- (o) providing Alberta Innovates access to all records relating to this Investment Agreement upon reasonable prior notice.

3. Eligibility

(a) Studentship Eligibility

- To be eligible to hold a SRS Studentship, Studentship Applicants must:
 - be registered in an undergraduate degree program (or a diploma or certificate program delivered by a Comprehensive Community College or Polytechnic Institution) in Canada. Note, this may be waived by post-secondary institutions to allow exceptional high school students to participate);
 - able to participate in the SRS Program at the Alberta-based post-secondary institution to which the student applied;
 - Note: a student cannot hold multiple SRS and/or HYRS studentships at the same time.

Note: While SRS Studentships are not renewable, Studentship Recipients from prior years can submit new applications to new SRS Studentship Competitions (provided they meet the other eligibility criteria).

- To be eligible to hold a HYRS Studentship, Studentship Applicants must:
 - be enrolled at an eligible high school (as specified by the Applicant);
 - have a minimum of 85% standing in each of Math 20-1 or 20-2, Biology 20, and one other grade 11 science (transcripts or interim reports are required), unless strong justification is made for cases of equity and appropriate program accessibility;
 - provide a signature from a parent or guardian;
 - Also note, a student cannot hold multiple SRS and/or HYRS studentships at the same time.

(b) Supervisor Eligibility

The Supervisor must be employed at the Applicant’s institution. The Supervisor must be able to provide appropriate supervision for the proposed project. The Supervisor does not need to be a faculty member. In instances where the Supervisor is not a faculty member, the Applicant will confirm appropriateness with Alberta Innovates. An approved Supervisor is limited to:

- A maximum of four (4) Studentship Recipients per supervisor per year for SRS.
- A maximum of four (4) Studentship Recipients per supervisor per year for HYRS.
- A maximum of two (2) Studentship Recipients per high school per year for HYRS.

4. Studentship Duration and Value:

Program Stream	Summer Research Studentship	High School Youth Research Summer
Duration of the Stipend / Salary Portion of the Studentship	Minimum term of four weeks to a maximum of 4 months, during the period of May to August.	Up to eight weeks.
Stipend Amount	in accordance with post –secondary institution policies	in accordance with post-secondary institution policies
Duration of Career Development Portion of the Studentship	Career development opportunities may be offered throughout the agreement term. Current and past year’s Studentship Recipients may be	Career development opportunities may be offered throughout the agreement term. Current and past year’s

	included in any networking events and career development opportunities.	Studentship Recipients may be included in any networking events and career development opportunities.
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5. Program Priority Areas:

Digital or Data Driven Health Research: projects that recruit, train, or deploy talent to advance digital or data-enabled methods, tools, or technologies in health research. Areas of interest include: computer modelling or simulation for drug discovery or technology development; overcoming data access, collection, or data infrastructure challenges; approaches to preparing health data for machine learning applications; overcoming participant/patient recruitment, engagement, or retention challenges; predicting therapeutic outcomes or adverse effects; overcoming challenges with acceptance of digital health solutions; novel approaches to decentralized clinical trials design.

Commercialization: projects that recruit, train, or deploy talent to develop and commercialize an emerging health technology, preferably digital or data-enabled, with the potential to generate commercial economic returns (jobs, revenue, investment) for Alberta and cost-effective, beneficial health outcomes.

Health System Transformation: Projects that recruit, train, or deploy talent to enable the advancement of data and digitally enabled care models, including facilitating adoption, implementation, and/or scale across the continuum of care in Alberta. Key areas of interest include but are not limited to implementation studies in health care settings; policy development; approaches to citizen-centric care.

Program Stream	Summer Research Studentship	High School Youth Research Summer
Priority Areas	40%	50%
Other Health or Clinical Research & Innovation Related	60%	50%

6. Definitions

The following program-specific definitions apply (in addition to those outlined in the body of the investment agreement):

- (a) “Studentship” means the award provided to the Studentship Recipient;
- (b) “Studentship Applicants” means the students applying under the Program, and Studentship Applicant means one student applying under the Program;
- (c) “Studentship Application” means the application put forward by an eligible Studentship Applicant for consideration for the Program;

- (d) “Studentship Recipients” means a High School or undergraduate student who has been awarded a Studentship under the Program;

7. Value of Studentships

The aggregate value of all Studentships granted under this Investment Agreement shall not exceed the amount of the Investment. The Applicant shall be solely liable for any and all Studentships it grants under the Program in excess of the Investment.

8. Return of Uncommitted Portions

In the event this Investment Agreement is terminated, or the Project Completion Date is not extended, the Applicant shall return any uncommitted portion of the Investment to Alberta Innovates within thirty (30) days from such termination date.

9. Research Integrity

Alberta Innovates supports Alberta research institutions in their efforts to promote and ensure the highest standards of research and Studentship practice and behavior. It is incumbent upon each Studentship Recipient to adhere to all research policies and procedures in place at their institution, including those regarding integrity in research and Studentship.

10. Program Branding, Communications & Marketing Materials

Applicants will ensure that all references to the Program acknowledge Alberta Innovates and the appropriate program logos. Contact Alberta Innovates for high resolution copies of logos and other promotional material.

Schedule C

SCHEDULE C – ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

The Summer Research Studentship (SRS) and the Highschool Youth Researcher Summer (HYRS) programs have the following definitions for Eligible Expenses and Ineligible Expenses:

- (a) **"Eligible Expenses"** means:
- i. GST, but only where such GST is levied on costs which are themselves Eligible Expenses and solely to the extent such GST is unrecoverable, and the Applicant is not otherwise re-imbursed for same;
 - ii. Salaries or stipends paid to Studentship Recipients in accordance with Schedule A;
 - iii. Costs of holding a workshop or event (including meals and/or non-alcoholic refreshments), the activities of which relate directly to the funded project and are in accordance with Schedule A;
 - iv. Up to 10% of total Investment for costs directly related to administration of the program; and
 - v. Any other cost which Alberta Innovates pre-approves in writing as an Eligible Expense.
- (b) **"Ineligible Expense"** means any cost that does not qualify as an Eligible Expense. For avoidance of doubt, "Ineligible Expenses" Includes any of the following:
- vi. any cost incurred prior to the Project Start Date, except where Alberta Innovates has provided written approval to include the cost as an Eligible Expense;
 - vii. Federal and Provincial income taxes, goods and services taxes, excepting only unrecoverable portions of the GST for which the Applicant is not otherwise re-imbursed;
 - viii. ANY and ALL costs not related to direct stipend or program admin support. This includes health insurance and living and travel costs for Studentship Recipients unless pre-approved by Alberta Innovates; and
 - ix. any other costs deemed ineligible by Alberta Innovates.

Sample Application

Alberta Innovates Block Grant Request

Note: This is a sample application only, you will need to complete these sections in our grants and administration system (Smart Simple)

1. Check off the program(s) that you seek funding to deliver:

- Alberta Innovates High School Youth Researcher Summer*
- Alberta Innovates Summer Research Studentships*

2. Explain how your post-secondary institution is preparing trainees to contribute to the health innovation ecosystem by answering the following sub questions:

a) List the health-related training programs offered by your institution.

b) Will you restrict HYRS/SRS studentship opportunities at your institution to students enrolled in particular programs? If so, please list the programs.

c) How will your institution use HYRS/SRS funding to:

- Increase awareness and interest in research and innovation (R&I) careers – particularly at the intersection of health and emerging technologies.
- Create opportunities for emerging talent to acquire experience and connections in Alberta’s health R&I ecosystem.
- Increase the competitiveness of Alberta as a destination for R&I talent.
- Leverage partner relationships to advance Digital Health innovation in Alberta.

3. Budget

a) Total Budget Requested: _____

b) Outline how you intend to allocate this funding by completing the below table. We have provided headings/expense categories that are helpful for our understanding. You may modify them, but please try to provide granular information on planned programming costs. If you are not delivering both programs, please enter in 0’s for the rows that do not apply or delete them altogether.

Expense Category	Projected
High School Youth Researcher Summer	
Student Stipends	
Programming - Reviewer Honoraria and Staff Police Checks	
Programming - Student Programming and Events	
Programming - Residency for Students	
Other	

Subtotal HYRS	
Summer Research Studentship program	
Student Stipends	
Subtotal SRS	
Administrative Recovery (up to 10%)	
Expenses Summary	
Total Student Stipends	
Total Administrative Costs	
Total Programming Costs	
Total Other Costs	
Grand Total	
Remaining Funds (Anticipated AI Refund)	

c) How will the Administrative Recovery (up to 10%) be used?

d) What are the maximum award values and terms that you intend to offer?

4. Outline your program administration team for this year in the table below.

Program	Role	Name	Email
HYRS			
SRS			