

# **Faculty of Medicine**

## **Summer Student Research Program (SSRP) for non-medical students**

### **Handbook**

#### **Description:**

The goal of this program is to increase the number of African Nova Scotians and Indigenous students in medicine by providing medically related research experience. The Imhotep Legacy Academy and the Indigenous Health Sciences Initiative have partnered with the Faculty of Medicine to create these Summer Research Studentships. Students who are confident that medical research will be part of their professional careers will gain valuable experience in the design, execution, and evaluation of experiments. Participating students will receive a stipend of \$5,000 over a 12-week period (with 2 weeks personal vacation) during the summer.

#### **The Application Process:**

NOTE: Completed applications must be submitted on or before the deadline (please refer to website). Supervisors are asked to assist students in the completion of the application form.

#### **Selection Process:**

Awards will be made on a **competitive** basis. Representatives from the Faculty of Medicine Research Advisory Committee, Imhotep and Indigenous Health in Medicine and PLANS (Promoting Leadership in Health for African Nova Scotia's) will review each application with reference to the goal of enabling students to have maximum involvement in a research project that will be conducted in a productive and supportive environment. Reviewers will assess all applications against the following criteria:

1. Students must have completed at least two years of a health and/or science-related undergraduate program, other than medicine, at Dalhousie University or another Canadian university;
2. Students must be members of the Maritime Indigenous community, African Nova Scotian community or African Canadian and show evidence of community engagement/ interaction;
3. Students must demonstrate a serious interest in a future career in medicine or medical research;
4. Student GPA;
5. Quality of the student (research experience, skills, fit to the project);
6. Potential contributions of the student to the project.

Students participating in the program are required to:

1. work full-time on their research projects for 10 weeks in the summer
2. submit a written report of their work in October (guidelines are on the website).
3. submit student and faculty evaluation forms (forms are on the website);
4. participate and present research at a regional/national conference or research day

Dalhousie University students who complete all requirements will receive a notation on their transcripts "Faculty of Medicine Summer Student Research Program non-medical students completed Summer XXXX". Students external to Dalhousie University who complete all requirements will receive a Certificate of Completion.

Instructions for the written research reports are on the website. Students are urged to begin their paper during the summer as other time commitments place a strain on available writing time during September. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that a Faculty Evaluation form is submitted.

**SSRP non-medical Website:** <https://medicine.dal.ca/research-dal-med/capacity/ssrp.html>

## **SSRP Supervisor / Student Responsibilities**

### **Overview:**

The role of the supervisor is to guide the student through the scientific method and to assist her/him to develop and refine research-related critical thinking skills. This strengthens the education of all potential physicians-in-training, including those who do not choose a medical career involving the conduction of health research.

### **Student's Responsibilities:**

- Seek support and guidance from the Medical Research Development Office, Program Manager, Research Training and Support for contacting a suitable supervisor
- Make contact, and develop a productive relationship, with your supervisor (any difficulties you experience with this should be discussed in a timely manner with the Program Manager, Research Training and Support)
- With the support of your supervisor, prepare and submit your research proposal by the specified deadline using the approved application template provided by the Program Manager, Research Training and Support
- Meet with your supervisor regularly in person to update her/him regarding the progress you have made in developing your proposal and conducting your research project
- Complete and submit the mandatory report and evaluations by the specified deadlines
- Inform your supervisor and Program Manager, Research Training and Support of any interruptions or absences that may interfere with your ability to meet the above responsibilities.
- Adhere to the summer research expectations as provided by the Medical Research Development Office (MRDO).

### **Supervisor's Responsibilities:**

- Work to develop a productive relationship with your student
- Lend your research experience to assist your student to develop an appropriate research project plan and proposal
- Assist your student to obtain Research Ethics Board approval (as needed). Ethics approval **must** be in place prior to starting the project in June
- Meet with your student regularly to monitor his/her achieved progress toward meeting the established research objectives and timelines

- Review and approve the final report, providing feedback as required
- Provide timely and constructive feedback to the student on her/his progress and performance
- Contact Program Manager, Research Training and Support regarding any issues or concerns that are not amenable to resolution between you and your student
- Cover operating costs/expenses, if any, associated with conduction of your student's research project (note: the summer stipend provided to students is for salary purposes only)
- Ensure the student is fully dedicated to their project during funded summer(s) and adheres to the research expectations as outlined by the Medical Research Development Office (MRDO)
- Clearly define the roles of the various team members, including associate supervisors, co-investigators, and collaborators; the supervisor has responsibility for communication within the team to ensure appropriate student activities and progress

#### **With your Supervisor:**

Once you have a supervisor, discuss the following with them (and any additional information you feel will be necessary or useful for your project):

- Confirm that your supervisor has an appointment in the Faculty of Medicine **OR** you can have a supervisor from another Faculty if you also have a co-supervisor who has an appointment in the Faculty of Medicine
- If the supervisor is working in a hospital, does he/she have an appointment affiliation with the Department/Division/Program/Service in which your research project is to be conducted?
- What hospital databases will be required, if applicable. This information is very important to determine asap as some databases are difficult to access and may cause considerable delays.**
- Expected full time summer session working hours and timing of vacation (2 weeks of the 12-week summer session)
- Lab protocol / important lab information / lab orientation (if applicable)
- Your research background / experiences
- Accountability
  - What you are responsible for and what your supervisor will assist you with?
  - What you should communicate to your supervisor in terms of your research project (and frequency of reports)?
  - Research project objectives

- Will REB approval be required for your project and if so, what level of approval is required?
- What research resources are available in the supervisor's department/division? (e.g. statistical support)
- Work together on your project proposal
- Determine if there is sufficient space for you to conduct your research within appropriate working hours. If you feel there is not appropriate space, please contact Program Manager, Personnel Support Programs.
- Remain in regular contact with your supervisor

### **Summer Hours Expectations:**

The intent of the SSRP summer research funding is to remove the necessity to seek additional income during the summer and thereby allow students time to devote to both their research and other research-related events that will occur during the summer months (seminars, workshops, research-group meetings, etc.).

The program recognizes that some time can be devoted to earning additional money or participate in other commitments. Other commitments should not interfere with the conduction of the student's research project. Any non-SSRP commitments, either paid or unpaid, that would be a distraction from the project, must be discussed with the supervisor and mutually agreed on. Students are expected to devote their intellect and enthusiasm to their project during their funded summer and meet the professional goals of the program.

It is the supervisor's responsibility to monitor and report on student activities and report any concerns in a timely manner to the Medical Research Development Office (mrdo@dal.ca). Failure to comply with these expectations can result in the summer studentship being cancelled.

### **Authorship:**

Due to the nature of research, many students working with a supervisor may play a role in an already ongoing project. As a result, the student may not be the lead (or first) author on a publication reporting the results of an entire project. Nevertheless, students that contribute a defined component to the research project are expected to be acknowledged through authorship on the publication.

If a publication results from a SSRP student's project but involves several authors, the SSRP student must submit the publication along with a narrative describing their particular role in the published work.

In the absence of any publication, the SSRP student must submit a publication quality report in October on which the student will be the sole author. Nevertheless, the student should acknowledge the roles and contributions of others who may have helped with the conduct of the research. Such acknowledgement would include, but not be limited to technical advice or assistance or provision of yet-to-be-published results that frame the context for the student's research project.

**Required paperwork:**

To receive payment, students must be set up for direct deposit through Dalhousie. The following **must** be submitted by the deadline date outlined in your Award Letter or you will not receive your studentship funds.

- Void Cheque
- Completed Dalhousie direct deposit form

Students will be paid on:

- June 27
- July 27
- Aug 27

**Note:**

- Studentships are **not** awards and should not be listed as such on a CV.
- Studentships are set up as ‘scholarship earnings;’ therefore, the income is not considered employment income and no deductions (EI, CPP, income tax) will be taken. Students will receive a T4A from employer for tax purposes.

**External Studentship Funding:**

Because SSRP non-medical is a competitive process, not all applicants will receive funding. All students are encouraged to apply for outside funding, as it is a great opportunity to enhance your resume by listing this funding as an award and is another example of demonstrating academic credentials.

Students awarded funding via outside sources will not receive the additional funding that is allotted to all SSRP students at the same time. If outside funding is less than \$5000, MRDO funds would top-up salary-type funding to this maximum amount. Students cannot hold an external award and the SSRP studentship at the same time.