

Brock University, Office of Research Services

Match of Minds

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

2019

Overview

The Match of Minds program provides research employment opportunities for students across all faculties, which are intended to expand their potential to participate in research. The program also encourages the development of skills and abilities of students for future employment, in turn also improving the quality of Research Assistants available to faculty researchers at the graduate level.

Value

The Match of Minds program offers up to \$5,000 for student employment. Students may be hired over the course of the full year. **The previous restriction on hiring over the summer only has been removed.**

Program Dates

Students may be employed between May 1st and April 30th each year.

Current Student Status

The letter of award will specify any restrictions on the number of hours a student can work. Currently, there is no limit on the number of hours undergraduate students or those transitioning to a graduate program can work. However, by agreement with the provincial government, full-time graduate students are allowed to work a maximum average of 10 hours per week for the duration of a given term. Full-time graduate students who wish to seek additional employment appointments for on-campus work (including TA or RA hours) that result in more than an average of 10 hours per week must first seek and obtain the approval of their Supervisor (if applicable), the Graduate Program Director, and the Dean of Graduate Studies. Please attach a completed Request for Approval of Extra On-Campus Employment Hours [<https://brocku.ca/graduate-studies/wp-content/uploads/sites/181/REQUEST-FOR-APPROVAL-OF-EXTRA-ON-CAMPUS-EMPLOYMENT-HOURS-Feb-2017-FF.pdf>]. In this case, a meeting with the Graduate Program Director is required before a contract can be created.

Eligible activities

- Funding for a research assistant position for recent graduates, full-time undergraduates and, in exceptional cases, incoming undergraduate students* for a research assistant position.
- Funding for full-time graduate students, or incoming graduate students, to gain skills that will improve their employability in their chosen field.
- Funding for full-time undergraduate or graduate students to develop a commercial enterprise.
- Funding for full-time undergraduate or graduate students to assist with the development of a Service-Learning or Experiential Learning initiative.

****If Faculties are recommending an incoming undergraduate student for an award, they should fully justify the student's positioning in the overall ranking.***

Eligibility Criteria: Students

1. Be a full-time student (undergraduate or graduate) or recent graduate of Brock University
2. In exceptional cases, be an incoming full-time undergraduate student to Brock University
3. Be an incoming full-time graduate student
4. Not have received Match of Minds funding in the past

Notes:

- Students are not eligible to hold both and the NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Award (USRA) and Match of Minds award in the same year.
- Students may **not** hold a Match of Minds award and participate in a paid co-op position through Brock University at the same time.

Eligibility Criteria: Supervisors

1. Tenure stream professors and BUFA members
2. Employed full time in a staffed unit (e.g. Library, BioLinc, Wellness Centre)
3. Adjunct professors

Applications

Match of Minds applications are to be made by a Brock faculty or staff member. The application must clearly outline:

- The activities that the student will be undertaking during their term
- What specific skills the students will gain, outside their regular academic activities, which will benefit them in future endeavours
- That the current level of the student is appropriate for the work being proposed or a brief plan of how the Faculty member intends to mentor the student to develop the necessary skills

Faculty or staff members who have identified an interested student as a potential Research Assistant are invited to submit an application.

Award Conditions

Awards made under this program are provided to a researcher and must follow all Brock policies and procedures for research spending compliance. Student employment must be held within a recognized Brock site. Funding will not be provided for students working at external companies or agencies.

The funds must be used for the salary and benefits of a student Research Assistant and must be paid through the University payroll system as part of a contract or a timesheet authorization. All research conducted under this funding must comply with all human ethics, Animal Care, Biosafety and other applicable protocols. Hiring rates are those set by Human Resources for student research assistants.

Due to the popularity of this program and in the spirit of maximizing opportunities for students, the program can only support a student once. Thus, applications for students who have already benefitted from Match of Minds funding are ineligible.

Application and Review Process Summary

1. Eligible faculty and staff identify an eligible student recipient
2. Eligible faculty and staff complete the application form found on the Office of Research Services Sharepoint site and submit it to khunter@brocku.ca prior to the program deadline noted below. The application should include:
 - a. a 1-page letter of support from the faculty or staff member
 - b. a 1-page letter from the student
3. Send all materials to khunter@brocku.ca by email by **Friday March 1, 2019 at 12:00 noon**. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered. Only electronic applications will be accepted.
4. The Office of Research Services (ORS) will review the applications received for eligibility and completeness and will then forward them to the appropriate Faculty for assessment.
5. Applications will be assessed using set criteria and ranked by a committee internal to each Faculty.
6. Each Faculty will then send the ranked list, applications for the top ranked students and the evaluation rubric for all applicants to khunter@brocku.ca for validation by **Monday, March 18, 2019**.
7. An award notice is sent by the Office of Research Services to successful faculty or staff members during the **first week of April 2019** and funding is transferred.

Additional Guidance for the Intake and Adjudication Process

Faculties and non-Faculty units are assigned a certain number of awards each year based on an equation that takes into consideration historical program subscription and student enrolment. The Office of Research Services will advise each Faculty and non-Faculty unit of the number of awards they are able to offer each year. The Office of Research Services adjudicates all applications coming from non-Faculty units (e.g. Library, BioLinc, Wellness Centre), and each Faculty adjudicates applications from within their Faculty, including from non-faculty staff (e.g. lab demonstrators). Applicants are, therefore, evaluated against other applicants received by their Faculty or non-Faculty unit.

Each Faculty will arrange for a committee to assess the applications using the assessment criteria outlined below.

The review committee should consist of at least two people who will review and assess each application and determine a final ranking. Completed adjudication spreadsheets, with rankings, are submitted to ORS, along with complete applications for top-ranked researcher-student teams, only. It is at the discretion of each Associate Dean of Research as to how many people adjudicate the applications, and whether the scoring rubric that is submitted to ORS reflects an average of multiple scorers, or a consensus score on each application.

ORS validates the adjudication process and the eligibility of each student and informs the Associate Deans of Research of the eligible applicants who may be offered a position.

Assessment Criteria

Each application is assessed on the following items:

1. Student’s grade: Indicated on the application form
2. Job or research description: Text box completed by supervisor, on the application form
3. Transferable skills: Text box completed by supervisor, on the application form
4. Researcher’s letter: 1 page, attached to the application form
5. Student’s letter: 1 page, attached to the application form

Evaluation Rubric

Each item is scored, and then weighted, to arrive at a final score out of 25, as follows:

Item	Scoring Scheme	Weighting	Example: original score	Example: weighted score
1. Student’s grade	Use numeric grade average, 0 to 100%	0.05	85	4.25
2. Job or research description	1 to 5	0.8	5	4
3. Transferable skills	1 to 5	0.8	3	2.4
4. Researcher’s letter	1 to 5	1.2	5	6
5. Student’s letter	1 to 5	1.2	4	4.8
Example Student score				21.45 out of 25

For items scored out of 5, use the following criteria:

- 1 = the item demonstrates **little to no evidence** of opportunity for student scholarly growth or advancement
- 2 = the item demonstrates **evidence, of a low to modest quality of opportunity**, for student scholarly growth or advancement
- 3 = the item demonstrates **evidence, of a good quality of opportunity**, for student scholarly growth or advancement
- 4 = the item demonstrates **evidence, of a very good quality of opportunity**, for student scholarly growth or advancement
- 5 = the item demonstrates **evidence, of an excellent quality** of opportunity for student growth or advancement

Timelines

This process incorporates the decision timelines of the NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRA), because many students apply to both, and are encouraged to select the USRA over the MoM.

Step	Timeline	Responsible	Actions
1.	January 2019	ORS	Program Launch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forms available on ORS website • Advertisement of program launch, dates and eligibility, and submission instructions
2.	By March 1, 2019	ORS	ORS receives all applications
3.	By Friday, March 8, 2019	ORS	ORS reviews applications for eligibility and completeness and forwards them to the appropriate Faculty
4.	March 11 – 15, 2019	ADRs	Each Faculty convenes a committee to assess the applications
5.	By Monday, March 18, 2019	ADRs	Associated Deans of Research send to ORS, for validation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a list of all candidates in rank order • complete application forms for top ranked candidates • completed evaluation rubric for all candidates
6.	By Monday, March 25, 2019	ORS	ORS confirms to ADRs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preferred candidates' eligibility • that evaluation rubric was used as per guidelines • if there are additional students that a faculty may hire, in cases of under-utilization by other units
7.	First week of April 2019	ADRs & ORS	Notice letters sent to students & supervisors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADR or delegate sends letters within their faculty • ORS sends letter to staffed supervisors & their students
8.	By the end of April 2019	ORS	Accounts set up for faculty & staff to hire students

Deadline to submit applications:

Friday, March 1, 2019 at 12:00 noon

CONTACT: For question regarding the program, please contact Kathryn Hunter at khunter@brocku.ca or at x 4808.