

# BRC Undergraduate Diversity Research Grants Program

There is a well-documented history of systemic discrimination against persons who identify as Indigenous, Black, or People of Color (abbreviated as IBPOC), and/or as visible minorities in Vancouver and more broadly in British Columbia and Canada. The impact of this history together with ongoing discrimination, both personal and systemic, can be seen for example, in the under-representation of persons who identify as IBPOC within university faculty compared to the Canadian population.

The Biodiversity Research Centre is resolved to work against racism and to promote diversity within our centre as well as more broadly in the scientific community. In discussions with a variety of groups (undergraduate and graduate students, staff, faculty), an often-expressed suggestion is to provide more specific mentorship and research opportunities for undergraduates who self-identify as IBPOC. Hence, in 2021 we established this Undergraduate Diversity Research Grants Program, which successfully funded 12 student research projects. We are continuing this program in the 2022-2023 academic year.

We note that while this grants program is specifically for students who self-identify as Indigenous, Black, or a Person of Colour (i.e., a visible minority in academia), the BRC is also welcoming of a wide variety of undergraduate researchers through other ongoing programs (e.g., the Biology Honours program, NSERC USRA awards, etc.).

**Funding available:** In the 2022-2023 academic year, 10 research grants of \$2,500 each. Funds can be used for projects anytime between the award date and the end of summer 2023.

**Application process:** UBC Vancouver undergraduate students in at least their second year of study, who self-identify as Indigenous (within North America), Black, or a Person of Color (or a related term that applies to people of similar ancestry), are invited to approach BRC faculty members whose research interests them. The student can choose to mention that they are eligible for this program, and ask if the faculty member might have sufficient advising time and other resources to provide a research opportunity. (*Please note that **faculty should not ask if students are eligible**; rather eligible students need to initiate the discussion and self-identify as being eligible.*) If both student and potential research advisor agree to apply, they may then submit a joint application to the program. The student should provide a brief statement of how they meet the criteria for the program and should collaborate with the advisor to write a somewhat longer statement (up to 500 words) describing the proposed research and how it is related to the student's research interests, along with a budget of how the \$2,500 will be spent (this can be any reasonable research cost: e.g. stipend for the student, travel, supplies, etc.). The proposed faculty advisor should write a short statement saying they support the proposed research and are willing to provide guidance, along with a description of any other resources that will support the student's research project and a description of likely benefits of the research program for the student (e.g., skills they will learn, and whether the research might result in article authorship or presentation of conference talks). The research can overlap with other research being done in the group, but should be clearly identifiable as a distinct

component that the student is leading. The funding should be used entirely for the direct benefit of the student's project, whether via stipend or other research expenses.

**Application due dates:** There will be two dates when applications will be considered by the adjudication committee: October 15 and January 31. To be considered, applications should be submitted before the relevant date. We anticipate awarding 5 grants during each adjudication period (a total of 10 for the year), although this might be adjusted some depending on the number of applications and the timing of proposed projects. Projects may occur any time after the application date and the end of summer 2023.

**Adjudication:** A committee will read the applications and decide to fund those that best meet the criteria and have a clear and convincing research proposal, budget, and support from the proposed advisor.

**Funding process:** Successful applications will result in the award (typically \$2500) being made available for the student's project via temporary transfer from the BRC to the advisor's research funds. The advisor will be tasked with ensuring the funds are spent on the student's research and reporting to BRC administration regarding how the funds were spent.

See the application form on the next page.

## Application Form: BRC Undergraduate Diversity Research Grants

An interested student should begin the application process by approaching BRC faculty members (listed [here](#)), mentioning they are eligible for this grant and discussing possible research projects. If the faculty member is willing to advise the student, then this form should be filled out to apply for the grant. The student applicant should fill out sections 1-3 (section 2 and 3 can be done in collaboration with the proposed research advisor), and then ask the proposed advisor to fill out section 4.

Applicant name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of applicant (by signing, the applicant affirms that all information provided on this form is accurate, to the best of their knowledge):

x \_\_\_\_\_

Name of proposed research advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Application date: \_\_\_\_\_ (please note that there will be two soft deadlines when decisions will be made: October 15 and January 31, with 5 awards likely to be made in each time period)

**Section 1 (Eligibility)**: Please provide a brief (up to 100 words, or shorter is OK) statement describing how you meet the eligibility criteria for this particular program. These criteria include:

- You are an undergraduate at UBC.
- You self-identify as Indigenous (within North America), Black, or a Person of Colour (or a related term that applies to people of visible minorities in Canada). For purposes of tracking success of this program, we appreciate you being specific in terms of which of these self-descriptions applies to you.
- You are proposing research under the supervision of a BRC faculty member.
- Please state whether you have received a previous grant under this program. Priority will usually be given to those who have not received a previous BRC Undergraduate Diversity Research Grant.

**Section 2 (Research proposal)**: In 500 words or less, please describe the proposed research that you will conduct. This research can overlap with other research being done in the research group, but should be clearly identifiable as a distinct component that you are leading. You may write this statement in collaboration with your proposed research advisor.

**Section 3 (Budget):** Please provide a brief outline of how the grant would be used (this can be up to \$2500, and can include any reasonable cost that is directly supporting the student's research, e.g. stipend for the student, travel, supplies, etc.).

**Section 4 (Support statement):** Here, your advisor should provide a statement (200 words or less) saying they support the proposed research and are willing to provide guidance. They should also describe any other resources that will support the student's research project and describe likely benefits of the research program for the student (e.g., whether it might result in article authorship or presentation of conference talks). The research can overlap with other research being done in the group, but should be clearly identifiable as a distinct component that the student is leading.

Signature of proposed advisor \_\_\_\_\_