

Brandon University Northern Scientific Training Program (BU NSTP) Guidelines

NSTP Overview

Managed by Polar Knowledge Canada (POLAR), the purpose of the Northern Scientific Training Program (NSTP) is to encourage and support Canadian university students with an interest in northern studies and conducting thesis research in Northern regions, by assisting them to gain northern professional experience and training, through the issuance of supplementary funds. The program supports Canadian universities in providing scientific training that gives advanced undergraduate and graduate students professional experience in the Canadian North and encourages them to develop a commitment to northern work.

Program Criteria

a) Research

It is the current practice of the Brandon University Senate Research Committee (SRC) to encourage students to undertake northern research in a wide range of disciplines and to undertake multi-disciplinary projects where appropriate. Projects conducted at any time of year will be considered. Bearing in mind that the purpose of the Program is to develop northern researchers with an awareness of northern issues, supervisors and students should ensure that their research is relevant to current northern concerns.

1. NSTP funding is available for research involving field experience in northern Canada for **ALL DISCIPLINES**.
2. The term "North" is normally understood for purposes of the NSTP Program to include that part of Canada which lies north of the southern limit of the discontinuous permafrost zone; all of Labrador; and the other seven Arctic countries (Finland, Greenland (Denmark), Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States - Alaska). Please reference the [NSTP map](#) which outlines eligible northern research areas.

Circumpolar projects in Russia: Due to the sanctions imposed in response to the gravity of Russia's violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, and grave human rights violations that have been committed in Russia, POLAR will be unable to fund projects taking place in Russia or involving collaborations with Russian organizations for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. For more information, please visit the Government of Canada's - [Canadian Sanctions Related to Russia](#).

3. It is the responsibility of the student and their supervisor to comply with ethical principles related to the conduct of research in the North. Applicants must respect the guidelines being set up under present and future land claim settlements in the North. As part of the licencing and permitting process, research proposals are reviewed by community members to ensure research will be culturally relevant to community needs. Students must consult the Aurora Research Institutes [Doing Research in the Western Northwest Territories: A Guide for Researchers](#), [the Guidebook of Scientific Research in the Yukon](#) and Nunavut Research

Institute's [Scientific Research Licensing Guidelines and Appendices](#) to ensure their research will be carried out under the appropriate licence/permit.

b) Funding

NSTP funds support projects as outlined in the application forms. They are intended to assist in defraying the **additional costs** attributable to northern research projects, specifically, transportation costs, living expenses, freight costs, and interpreter fees, and are therefore **supplementary in nature. NSTP funds are not intended as a source of primary support for students, or as an on-going support in the form of general scholarships. This is why candidates are asked to clearly indicate other sources of funding** on the application for funds. It should also be noted that while the [per diem](#) allotment is left to the University's discretion, cost efficiency is highly advised.

NSTP will provide one year of funding for thesis-based research at the undergraduate level, and up to two years of funding for thesis-based research at the Master's level. Students may apply and be granted funding in any year of their programs.

Students may apply for up to \$6,000.00 in funding per year.

NSTP Awards

The NSTP annually offers four awards for excellence, one \$2,500 award in each of the major disciplines. More information on each award can be found in the [NSTP Information Manual](#).

- Malcolm Ramsay Memorial Award (Life Sciences)
- George Hobson Memorial Award (Physical Sciences)
- Robert McGhee Award (Human Sciences)
- Éric Dewailly Memorial Award (Health Sciences)

Institutions are encouraged to nominate one candidate for each of the NSTP awards from among the current NSTP applicants in the respective discipline areas. Students are eligible to be nominated for the award in their 'discipline' as identified in their application. The only criterion for each award is excellence. The award form must be filled out using the online system and signed off by the Chair of the Northern Studies Committee.

c) Student Eligibility

You are eligible to apply for NSTP funding if you are:

- registered in a degree program at Brandon University;
- a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada;
- a graduate student undertaking thesis-based research or an undergraduate student undertaking thesis-based research; and
- supervised by a Brandon University faculty member.

d) Brandon University NSTP Review Committee

Applications for the NSTP will be reviewed and adjudicated by the Brandon University Senate Research Committee (SRC). The Research Officer will provide instructions and application package materials to the SRC prior to the adjudication meeting, and will attend the adjudication meeting as an information resource. The Research Officer will also attend a SRC meeting prior to the adjudication meeting to train the Committee on their responsibilities and the NSTP process.

The SRC is guided by the [Brandon University Conflict of Interest in Research Policy](#) which is based on the Tri-Agency Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy.

Committee Members are Required to:

- be knowledgeable with the information set forth in the Brandon University Conflict of Interest in Research Policy,
- self-declare a Conflict of Interest for an application where a Conflict of Interest is present,
- refrain from completing the formal evaluation for the identified application(s), and
- abstain from participating in the review and adjudication of the identified application(s).

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) training for SRC members is required prior to the adjudication meeting, specifically:

1. [Unconscious Bias Training Module](#); and
2. [Sex and Gender Training Modules](#).

Committee members are required to take the EDI training every two (2) years, and to provide their most recent training certificates to the Senate Research Committee administrative assistant.

SRC members will also be provided with the following reference manuals prior to application review:

- [Doing Research in the Northwest Territories: A Guide for Researchers](#) – Aurora Research Institute;
- [Scientific Research Licensing Guidelines and Appendices](#) – Nunavut Research Institute;
- [Guidebook on Scientific Research in the Yukon](#) – Government of Yukon
- [The State of Northern Knowledge of Canada Report](#) – Canadian Polar Commission.
- [National Inuit Strategy on Research](#) – Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami

e) Application Assessment

Applications submitted to POLAR are assessed by the NSTP Management Committee, an intergovernmental committee consisting of northern experts that is responsible for reviewing applications and reports, and for making funding recommendations. The Brandon University SRC will assess and rank all applications based on the criteria used by the Management Committee, and found in the [NSTP Information Manual](#), as well as Brandon University-specific selection criteria. The following are considered when assessing applications for funds:

- the extent to which student applications and reports comply with the [NSTP guidelines](#);
- the completeness and clarity of the information provided;
- the evaluation of past performance and future research plans;
- the relevance of the research project to current northern issues;
- the experience and scientific knowledge/training gained by the students;
- the development of northern studies and northern specialists at the university;
- the university submission package as a whole;
- recommendation of the supervisor; and
- the student's CGPA based on current Brandon University transcripts.

f) Deadlines

Internal Deadline – November 1

Where the 1st falls on a weekend, the deadline will be the following business day.

Late applications will not be accepted.

External Deadline – December 1

The SRC will forward applications to the NSTP Secretariat at POLAR by December 1.

How to Apply

Applicants are required to complete and submit the necessary application and/or report online using the appropriate web-based form, ensuring that the instructions outlined in the [NSTP Information Manual](#) are followed. Additionally, a complete PDF submission to the ORS is required. Scanned copies will not be accepted.

Steps in the application process:

1. Supervisor and student must each create an NSTP account in order to access the online application forms. This can be done at: <https://nstp-pfsn.smapply.io/>
2. Student completes application online and submits electronically
3. Supervisor receives electronic notification for application review
4. Supervisor reviews and completes the required sections of the application and then *approves/submits* electronically
 - i. See [NSTP Information Manual](#) for additional information on supervisor's comments.
5. Submit the application and supporting documentation (#6) in PDF format by the internal deadline to the Office of Research Services (ORS) by emailing it to the Research Officer, Julia Herr, at herrj@brandonu.ca.
6. Supporting documentation to be included with the application submission:
 - i. itemized budget;
 - ii. budget justification;
 - iii. letter of support from supervisor; and
 - iv. university transcripts (unofficial transcripts will be accepted, but must be requested by the student from the Registrar's Office).
7. Once supervisor approves the online application, it will be forwarded electronically to the Brandon University NSTP Committee Chair. The Chair submits to POLAR after the SRC has reviewed and ranked applications.

Note 1: Only typed applications, including accompanying documents, will be accepted.

Note 2: Incomplete applications will not be considered.

The SRC reviews and ranks applications then forwards on to the NSTP Secretariat at POLAR for adjudication.

To start the NSTP application process, please visit the POLAR website at:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/polar-knowledge/funding/student/nstp.html>.

Award Notification

Following submission to POLAR, the applications packages are distributed to the NSTP Management Committee in January, and adjudication takes place in February. The NSTP Management Committee allocates funds based on the overall quality of the academic institution, the proposed projects, and the numbers of students requesting funds. Shortly after the adjudication meeting, the Brandon University SRC will receive an email notification specifying the amount of money awarded to Brandon University, and identifying any projects not deemed eligible for funding.

Reporting Requirements

Students are required to complete a research report upon completion of their research, using the web-based forms available at [Online Forms](#). Once the online forms have been completed, they are to be submitted to the universities' Northern Studies Committee via the online system. The internal submission deadline for research reports is **November 1**.

The NSTP encourages and supports winter projects, which do not fit into the normal timeline for reporting on research projects. For those projects, the final report must be provided by April 30th to the NSTP Secretariat. However, universities must submit a preliminary report outlining the name of the student, an estimate of costs and days in the field, as well as any other pertinent information, no later than November 10. The internal deadline for preliminary report submission for winter projects is **October 27**.