



Vancouver Island University REACH Awards

The REACH awards provide Vancouver Island University undergraduate and graduate students with a stipend to enable them to conduct their own original research¹ under the mentorship of a faculty member.

Award information:

The awards provide funding for student engagement in research from study design to knowledge mobilization. The stipend provides a one-time award of \$2,000 per student.

Eligibility:

In order to be considered for a REACH award, students must:

- Be currently registered in a full time or part-time VIU program at the time of application in either an undergraduate or graduate program. Students in any year and any discipline are encouraged to apply.
- Maintain a minimum GPA of 3. *This award is not adjudicated based on GPA.*
- Have a faculty member who is willing to mentor and guide the student during the research process (faculty members can only support 2 student applications each award cycle and each student must have a separate project).
- Not have completed the entire research project by the application deadline
- Not have received a previous REACH award

Students who hold either an NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Award, a SSHRC or NSERC Canada Graduate Scholarship, or research funds from their own Faculty/Department are not eligible to apply for the same project as their existing award.

Application deadline:

The deadline is the end of October 31 for funding starting in January, May or September of the following year. If funds remain after the October call, a second call will occur in February for May or September starts.

Application process:

1. All applications are to be submitted electronically by the student – [ONLINE SUBMISSION FORM](#)
2. Students must have identified a faculty member as a research mentor PRIOR to submitting their application. All research mentors must complete a [Faculty Student Research Mentor Support Form](#) as part of their application. Please have your mentor complete this form prior to the deadline so your application is complete. *Faculty members may not support more than 2 REACH applicants in any funding cycle.*
3. If the online submission form or faculty student research mentor support form is not loaded according to the instructions, the application will be deemed ineligible and will not be funded.
4. Students who need support developing their proposal should: a) ask their faculty mentor for help and feedback on their application, or b) request assistance from the Student Research Engagement Coordinator (kendra.stiwich@viu.ca) or student research ambassadors through the Scholarship, Research and Creative

¹ This fund is not intended to provide funding for faculty-led research initiatives, class or group projects. Students should be the lead investigator on the study. Applications can align with work done for thesis or major projects, honours projects, independent or directed studies, or research based internships.

Activity Office. An information session will be held in September by the Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity Office.

5. Proposals must be written by the student and be written in language accessible to a general audience (avoid technical terms and minimize jargon). Proposals must include:
 - Cover page with the student's name, student ID number, email, year of study, program of study and name of faculty mentor. *This page will be removed for the adjudication process.*
 - A 1000 word research proposal that clearly identifies: a) the title of the research project, b) a 200 word summary of the study, c) the research problem or issue, d) a brief summary of literature to situate the study, e) the methods to be used in the study, f) a brief timeline (between 4-12 months), and g) the knowledge mobilization plans to share the results of the study. [the entire proposal should be 1000 words max *including* the 200 word summary]
 - A list of references cited in the proposal.
6. Applicants will receive an automated confirmation of receipt of their proposal.
7. The review process normally takes one month and students will be notified of the results within six weeks of the application deadline date.

Adjudication

- After the application deadline, all applications will be anonymized removing student and supervisor's name, faculty, student year of study, and program prior to adjudication. This information should only be on the cover page. It should not appear in the proposal.
- The applications are adjudicated by the STAR committee which includes faculty from a variety of disciplines as well as a student representative from the Student Union.
- Approved applicants are sent instructions on how to proceed with the award setup.
- Due to the sheer volume of applications, unsuccessful applicants will not be provided feedback on their proposal. Adjudication decisions are not appealable but applicants are welcome to reapply in a future application cycle.

Award setup

- The awards are set up as a scholarship/bursary paid in a lump sum at the commencement of the award's term. Terms of the award may range between 4 – 12 months.
- Students are invited and strongly encouraged to attend an introductory mixer to learn about program expectations and resources available to support their research at the University.

After the award:

- A follow up mixer will be planned for students to share their experiences and discuss their final report.
- Students submit a final report/reflection on their project within 30 days of the project end date to the STAR committee and the SRCA office (kendra.stiwich@viu.ca).
- The SRCA office may ask successful applicants to participate in a video to share the results of their research project or to develop a press release to promote their work to the campus and external community.
- Students are expected to share their results at VIU's Annual Research Week via a poster, presentation, exhibit or performance.
- Students receive a T4A for the corresponding tax year listing their award amount.

Research ethics, risk management, and safety

For projects involving human participants, animals or biohazardous materials, supervisors are responsible for obtaining research ethics approval, and for ensuring that students receive the appropriate training and supervision to comply with the approved protocol(s).

Relevant links

- [Application Form](#)

- [Faculty Student Research Mentor Support Form](#)

Contact information

For questions, contact: Kendra Stiwich, Student Research Engagement Coordinator at kendra.stiwich@viu.ca or in Building 305 office 446.