

## 2024 Indigenous Student Summer Internship Program Details

### Overview

BioCanRx – Canada's Immunotherapy Network is a not-for-profit national organization funded by the Government of Canada. We have a mission to foster a network that will accelerate Canada's most promising biologically based cancer therapies into clinical trials. The Network is committed to growing the Canadian cancer biotherapeutics sector through innovative research projects and a robust training program.

The goal of the BioCanRx Indigenous Student Summer Internship Program is to provide Indigenous undergraduate university or college students with meaningful hands-on research or policy experience in the area of cancer. This is accomplished through internships with research groups at post-secondary institutions across Canada. Although BioCanRx's mandate focuses on cancer immunotherapy and biotherapeutics, the **BioCanRx Indigenous Student Summer Internship is open to any cancer-related research or policy-related work including that with an Indigenous-oriented framework, such as Indigenous traditional knowledge.** An additional intent of this program is to promote and strengthen Indigenous students' participation in cancer research and policy and careers by providing networking, mentorship, and hands-on, practical experience opportunities.

This program is supported by the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research who is providing support for up to three students working with Ontario-based researchers.



## Information about the Summer Internship

The content below contains important information including key dates, student eligibility, terms of the award, and other resources. For stream- specific information including supervisor eligibility and application process please see below.

### Key Dates

**Date TBD** - Indspire-hosted informational webinar (English Only, recording will be posted on [BioCanRx's website](#))

**February 16, 2024** – Applications deadline

**Late March/Early April 2024** – Awardees notified

**Late April 2024** – Investigator Equity Diversity and Inclusivity training (as required)

**May 6, 2024** – Placement begins

**August 30, 2024** – Placement ends

### Student Eligibility

- Applicants must be working towards their undergraduate degree at a Canadian university/college, have completed at least two semesters, and be in good academic standing. Awardees cannot be enrolled in a graduate program at any point while holding this award.
- Summer students cannot simultaneously receive award-based funding from any of the tri-council research agencies (NSERC, CIHR, SSHRC) while receiving a stipend from BioCanRx.

### Specific Terms of the Award

- The BioCanRx Summer Studentship Award provides **\$9,000 CAD in salary support (+ additional travel and housing related expenses on a case-by-case basis) over a 14-week work term where the student will be working full time.**
- Acceptance of the BioCanRx Summer Studentship Award is conditional upon a commitment from the supervisor and the student co-applicant that the student will complete a 14week work term.
- The value of the Award is paid out to the Supervisor's institution
- At the conclusion of the placement, the student will be expected to submit a short report on the experience and its impact on their career choice by completing the **End of Term Form** (sent to the student towards the end of their work term). The purpose of the End of Term Form is to provide BioCanRx with a high-level summary of the students' work, describe the student's academic or career plans, and provide BioCanRx with their opinion and feedback of the program.
- In the event that the award has to be terminated in advance of the award end date (e.g.; student left the undergraduate program), the student will be expected to complete the **Terminating Award Form** (sent to trainee on request by the principal investigator) and any remaining BioCanRx funds will have to be returned.

## How your data and findings will be used

Please note that as part of this program, students and supervisors are *not* expected to share raw data, or any confidential information pertaining to the study results or stakeholder engagements with BioCanRx. BioCanRx does not retain any intellectual property or ownership over research or policy outputs. Only high-level summaries of research findings will be asked for as part of the End of Term Report. Additionally, students will be invited to present their work at the annual scientific conference – the Summit for Cancer Immunotherapy (details below).

## Other opportunities available to Summer Students

In addition to working on a project over the summer, students will be invited to participate in BioCanRx webinars and other training activities – both virtual and in-person. Some of these offerings include:

- Panel discussion with BioCanRx Investigators about the World of Academia
- How to Write a Scientific Abstract
- How to Visually Communicate your Research
- How to Orally Communicate your Research
- And much more!

Additionally, pending the successful completion of their summer studentship and submission of an abstract, students are invited to present a poster at BioCanRx's annual Summit for Cancer Immunotherapy. BioCanRx is currently in the process of planning their next Summit for 2025, the 2024 summer student cohort will be invited to present at this upcoming Summit. Inclusive of this invitation, students will be supported for travel and accommodations, and conference registration fees will be waived.

## Mentorship and Advice



**Rivers to Success: Indigenous Student Mentorship** - BioCanRx is partnering with [Indspire](#) to provide mentorship to not only students who receive this award, but to those wishing to apply to the Summer Studentship program. Indspire's Rivers to Success program provides students with one-on-one and group guidance and mentorship from Indigenous peers and role models who have “been there, done that” – and who can help you stay grounded as you prepare to take your next steps on your personal path to success. Indspire is a highly recognized and well respected Indigenous-led organization: its Rivers to Success Mentorship Program is well-established. You can learn more about the program [here](#). BioCanRx is very pleased to collaborate with Indspire, as we strongly encourage mentorship – not only specific to this program, but as a means of broader guidance and support as you progress through your undergraduate or college education. If you are interested in participating in the Rivers to Success program before you apply to BioCanRx's Summer Studentship program, please contact [rivers@indspire.ca](mailto:rivers@indspire.ca).

**Program Advisors:** Additionally, you can also reach out to our Program Advisors – students and supervisors who work in research or health policy that are knowledgeable about BioCanRx and the Summer Studentship program. You can find a list and bio of these mentors with their contact information [here](#). Alternatively, please contact Megan Mahoney at [memahoney@biocanrx.com](mailto:memahoney@biocanrx.com) if you'd like an introduction to a listed Program Advisor.

## Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be reviewed by the Indigenous Student Summer Internship Student Working group according to the following criteria:

1. Does the program align with the overall goals of the students' academic and/or professional goals?
2. Does the application align with the goals of the Indigenous Student Summer Internship?
3. Is the project scope realistic for the studentship timeline? Will it be a beneficial learning experience for the student candidate?

Please note that Indigenous students applying to this Indigenous Student Summer Internship Program will also automatically be considered for the Summer Student program (inclusive of non-Indigenous students), and do not need to apply twice.

## Information on Details

You are **applying with a supervisor** working at a Canadian University working in any of the following areas:

- **Clinical, social or economic impact research or policy.** This type of project aims to study the potential solutions to social, legal, ethical, economic or health-systems barriers relating to cancer and patient access to treatment and care.
- **Indigenous Knowledge.** This type of project incorporates Indigenous knowledge to study cancer, or to develop strategies to improve cancer care of Indigenous people.
- **Knowledge Translation.** This type of project includes the development, implementation and/or measurement of materials, processes or applications used to improve cancer-related knowledge to Indigenous individuals or to a broader population.
- **Laboratory-based research.** This type of project encompasses cancer research taking place in a laboratory setting.

You can find more information about BioCanRx's funded Research Program on our [website](#). Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of what projects are eligible. If you have questions about the fit of a project, supervisory eligibility or would like help finding a supervisor, please do not hesitate to contact Megan Mahoney at [memahoney@biocanrx.com](mailto:memahoney@biocanrx.com).

### Supervisor Eligibility

- Candidates' proposed supervisors for the Open Research and Policy Stream studentship placement must be working in cancer research or policy at any Canadian Institution. BioCanRx supports multidisciplinary research in multiple disciplines. Contact Megan Mahoney ([memahoney@biocanrx.com](mailto:memahoney@biocanrx.com)) if you have any questions regarding fit to program.
- A supervisor can host an undergraduate student from a different institution other than their own.
- Supervisors may concurrently submit one Indigenous Student Summer Internship Application and one Summer Studentship Program Application (open to Indigenous and non-Indigenous students). Program Details and Application Form found on the [BioCanRx website](#) - i.e., two applications total; one for each program.)

**IMPORTANT NOTE TO STUDENTS:** At the time of the application, students must have found a supervisor with whom they wish to work *and* have made arrangements with the proposed supervisor to co-apply to this award. If you are interested in working with a specific researcher, contact them as soon as possible. Please contact Megan Mahoney ([memahoney@biocanrx.com](mailto:memahoney@biocanrx.com)) for help facilitating this process with existing BioCanRx Network Investigators. We cannot guarantee any placement. You can find a list of BioCanRx funded investigators [here](#). Please

note that this is just a starting point. As stated above, your supervisor can be any investigator as long as they are doing cancer research or policy work at a Canadian Institution.

## **Application Procedure**

(Please refer to Application Form – Open Research and Policy Stream document for details found on our [website](#))

- Student and proposed Supervisor/Principal Investigator (i.e., supervisor) co-complete the Application Form
- The student provides a summary of the proposed research project (co-developed with the supervisor).
- The student provides a summary of what they will be responsible for, and what will gain from the Summer Student experience (co-developed with the supervisor).
- The student provides a statement of interest.
- The proposed supervisor provides a letter of support.
- The proposed supervisor describes specific, concrete practices that they have in place to ensure that Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion is intentionally and proactively supported in their training plan.