Highschool Youth Researcher Summer Program

Before beginning your application, please note:

- Applications must be submitted via the online application form.
- You cannot save the form, so you are encouraged to review the entire application before you begin. It is highly recommended that you type your written responses in a word processor offline, then copy the text into the form.

Application checklist:

BEFORE starting your application:

1. Review all sections of the Alberta Innovates HYRS webpage and FAQ's.
2. Obtain permission from your two (2) Teacher Referees for the application.
3. Obtain permission from your Non-Academic Referee for the application.
4. Review the eligibility criteria for HYRS.

STARTING your application:

5. Read the entirety of the online application form before completing any form fields.
6. Create a word document to type your written responses for the application in a format you can save for your records.
7. Carefully complete each section of the application (please click each item below for more information on each application section):
   - **I. Section 1: Student Information**
   - **II. Section 2: School Information**
   - **III. Section 3: References**
   - **IV. Section 4: Academic Background**
   - **V. Section 5: Extracurriculars, Interests, Hobbies, and Abilities**
   - **VI. Section 6: Career and Academic Goals**
   - **VII. Section 7: Essay**
   - **VIII. Section 8: Additional Information**
8. Preview your application before submitting
9. Submit your application
10. Follow up with your Referees
11. Await the HYRS decision email

STEP 1: Review all sections of the Alberta Innovates HYRS webpage and FAQ's.

Visit https://research.ucalgary.ca/students/alberta-innovates-HYRS and read our HYRS eligibility criteria, application guide, and FAQ section. If your question does not appear on the website, please contact hyrs@ucalgary.ca.

STEP 2: Reach out to your two Teacher Referees

Each HYRS applicant is required to include the names and contact information of two (2) teachers to provide a reference for their application.

Applicants may select:

- Two (2) Science teachers; or
- One (1) Science teacher and one (1) Math teacher.

When reaching out to your proposed teacher references, it is recommended that you:

- Provide them with a brief background on the HYRS program (including what the program is, and why you are applying);
- Confirm if they are able to support your application by answering our online reference form;
- Advise the referees that reference assessment forms can be accessed on the HYRS web page;
- Advise them of the final referee deadline; and
- Provide an estimated timeline of when you will be submitting your portion of the application.

Applicants are **strongly** encouraged to obtain permission from their references **prior** to beginning the application. Please note: Both applicant and referee will receive a confirmation email when reference is submitted. ***If confirmation email is not received, contact hyrs@ucalgary.ca to ensure that the reference was received.***

STEP 3: Reach out to your Non-Academic Referee

Each HYRS applicant is required to provide the name and contact information of one (1) additional reference to support his or her application to HYRS. This reference must be an adult (at least 18 years of age), who is not related to you, and is from outside of your academic schoolwork. Examples of a good Non-Academic referees include:

- Work supervisors
- Volunteer coordinators
- Sports or music coaches
- Youth group leaders
- Mentors
- Previous lab/research supervisors

This referee will be asked to comment on a variety of your skills based on their observations of your activities within their organization. For this reason, we encourage students to contact their proposed non-academic referee before starting the application to discuss if that individual feels they can adequately comment on your:

- Role and responsibilities within the referee's organization;
- Skills and strengths when working with the public or taking initiative on assigned/unassigned tasks;

Applicants are strongly encouraged to obtain permission from their references prior to beginning the application. Please note: Both applicant and referee will receive a confirmation email when reference is submitted. ***If confirmation email is not received, contact hyrs@ucalgary.ca to ensure that the reference was received.***

STEP 4: Review the Eligibility Criteria for HYRS

To be eligible for the HYRS program at the University of Calgary, you must meet the following criteria:

• Be currently registered in Grade 11 at an Alberta high school located in Red Deer or anywhere south of Red Deer, up to but not including Claresholm.
  ◦ Students at high schools north of Red Deer should apply to HYRS at the University of Alberta.
  ◦ Students at high schools in Claresholm or further south should apply to HYRS at the University of Lethbridge.
• Achieve a minimum grade of 85% in each of the following courses by the program start date:
  ◦ Math 20-1 or Math 20-2
  ◦ Biology 20
  ◦ One other Grade 11 science (Chemistry 20 or Physics 20)

Pre-requisite courses must be completed before program start date. To verify your grades, upload any of the following: official or unofficial transcripts, interim report cards or Detailed Academic Reports (DARs). If you are still enrolled in a prerequisite course and will not have a final grade by the application deadline, upload a document confirming your enrollment and current standing, such as an interim report card or a signed teacher letter.

Combine all documents into one PDF and upload it to your application. It is your responsibility to ensure your upload covers every prerequisite course listed above. ***Applications missing grades or enrollment proof for any prerequisite will be marked incomplete and will not be forwarded for adjudication.***

STEP 5: Review the HYRS Application form in its entirety

Once the HYRS application is open, students will be able to access the portal via the link on the HYRS website. As the application cannot be saved in a draft form, it is recommended that students access the application to review the information required for each application section before beginning. Please review the information required for each section carefully and work in MS word (see STEP 6 below) to complete the written components of the application in order to save your progress.

STEP 6: Create a word doc to save your work

As mentioned above in STEP 5, we recommend that applicants work offline in a word doc to save their progress (as the HYRS application portal does not allow you to save drafts of the application). Titles and brief descriptions of each section are outlined in STEP 7 of the application guidelines, using these titles as headers in your document may help you organize your work and save in a format that can be used for future reference.

STEP 7: Completing the application

Section 1: Student Information

What is this?

This section of the application collects your basic contact information and gives us a way to create your application file and contact you if we have any questions or notice anything is missing.

What information will I need?

- Confirm you are a grade 11 student
- Confirm you live in the geographical region of Alberta assigned to the University of Calgary
- Your basic contact information (name, address, phone number, etc.)
- Parental Consent

Helpful Tips & Tricks:

This is the ONLY place in the application that you include your contact information. Therefore, we ask that you please double (and triple!) check to make sure that your email address and phone number are entered correctly as this is our only way of contacting you if we have questions.

Section 2: School Information

What is this? Why do you need it?

This section of the application collects your school's information. We collect this information for two reasons:

1. The name and address of your school help us confirm you are in the University of Calgary geographic area for HYRS at the UofC.
2. Each school can receive a maximum of two (2) HYRS awards. To be sure we don't award more than 2 students per high school, we collect this information from each applicant to keep track.

What information will I need?

- Your school's basic details (name, address [including postal code], phone number)
- The name of your High School Principal

Section 3: References

What is this?

In this section, you will enter the contact details of your three (3) selected references to provide support to your application. If you have not done so already, we recommend jumping back to **STEP 2 & 3** to review the process for reaching out to your references in order to get their permission and give them some information on what to expect as your HYRS Referee.

What information will I need?

- Name and email address for two (2) Teacher Referees (either two Science teachers or one Math and one Science teacher)
- Name and email address for your Non-Academic Referee

Helpful Tips & Tricks:

Complete your application early!

Your referees can complete their reference assessment using the link on the HYRS web page, found alongside the student application link. The reference assessment is submitted separately from your application and can be completed at any time before the deadline. **Both your application and your reference assessment(s) must be received by the application deadline. Incomplete applications will not be evaluated further.**

Once a reference assessment is submitted, a confirmation email will be sent to both you and your referee. Confirmation emails are sent based on the email addresses provided in your application and the reference assessment. If there is a typo or error in an email address, the confirmation will not be received. Please check each email address carefully to ensure it is correct. ***Contact hyrs@ucalgary.ca to ensure the assessment was submitted if confirmation email was not received.***

Section 4: Academic Background

What is this?

In this section, you will identify the courses you have completed (at the time of application) and those in which you are currently enrolled. The courses listed in this section will help us confirm you have met the minimum eligibility requirements and may be used by our office to help place you with a specific lab if you are selected for HYRS.

What information will I need?

- For courses you have completed: copies of official transcripts - stamped by your school office - showing your final mark in that course
- For courses you are currently enrolled in: copies of interim report cards showing your current standing in the course to-date. We can also accept letters from the teacher of that course outlining your current grade.

Helpful Tips & Tricks:

Plan to arrange for your transcripts before you start your application. Transcripts and interim reports should be stamped or signed by your school office and uploaded to your application as a **single PDF file**. Please ensure that your transcripts and interim reports include all necessary grades to determine you meet the minimum eligibility criteria (ie. Bio 20, Math 20-1/20-2, and Chemistry or Physics 20). ***In the event your application does not include all necessary transcripts, it may be marked as incomplete and not forwarded for adjudication.***

Section 5: Extracurriculars, Interests, Hobbies, and Abilities

What is this?

This section is split into two questions. The HYRS program seeks students who are well-rounded, curious about health research, and looking for a summer research experience to help launch their career and academic goals. The questions in this section are designed to help you provide details that demonstrate your general interests and describe your involvement in a wide variety of activities in your life.

For the first question, highlight what is unique about you by telling us more about how you are involved with your high school and/or community groups, and what role you take/impact you have.

For the second question, we want your personality to shine and showcase your interests outside of school and academics. Please tell us about yourself, and what your hobbies, activities, and special abilities are.

What information will I need?

- Describe what interests you and what your hobbies and special abilities are
- Describe the community and/or school groups you are regularly involved in
- Estimation of the number of hours per month that you spend with each group

Helpful Tips & Tricks:

For this section, lists are perfectly okay. The selection committee will use this section to help build a picture of you and get a sense of what activities and hobbies you undertake in your spare time, and which community or school group you choose to devote your time to (and why!).

Because there is a character limit on both questions in this section, it is imperative that you are strategic about which activities/hobbies and groups you choose to highlight. You may wish to discuss the groups you spend the most amount of time with, the activities you find the most satisfying, or the experiences you feel are most unique to you and why they are important to you.

One last helpful tip: make sure you read the questions carefully and provide an answer to **all parts** of the question!

Section 6: Career and Academic Goals

What is this?

This section includes 3 questions about your current interest in science and research, and how those interests may relate to some of your academic and career goals.

What information will I need?

- Description of your current career goal(s)
- Briefly describe why this career interests you
- Description of your academic goals, including programs of study you are currently interested in

Section 7: Essay – Your Interest in Science and Research

What is this?

As with the other sections of the application, the student essay helps our selection committee understand more about you. We want to know about a specific area of health research you find intriguing and why. We also want to know more about why you want to be part of the HYRS program.

What information will I need?

- An understanding of a specific area of health research you find interesting
- A description of why you find this interesting
- Your thoughts on why you would like to be a part of the HYRS program

Helpful Tips & Tricks:

Be concise:

Because the essay is very short (min. 350 words – max. 400 words) you will need to do some advance planning in order to make sure you have enough space to address all parts of the essay topic within the word limit. The most successful students are very succinct in their essays and **fully address all parts of the question**. Remember, the selection committee will not receive any essay content that exceeds the maximum word limit.

Research your topic:

You may need to do some advance research on an area of health research that you find interesting in order to write your essay; we recommend you start the brainstorming and research for this section of the application as early as possible to give you enough time to write the essay and make any edits or refinements you may need.

Be genuine:

Tell us about an area of health research that you truly find fascinating, not just an area that you may know the most about. When you are excited about your essay topic, it makes a HUGE difference in the quality of your essay – your passion will show through in your writing! Our team often reviews the essays for students selected for HYRS to help us identify what you find most exciting about research so be as genuine as possible about what interests you!

Section 8: Additional Information

What is this?

This final section includes 5 acknowledgements we require students to make before submitting the application. Some acknowledgements will help us determine suitable labs if you are selected, and some are used to help us ensure we reach out to you for further information if needed.

What information will I need?

- Know if you are willing to work in a research lab that uses animals in research
- Know if you can commit to the HYRS ambassadorship role after completion of the program
- Advise if you have up-to-date immunizations
- (For applicants outside of Calgary only) Identify if you require assistance with making living arrangements in Calgary
- Confirm if you are willing to make the 6 week, full-time, commitment to HYRS

Helpful Tips & Tricks:

Many students are unsure what "full-time" commitment means for HYRS. HYRS students are expected to join their mentors, or our team, on campus from Monday – Friday each week, for 6 weeks during the summer. Working hours may vary depending on your lab, however students can expect to spend no more than 8 hours/day (including 1 hour lunch) working with their labs or participating in HYRS activities.

STEP 8: Preview your application before submitting

Once you are satisfied with the content of your application, and have uploaded all necessary transcripts, you must preview your application by clicking the "Preview before submitting" button at the bottom of the application before you

are able to submit. The application will highlight (in red) any mandatory fields that you may have missed in the application.

Common issues:

In the event you have forgotten to upload your transcripts, you will receive an error message in red at the top of the preview screen. Please correct this error before attempting to submit your application.

In the event your essay does not meet the minimum word count, an error message will appear at the top of the screen when you attempt to preview the application. Essays must be between 350 – 400 words in order to submit.

If changes are required to your application, please ensure you click the "Go back to make changes" option before proceeding to step 9 below.

STEP 9: Submit your application

We recommend printing a copy of your application from the browser (or saving a copy by printing to PDF) for your records prior to your final submission at this stage.

Please ensure your application is complete and submitted prior to the posted deadline.

STEP 10: Follow up with your referees

Once you have submitted your application, we recommend following up with your referees to let them know you have submitted and advise them to complete the reference assessment form by the application deadline.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure their references submit their portion of the application. In the event that you or your referee did not receive the confirmation email, please contact our office at hyrs@ucalgary.ca to ensure it was submitted.

STEP 11: Await the HYRS decision email

Applicants are notified of the outcome of their application in May. Applicants selected for the award will be contacted via email at the address provided in their application. Once all awards are distributed, unsuccessful applicants will be notified via email. We wish all applicants the best of luck!

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HYRS

Expanding Young Minds

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