

NBIF Research Assistantships Initiative (RAI)

The information presented here is intended to answer the most common questions that ORS receives by providing additional information not found on the [NBIF website](#) and by offering advice based on past experience.

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What is an NBIF research assistantship grant?

The Research Assistantships Initiative (RAI) is a joint initiative of the New Brunswick Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour, the New Brunswick Department of Education and the New Brunswick Innovation Foundation (NBIF). The RAI offers funding for undergraduate and graduate students working under the supervision of researchers at New Brunswick institutions. Funds are awarded to the professor or researcher, who then allocates the funding to undergraduate or graduate students in the form of research assistantships through salaries, fellowships or stipends.

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Who should apply?

Researchers who supervise undergraduate or graduate students in areas of research related to [NBIF's Strategic Industries](#) are encouraged to apply. NBIF's mandate is to fund *applied research* in fields that are economically or socially important to New Brunswick. Applicants should also have a strong research and publication track record, with demonstrated expertise in the area in which they are applying.

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How do I apply?

Applications must be submitted to the Office of Research Services, not to NBIF directly. The ORS internal deadline for the competition is two (2) weeks prior to NBIF's deadline. ORS is required to check for completeness and adherence to the program guidelines.

In addition to the NBIF application form, you must also attach your CV. ORS recommends that you use a NSERC, SSHRC, or CIHR format CV if you have recently applied to one of these

councils. In addition to your CV, you may attach additional information relevant to the proposal; however, your CV and additional material combined cannot exceed 10 pages.

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What does NBIF look for in applications?

Research Assistantship Initiative: General Criteria for Proposal Evaluation

When evaluating research assistantship applications, NBIF applies specific criteria. Applications are not expected to meet all criteria, but successful applications will meet most of the criteria. Note that applications under the Education and Training cluster are evaluated differently in regard to certain criteria - refer to the "Education & Training" statement in italics on the RAI application form. While NBIF does not assign a weight to each criteria, the most important information used in assessing RAI applications is:

1. Scientific and technical merit of the research program
2. Expertise and track record of the technician's supervising researcher
3. The research assistant's expected contribution to the research program
4. The research program's potential for innovation and economic impact on New Brunswick
5. Funding from other sources and infrastructure available for the research program.

It is important that your application be written and presented clearly, in a manner that will allow NBIF to properly evaluate your request in light of the selection criteria. It is important to be aware that the NBIF review committee is composed of generalists from the public and private sectors. It is highly unlikely that any reviewer will be an expert in your field. Accordingly, applications should not contain too much technical detail; a non-expert needs to be able to understand the work you are proposing.

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What is meant by "funding and the infrastructure available for the research program"?

NBIF needs to be assured that sufficient funding/support exists for the proposed project to be completed. While you are not required to have "matching" funds, NBIF does look favourably on applicants who have other sources of funding or who are able to use the NBIF funding to obtain (i.e., leverage) other funding. For example, the project you obtain NBIF funding for may be used as a pilot project that leads to a tri-council grant application down the road. If this applies to your work, explain this in your application.

If you have support and infrastructure in your faculty or department for the project, this is considered an in-kind contribution and would be part of the "funding and infrastructure available for the research program." Examples include access to specialized equipment, lab time, or the support of a technician. If possible, assign an appropriate dollar value to this contribution.

In the application form, you must outline associated funding (cash or in-kind) in the Project Budget section.

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Can I apply for more than one student or for more than one project?

Researchers can be funded for more than one research assistantship in any specific round (e.g., two graduate students or one undergraduate and one graduate student). While you can apply for multiple students to work on more than one project, only highly-ranked applications will be considered for two or more awards. The majority of applicants receive funding for one graduate student. Decisions to award multiple students will depend largely on the number of successful applications identified. Assistantships are awarded for one year. Graduate assistantships are \$10,000 each, and undergraduate assistantships are \$5,000 each.

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If I have been awarded an Assistantship in the past, can I apply again?

Yes, you can apply for another Assistantship for either a new project or a continuation of your previous RAI project.

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When will NBIF make a decision?

NBIF typically makes decisions on research assistantship applications within 8 weeks of the competition deadline.

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