

RNA Innovation Program Guidelines for Trainees

By accepting the NSERC CREATE RNA Innovation offer, in addition to their thesis requirements, trainees are agreeing to the following:

- Involvement in deepYellow Challenge (MSc, PhD & PDF)
- Completion of on-site industry internships (Twinning Program) (MSc, PhD & PDF)
- Participation in Scientific Leadership course (MSc & PhD, PDF optional)
- Completion of research training courses (MSc & PhD)
- Preparation of semesterly progress reports (UG, MSc, PhD & PDF)
- Collection of [personal information](#) for reporting purposes in accordance with NSERC requirements (UG, MSc, PhD & PDF)
 - Name, DOB, gender, visible minority, disabilities
 - Program of study, PI
 - Status in Canada
 - Funding in addition to NSERC CREATE

deepYellow (dY) Challenge Information

Each RNA Innovation cohort (MSc, PhD & PDF) will receive an R&D challenge from an industry partner. Working together, trainees will aim to help solve this challenge. Mentorship will be provided by University of Lethbridge faculty and the industry partner and all wet lab work will be completed in SynBridge. The deepYellow Challenge may also be completed as an independent study and count towards a trainee's degree requirements. PDFs will act as group leaders and provide project guidance to their team. Each deepYellow Challenge will occur over a year (three semester, 12 month) schedule. The estimated time commitment for each trainee is approximately 120 hours/semester. Each trainee will participate in at least one (1) challenge. Presentations on the deepYellow Challenge will take place during the biannual networking fair.

Twinning Program Information

Each trainee will be required to spend a minimum of 20% of their time on-site at an industry internship. The Program Coordinator will facilitate placements for the trainees. Internship timing is flexible and can be completed as a single session or multiple sessions. Biannual networking fairs will introduce trainees to potential industry hosts. All trainees must adhere to RNA Innovation Terms of Reference, NSERC and the industry partners' confidentiality and intellectual property agreements.



Scientific Leadership Course Information

This course will provide students with a well-rounded and current understanding of scientific ethics, issues regarding gender and minority representation, and professional communication. Experts in these fields will be brought in to facilitate learning and lead discussions. Students will be expected to be involved in the selection of appropriate literature, preparation of presentations and written reports, and discussion of papers. Additionally, as part of the course, students will prepare their thesis project proposal. PDFs are encouraged to audit the course.

The course will consist of three modules addressing (1) leadership with respect to gender and minority representation, (2) integrity & ethics, (3) professional communication.

School of Graduate Studies Funding and Teaching Assistantships

If trainees **do not wish to be** assigned a teaching assistantship, they must consult with their Supervisor, the Program Coordinator and SGS.

RNA Innovation trainees can receive additional funding from SGS (tuition awards, Dean's scholarship) if they meet SGS qualifications.

Trainees are eligible for additional funding outside of RNA Innovation and SGS.

Research Course Information

All trainees must complete the requirements of their respective graduate programs. The RNA Innovation Scientific Leadership Course (see above) is mandatory for MSc and PhD trainees in RNA Innovation and can be used to fulfill SGS course requirements. Credit for the course work will be recognised among the participating institutions.

All RNA Innovation trainees are encouraged to participate in local seminar programs (e.g. ARRTI), RiboClub seminars, educational webinars, MITACS courses/webinars, and other courses that fit within the RNA Innovation mandate. Please discuss any questions or concerns with the Program Coordinator and your Supervisor.

Supervisor and Thesis Requirements

In addition to RNA Innovates program requirements, all trainees must fulfill their duties as defined by their Supervisor. These duties may include assistance with grant proposal writing, mentoring, and maintenance of laboratory infrastructure, attending meetings and conferences, as well as conducting and documenting research.



Transfer to Ph.D. from M.Sc.

Trainees that wish to transfer from M.Sc. to Ph.D. program will have to re-apply to the RNA Innovation Program. If the trainee is successful, they will receive funding for three (3) additional years as a Ph.D. trainee. Trainees who have completed the Scientific Leadership course and at least one deepYellow challenge are not required to participate again.

Trainee Reporting

All RNA Innovation trainees must complete a progress report each semester. Reports will be used to evaluate each trainee's advancement and the program's success. Reports will be submitted to the Program Coordinator.

Funding Allocation

(Subject to satisfactory performance and completion of RNA Innovation and SGS requirements)

- MSc trainees may receive RNA Innovation funding for 2 years.
- PhD trainees may receive RNA Innovation funding for 3 years.
- PDF trainees may receive RNA Innovation funding for 2 years.

Each graduate student trainee will receive:

- RNA Innovation Award from SGS: \$10,000/year
- RNA Innovation Salary from NSERC: \$10,000/year**
- Research Stipend from their supervisor: at least \$2,500/year for MSc, \$5,000/year for PhD

Each PDF trainee will receive:

- RNA Innovation Salary & Benefits: \$30,000/year**
- Research Assistantship from their supervisor: at least \$10,000/year
- Benefits as per university agreements

Appointments will be paid through the University in the amount described above. Rate of pay, leaves, vacation pay, etc. will be subject to statutory and legislatively required deductions on each pay period, including Canadian income tax, Canada Pension Plan ("CPP") and Employment Insurance ("EI"). You will be paid on the last working day of each month. This amount will be pro-rated for any contractual period specified otherwise. Payment in lieu of vacation is included in this amount.

**Please note that the RNA Innovation Salary is taxable income