

# HYRS

## Mentor Package 2026

The **High School Youth Research Summer (HYRS)** Program is looking for interested mentors for summer 2026.

HYRS offers motivated Grade 11 students from Alberta high schools the opportunity to gain firsthand research experience and introduce them to career opportunities in research. The program is looking for interested labs, research groups, and supervisors to mentor a student over a 6-week period, concluding in a showcase highlighting the work they have done.

### Program Information

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The HYRS program will run from **July 3 to August 14, 2026**. Students will spend 20-25 hours a week in the lab, with the remaining time allocated to the HYRS 2026 cohort and program team, where they will participate in various programming activities to enhance their research experience. The program will conclude with a research showcase on **Thursday, August 13, from 6:30 to 9 p.m.**

The awarded students will receive a stipend; all stipend payments are set up and managed by the Research Services Office. Students will participate in orientation activities on July 3 and will be available to begin work on their projects on Monday, July 6. Students will be able to work on research in their respective labs, and all other program components will also be held in person. In no case should these students work more than an average of 35 hours per week.

Students will meet 2-3 times per week as the HYRS cohort to participate in a variety of programming designed to enhance their research experience. Additional programming includes lunch seminars focused on careers in health research, as well as tours and social activities. Our team works to book these weekly events on **Monday** and **Wednesday** during the **lunch hour** and **Friday mornings** (9:30 – 11:30 a.m.). These sessions are mandatory, and it is expected that the students attend. Please plan for your student to be away from their project during these times.

Our administration team will provide all mentors and daily supervisors with a copy of the HYRS program schedule at the start of the summer so that you are aware of the events your student will be attending.

### Mentor Requirements

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There are 4 core requirements of a mentor:

## 1. Project description and poster

Each student must be assigned to their own clearly defined project as they are required to create a scientific/informative presentation based on their work this summer. This can be a stand-alone project or part of a bigger project currently underway in your lab. It is important that your HYRS student is aware of the relevance of their work, understands their role in the project, and knowshow it fits with other research in your lab.

### Priority Areas

- Digital or Data-Driven Health Research: Research Projects that advance digital or data-enabled methods, tools, or technologies in health research have the potential to enhance the efficiency of healthcare delivery, creating opportunities for more personalized healthcare approaches. Examples of topics include:
  - computer modelling or simulation for drug discovery or technology development
  - overcoming data access, collection or data infrastructure challenges
  - approaches to preparing health data for machines.
- Commercialization: Research projects that develop and commercialize an emerging health technology, preferably digital or data-enabled, with the potential to generate commercial economic returns (jobs, revenue, investment) for Alberta and cost-effective, beneficial health outcomes.
- Health System Transformation: Research projects that enable the advancement of data and digitally enabled care models, including facilitating adoption, implementation and/or scale across the continuum of care in Alberta. Key areas of interest include but are not limited to:
  - implementation studies in health care settings
  - policy development
  - approaches to citizen-centric care

At the culminating event for the HYRS program, the students will participate in a project poster showcase alongside other summer research programs to highlight their research contribution and experience working in their role. Students will receive a workshop on scientific/informative presentation creation, but they may need your team's help in putting the final product together.

As many students will not have 'results' after 6 weeks, the presentation should be a graphic representation of what they have done this summer. The final showcase will be held **Thursday, August 13 from 6:30-9 p.m.**

## 2. Mentorship and Goal Setting

We encourage all mentors to meet with their mentee at the beginning of the program on Monday, July 6 to get to know the HYRS student and discuss goals for the student to achieve during their summer. Some of the overarching goals of the programs include:

- Increased awareness of ongoing research activities happening at the University of Lethbridge
- Increased confidence engaging with the public
- Developing a real-world perspective on research including its challenges, obstacles, opportunities, and imperfections
- Improved understanding of the process of research and how methods affect the results
- Ability to ask appropriate questions in an academic and/or research environment
- Increased confidence in verbally presenting difficult scientific concepts in an accessible fashion
- Increased confidence approaching other Principal Investigators and university professors in the future
- Networking and establishing contacts and relationships

Check-ins throughout the summer and a final meeting with your student to discuss their experience can be very valuable to the student and help them see their overall progress.

### **3. Orientation and Training**

Students will complete their WHMIS training. Students who require animal training to work in labs will be provided with training before the start of the program.

### **4. Final Survey**

Each Mentor is required to complete a short final survey about their experience with their student and the program at the end of August.

## **What are the requirements of a HYRS daily supervisor?**

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Most mentors are not able to provide daily supervision of the student and will assign a member of their team as the student's daily supervisor. Daily supervisors are asked to provide guidance to the student throughout the summer and teach them the expectations of the project.

Daily supervisors can be graduate students, research associates, postdoctoral fellows, or other members of the lab team that are able to lead the student through their daily tasks on the project and answer any questions they may have.

HYRS students should be treated as a lab team member, and we encourage them to attend lab meetings and seminars.

## **What are the requirements of the HYRS students?**

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HYRS students act as ambassadors of the program and the University. Students will receive a workshop on workplace and email etiquette, and a session on research ethics. Please ensure that your student is aware of any particular intellectual property confidentiality issues and make this distinction explicit (i.e., what they can/cannot talk about outside lab/in public places).

Students are expected to follow the procedures and rules of the research environment in which they conduct their research, under the guidance of their mentors, including all policies governing research at the University of Lethbridge.

Students are to maintain regular working hours. In no case should the students work more than an average of 35 hours per week. Students are not required to track their hours through the HR payroll system.

Students are required to attend all HYRS-related events, such as guest lectures and the culminating event. Students are expected to keep their mentors and daily supervisors informed of any changes to the initial schedule of events and remind their supervisors of their weekly session activities.

We encourage all students to talk to their mentor or supervisor if they have issues with their project. Our team is also available to assist with any issues that arise and require resolution – if you are having difficulties, please let us know as soon as possible as six weeks is a very short time!

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