

HYRS

Student Application Guide 2026

Before you start your application:

- Review ALL sections of the [HYRS website](#)
- Review the [eligibility criteria](#) for HYRS ULethbridge
- Obtain permission from your two (2) teacher references for the application
 - This can be 2 science teachers OR 1 science teacher & 1 math teacher
- Obtain permission from one community reference for the application (an example of a non-academic reference could be a coach, private music teacher, or employer)
- **Please note: The HYRS program focuses on health research and innovation, which does not always involve traditional laboratory work.** Biomedical research that includes lab work is part of the program but represents only a small portion of the broader field. As a result, most HYRS placements are not primarily lab-based. Placements typically focus on improving healthcare or supporting sustainable health systems through new technologies and often involve computer-based work in an office setting. Some placements may also include clinic or community activities. In some years, a small number of students may also be placed in research areas outside of health, depending on the mentors and projects available.

Starting your application

- Download the editable [student application document](#)
 - Use this document to hold your answers before you officially submit your application online, as the online application must be completed and submitted in one sitting
- Complete each section in the document (STEP 6 below has tips for each section)
- When you're happy with your answers, transfer your answers to the online application form
- Submit your application and check your email for a copy
- Follow up with your references!

Application Steps

STEP 1: Review all sections of the Alberta Innovates HYRS webpage and FAQs

Read the '[FAQs](#)', '[How to Apply](#),' and '[What is Alberta Innovates](#)' on the website. If your question isn't answered online, contact HYRS@uleth.ca.

STEP 2: Reach out to your two (2) Teacher References

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 teachers, it is recommended that you:

- Provide them with a brief background on the HYRS Program (what the program is and why you want to apply).
- Confirm they are willing to support your application, and if so, ask them to complete the [online reference form](#).
- Provide them with an estimated timeline for when you will submit your portion of the application.
- Advise them of the final deadline for their reference submission: **Monday, March 29, 2027 at 11:45 p.m. (MT)**.
 - **Without these references, your application will be marked incomplete and will not be forwarded for adjudication.**

STEP 3: Reach out to your Community/Non-Academic Reference

Each HYRS applicant is required to include the names and contact information of one (1) additional reference to support their 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 your academic schoolwork.

Examples of a good community reference include:

- Work supervisors
- Volunteer coordinators
- Sport or music coaches/teachers (outside of school)
- Youth group leaders
- Mentors
- Previous lab/research supervisors

This reference 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 Community reference before starting the application to discuss whether that individual feels they can adequately comment on your roles & responsibilities within the organization, as well as your skills & strengths when working with the public or taking initiative on assigned/unassigned tasks.

Please remind them of the final deadline for submitting their reference: **Monday, March 29, 2027 at 11:45 p.m. (MT)**. Without these references, your application will be marked incomplete and will not be forwarded for adjudication.

The Non-Academic/Community Reference Form can be [accessed here](#).

STEP 4: Review the Eligibility Criteria for HYRS

To be eligible for the HYRS Program at the University of Lethbridge, you must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Have achieved a minimum of 85% standing in each of

- Math 20-1 or Math 20 – 2
 - Biology 20, and
 - One other Grade 11 science
- Transcripts and/or interim reports are required and must be signed and/or stamped by your High School office, scanned, and uploaded to your application to verify your grades in the above-listed courses. You do not need to pay to get an official transcript. A PowerSchool printout signed or stamped by the front office is fine.
- The applicant is responsible for ensuring uploaded transcripts include all necessary grades to confirm you meet the minimum eligibility criteria for HYRS.
 - In the event your upload does not include all necessary grades (ie. Bio 20, Math 20-1 or 20-1 and Chemistry 20 or Physics 20) **your application will be marked incomplete and will not be forwarded for adjudication.**
 - If you wish to share updated grade reports, please email hyrs@uleth.ca with the following subject line: **"RE: (LAST, first) HYRS grade report update"**
- Be currently registered in Grade 11 at an Alberta High School within the geographical location assigned to the University of Lethbridge (a high school located in or south of Claresholm).
 - Students North of Claresholm and in or south of Red Deer should apply to HYRS at the University of Calgary.
 - Students North of Red Deer should apply to HYRS at the University of Alberta.

STEP 5: Review the HYRS Application form in its entirety (offline)

You can access the HYRS application form via the link on the [HYRS website](#). However, the online form has multiple sections, and you must complete each section before proceeding to the next. As a result, you will not be able to view all the questions without submitting your answers. Additionally, the online form will only save responses for 24 hours, so work on your application outside the online form before submitting to ensure you have all required information.

To help you prepare for the online application, please [download and use this editable application template](#) to compile your responses. Titles and brief descriptions of each section are outlined in STEP 6 (below).

STEP 6: Complete the online application

1. Personal Information

This section collects your basic contact information, allowing us to create your application file and contact you if we have questions or notice missing information.

Note: This is the only place we receive your contact information. Please double-check that your email address, phone number, and all other details are entered correctly.

1. School Details

This section collects information about your school. We collect this information for the following reasons:

- Your school's name and address help us confirm you are in the University of Lethbridge geographic area for HYRS at ULethbridge.

- Each school can receive a maximum of four (4) HYRS awards. To ensure we don't award more than four students to any particular high school, we collect this information.

2. References

This section of the application collects the information on your three (3) references. Review STEPS 2 & 3 to learn how to contact your references.

Reminder: Your application will be marked incomplete and will not be forwarded for adjudication if you do not submit the references.

3. Academic Background

This section of the application 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.

- For courses **you have completed**: copies of official transcripts - stamped by your school office - showing your final mark in that course.
- For courses you don't have final grades for: 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 tip for your transcripts**: Plan to arrange for your transcripts before you start your application. Your school office should stamp or sign transcripts and interim reports, and you should upload them to your application as a **single PDF file**. Please ensure your transcripts and interim reports include all grades needed to determine whether you meet the minimum eligibility criteria (i.e., Bio 20, Math 20-1/20-2, and Chemistry or Physics 20). If your application does not include all required transcripts, it may be marked incomplete and not forwarded for adjudication.
- We are interested in your current hobbies, activities, and abilities as we want to see your personality shine! Please tell us about yourself and highlight what makes you unique.
- Describe the community and/or school groups you are regularly involved in. Tell us about your role and the impact you have. Estimate how many hours per month you spend with each group.

4. Your Interest in Science and Research

This section collects information about your career goals and interests. This information may be used to help place you with a specific lab if you are selected for HYRS.

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

- 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

5. Essay

As with the other sections of the application, the student essay helps our selection

committee understand more about you. **This is maxed at 400 words.** 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.

- An understanding of a specific area of health research that 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

Formatting Guideline: 12 pt font, double-spaced, typed 350 to 400 words. Hard limit: 400 words; anything beyond this limit will not be given to the adjudication committee.

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 to make sure you have enough space to address all parts of the essay topic within the word limit. The most successful students are concise and thoroughly address all parts of the question. **Remember, the selection committee will not receive any essay content that exceeds the 400-word limit. i.e., anything after that will be deleted, and your work will seem unfinished.**

Research your topic: You may need to do some advanced research on an area of health research that you find interesting 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!

6. Additional Information

This final section includes five acknowledgments that we require students to make before submitting the application. Some acknowledgments will help us determine suitable labs if you are selected, and others ensure we can reach out to you for further information if needed.

- 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 Lethbridge only) Identify that you are prepared to make your own living arrangements
- Confirm if you are willing to make the 6-week, full-time commitment to HYRS
 - Many students are unsure what “full-time” commitment means for HYRS. HYRS students are expected to join their mentors or our team on campus Monday through Friday 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 7: Review your application before submitting

Once you are satisfied with your application content and have all the necessary documents to upload, review your answers one last time.

STEP 8: Submit your application

Transfer your answers from your draft document into the online form and upload any required documents or signatures. Please ensure that your application is completed and submitted before the deadline.

STEP 9: Follow up with your references

Once you have submitted your application, we recommend following up with your references to let them know you have submitted your application. Applicants are responsible for ensuring their references submit their portion of the application. If your reference has any issues, please have them contact hyrs@uleth.ca to let us know.

STEP 10: Await the HYRS decision email

Applicants are notified in May of their application outcome. Applicants selected for the award will be contacted via email at the address provided in their application. Once all awards are distributed, we will notify unsuccessful applicants by email.