

Department of Biochemistry Graduate Student Funding Policy

1. Purpose

This document outlines the Biochemistry Department guidelines for studentship applications and the expected top-up funding from supervisors for successful external/internal awards. This document is to support the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Fundy Policy Framework which takes precedence over this document.

2. Supervisor Roles and Responsibilities

2.1. Consistency in Stipends

Supervisors are expected to ensure consistency in stipends among students within the same laboratory and at similar stages in their programs when receiving funds from a supervisor's operating grant and/or program-level support.

2.2 The Biochemistry Department considers Masters students and Doctoral students equal in terms of funding. Both are to earn the same Minimum Funding and use the same Base Funding for awards calculations.

3. Student Eligibility and Program Requirements

3.1. Full-Time Status and Attendance

To be eligible for financial support, students must be registered full-time and actively participating in their program. This includes meeting reasonable expectations for attendance and research activity as determined by the supervisor/supervisory committee and program.

3.2. Tuition and Fees

Students are responsible for paying tuition and fees annually. International students may receive a tuition scholarship from the Graduate Science Education office or the FGPS (International Graduate Tuition Award). The IGTA is generally not included in the minimum funding calculation but exceptions can be made.

4. Graduate Student Stipends

4.1. Definition and Initial Information

Graduate Student Stipends are the essential financial support provided to students, ensuring they possess sufficient resources to pursue their studies without significant

financial strain. Biochemistry student stipends must equal a **minimum of \$27,600 per year (September 1st to August 31st)**. Stipends can comprise GRAFs (Graduate Research Assistantship Fellowship) from supervisors operating grants as well as external/internal awards and studentships.

4.2. Components Included in Minimum Funding

The following count toward meeting the minimum funding amount:

- Stipend/scholarship payment from the supervisor's research grant.
- External scholarships, including, but not limited to, SSHRC, NSERC, CIHR, AIHS, AITF, AGES, and charitable organizations.
- Internal scholarships, including department, faculty, and university competitions.

4.3. Exclusions from Minimum Funding Calculation

Income from the following sources does not count toward the student's base funding amount:

- GTA and GRA income.
- Travel awards obtained from the department, faculty, and/or university.
- Research Prizes (e.g., Poster awards, American Physiological Society APS Student Research Recognition Award, MEDSTAR Award, Dick Stein Memorial Research Prize, Andrew Steward Memorial Prize).
- International Graduate Tuition Award (IGTA)
- Recruitment Awards for students entering the program

4.4 Exceptions

Supervisors will be permitted to supplement the minimum graduate student stipend if they are able and wish to do so. They must keep in mind point 2.1 (Consistency in Stipends) when choosing to do so.

4.5 Base Funding versus Minimum Funding

The Biochemistry Department defines the Minimum Funding for all students as \$27,600 per year. The Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry defines the Base Funding as \$25,000 per year. The Base Funding is used for calculating the impact of the students awards and scholarships.

5. Impact of Scholarship Awards

Base funding constitutes the minimum financial support provided to students. Nevertheless, students are obligated to actively seek external and internal awards to supplement their base funding. Students are responsible for reporting any awards received to their graduate program administrator and department within 30 days of receiving a notification of the award. The following outlines how the receipt of such awards impacts the **base funding**, including the conditions under which additional top-up amounts shall be granted to recognize students' efforts.

5.1. Scholarship Value and Top-Up Amounts

Success in internal and external scholarship competitions will impact a student's funding as outlined below.

- All cumulative scholarship values are assessed over the academic year (September to August)
- Student top-up amounts will be calculated from the base funding, implementing a differential when awards total \$3,000 or more
- The Differential is the difference between the Biochemistry's minimum guaranteed funding (\$27,600) and the FOMD's base funding (\$25,000) = \$2,600
- **Cumulative Awards up to \$2,500** The student retains the full amount in addition to their minimum funding (see note above regarding differential)
- **Cumulative Awards between \$2,500.01 and \$38,000** The student receives the first \$2,500 in full. Of the remaining amount, 30% is added to the student's funding, and 70% is applied toward fulfilling their base funding requirement*

*Top-up on awards of \$3,000 or less will be applied to the students minimum funding. No differential will be used until accumulated awards are greater than \$3,000.

- **Cumulative Awards exceeding \$38,000** No additional top-up is required from the supervisor, as the student's funding exceeds the base funding threshold.
- **Exceptions** This policy does not apply where a scholarship's Terms of Reference (ToR) mandate a supervisor contribution.