

OFFICE OF THE  
VICE-DEAN  
RESEARCH  
REPORT

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# PAVING THE PATH TO 2030

I am pleased to share the 2025 Annual Research Report for the College of Medicine. This report marks an important transition for our College as we recognize the retirement of Dr. Marek Radomski from his role as Vice-Dean Research. Dr. Radomski has been instrumental in shaping the college's research enterprise. We are deeply grateful for his vision and many contributions, and we wish him continued success in the next phase of his career.

Looking to the future, we are preparing for the next chapter of research leadership. The OVDR Vice-Dean role has been restructured into two positions – Vice-Dean Research (Biomedical Sciences) and Vice-Dean Research (Clinical, Health Services and Population Health) to reflect the growth and diversity of our research mission research in the college.

This year also saw the launch of our new strategic plan, Paving Our Path to 2030, which will guide our college over the next five years. Inspired by our mission to *cultivate the health and well-being of all peoples of Saskatchewan through service, education, scholarship, and research that matter*, the plan reflects our deep commitment to meaningful impact and connection. Importantly, research is a key focus area to ensure our college is a network that excels in innovation, research, scholarship, and quality improvement.



I extend my deepest thanks to our incredible learners, staff, and faculty for their dedication and for the meaningful contributions that continue to advance health and well-being across Saskatchewan and beyond.

As you read this report, I hope you see both the strength of our current research enterprise and the exciting possibilities we are collectively shaping for our future.

**SARAH FORGIE**  
**MD, M.Ed., FRCPC**  
**Dean, College of Medicine**

## ASSISTANT DEAN GRADUATE STUDIES

Rising cost of living remains the most significant challenge affecting student wellbeing and timely completion, prompting the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies to encourage departments to raise minimum stipends, with several units implementing staged or immediate increases.

In 2025, the College of Medicine strengthened graduate student affordability through OVDR-administered merit-based, needs-based, and equity-focused funding programs, with total annual graduate studies support of approximately \$500,000.

Effective September 2025, award values were increased across both major OVDR merit programs. CoMGRAD awards were set at \$25,000 (MSc) and \$30,000 (PhD), with equity top-ups applied to current recipients. In parallel, HSGS awards were aligned to the same values, with supervisor cost-sharing, to better support later-stage trainees.

Pathways to Success Funding was introduced as a needs-informed program providing a one-time \$5,000 award over five months to students facing financial barriers, helping sustain research engagement during periods of vulnerability.

The OVDR acknowledges the essential contributions of the Graduate Studies Coordinator and OVDR staff, and remains committed to continued improvements in graduate training and student support.

## RESEARCH DIRECTOR

Despite a year of transition for the OVDR, our focus has remained on fostering a supportive environment where research thrives – by championing our researchers, investing in infrastructure, and reducing barriers to success.

Recognizing the critical role of infrastructure in research productivity, we introduced three new funding initiatives to address operational needs, provide rapid support for urgent equipment repairs, and prioritize upgrades to shared-use equipment.

We also launched Pathways to Success, a graduate student funding program championed by Dean Forgie, to reduce financial barriers and enable graduate students to fully engage in their studies and research.

As we look ahead to the priorities outlined in the new strategic plan, I want to acknowledge and thank our exceptional team. Their dedication allows us to accomplish meaningful work, challenge the status quo, and strive to do better. I am fortunate to work alongside such talented and committed people.



## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

RESEARCH-ACTIVE FACULTY:

# 468

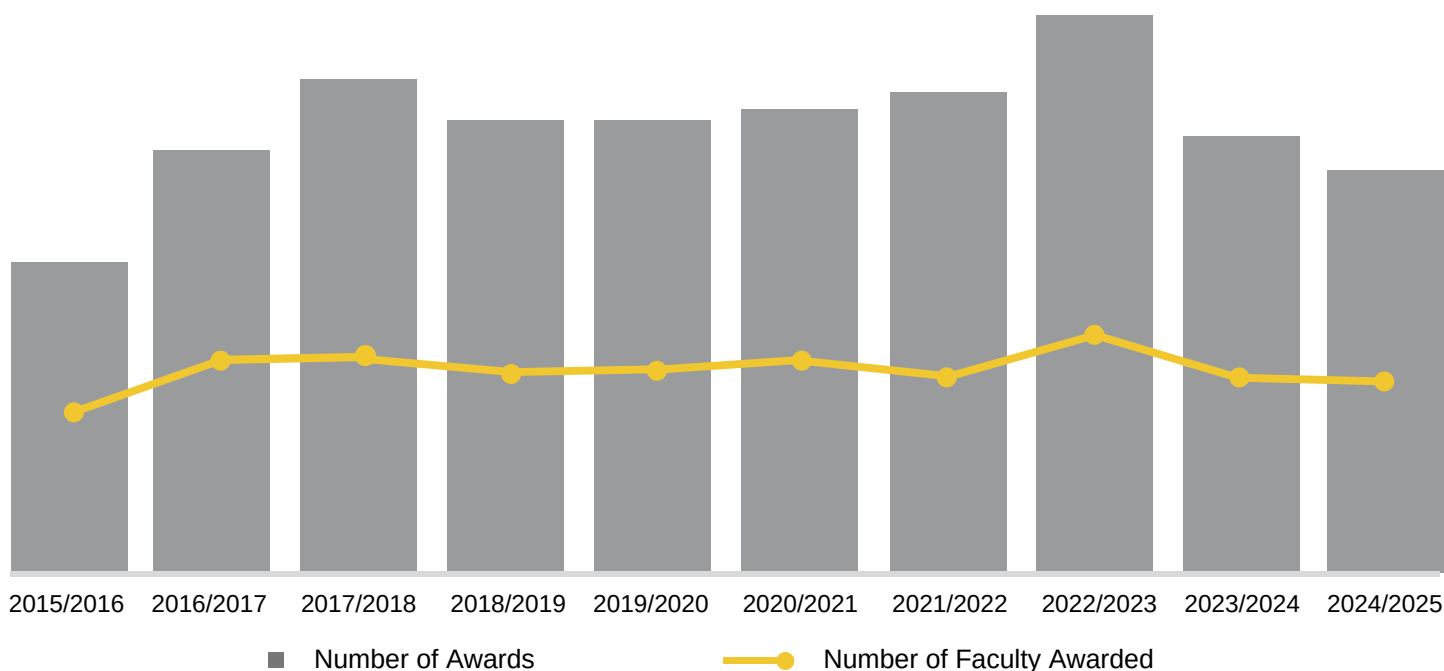
NUMBER OF FACULTY AWARDED  
PROJECTS IN 2024/2025:

# 151

RESEARCH FUNDING AWARDED  
TO COM FACULTY IN 2024/2025:

# \$53,075,053

In the 2024/2025 fiscal year, researchers in the College of Medicine were awarded \$53,075,053 in research funding, including \$11,925,749 of Tri-Agency funding.



## FACULTY INITIATIVES

- 01** RESEARCH START-UP FUNDING
- 02** CoMRAD  
College of Medicine Research Award
- 03** RESEARCH EQUIPMENT FUNDING
- 04** CORE FUNDING  
Cluster Operations & Research Essentials Funding
- 05** EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT FUNDING
- 06** CoMBRIDGE  
College of Medicine Bridge Funding
- 07** FAIR RESEARCH GRANT  
Funding to Ameliorate Interruptions to Research

## GRADUATE INITIATIVES

- 01** CoMGRAD  
College of Medicine Graduate Student Award
- 02** EMERGENCY LEAVE GRANT
- 03** PARENTAL LEAVE FUNDING AND MATERNITY LEAVE BRIDGING FUNDING
- 04** CoMTA  
College of Medicine Travel Award
- 05** PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS FUNDING
- 06** MD-MSc/PHD AND MPT-PHD MATCHING FUNDS PROGRAM
- 07** PUBLICATION FUNDING

## UNDERGRADUATE INITIATIVES

- 01** BIOMEDICAL SUMMER RESEARCH PROJECTS
- 02** DEAN'S PROJECTS  
Dean's Summer Research Projects and MD Research Experience
- 03** INTERDISCIPLINARY SUMMER RESEARCH PROGRAM

# RESEARCH START-UP FUNDING

New researchers often require institutional support to establish productive research programs in advance of generating external research funding. Negotiated as part of the recruitment package, the OVDR accepts applications to provide funding for start-up costs and equipment for a maximum of the first three years of a new faculty members research program.

Start-up funding is a valuable recruitment incentive when seeking to attract world-class faculty members.

## OVDR FACULTY START-UP INVESTMENT

**\$14.1M**

From the 2014/2015 fiscal year to February 2026, the OVDR has provided \$14,111,550 in startup funding to

—

**54**

College of Medicine faculty members to facilitate the launch of new faculty research programs

—

**\$49.8M**

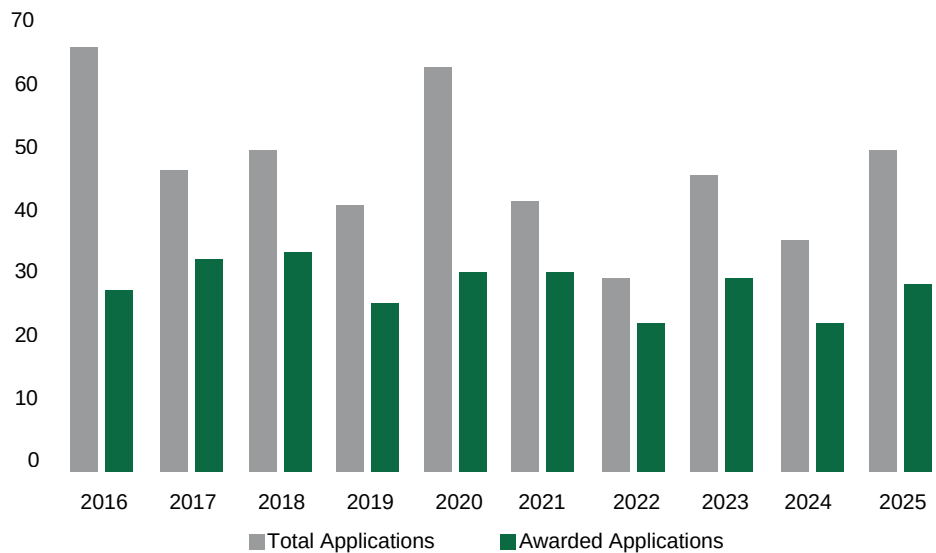
To date, these researchers have secured \$49,836,550 in external research funding

# COLLEGE OF MEDICINE RESEARCH AWARD (CoMRAD)

A competitive funding opportunity open to all faculty members with a primary academic appointment in the College of Medicine. The purpose of the CoMRAD is to provide seed funding for novel pilot and/or feasibility studies that will facilitate future applications to external funding sources on a provincial, national, and global level.

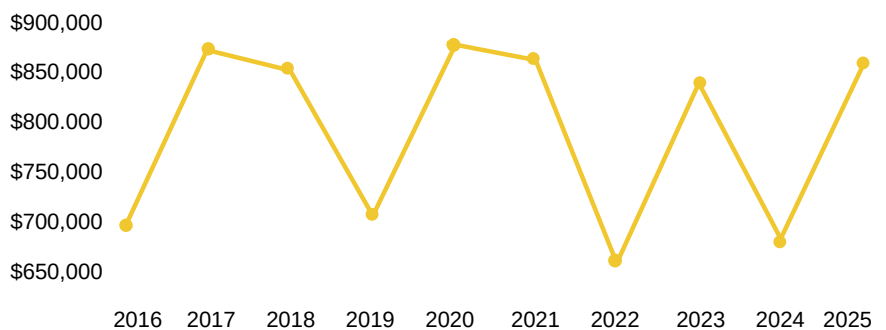
## FUNDED PROJECTS

Since the initiative's initiation in 2016, the OVDR has funded 288 CoMRAD projects.



## OVDR FUNDS COMMITTED

From 2016 to 2024 the OVDR committed \$7,890,451 to fund this initiative.



# RETURN ON INVESTMENT

**366**

Submissions for external funding with or by CoMRAD recipients; and

**\$34.7 M**

in external funding dollars received so far

## DISSEMINATION

CoMRAD Funding has resulted in the following:

**242**

**PUBLICATIONS**

**326**

**ABSTRACTS**

**293**

**CONFERENCE  
PROCEEDINGS**

**211**

**NEW OR EXPANDED  
COLLABORATIONS**

**8**

**PATENTS OR  
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

**6**

**BOOKS OR BOOK  
CHAPTERS**

# EQUIPMENT AND OPERATIONAL FUNDING

To more effectively and equitably address key equipment and infrastructure needs of the college, the OVDR launched three new internal funding initiatives in the 2025/2026 fiscal year. These programs have been developed to strengthen our research environment through targeted, and strategic funding opportunities.

## RESEARCH EQUIPMENT FUNDING

The Research Equipment Funding Program is a competitive initiative supporting the repair, upgrade, or replacement of existing research equipment critical to College of Medicine researchers. This program prioritizes shared-use equipment that enhances research capacity across disciplines.

The program has funded two pieces of equipment so far:

### **Behavioral Testing Equipment Update and Expansion**

In the Spring 2025 competition, Dr. Howland was awarded \$47,500 to update and expand the behavioural testing suite within the Lab Animal Services Unit. These enhancements will improve the suite's functionality, particularly for researchers conducting behavioural studies with mice.

Seven laboratories across the Colleges of Medicine, Pharmacy and Nutrition, and Veterinary Medicine are expected to benefit from the proposed equipment upgrades.

### **Electrophysiology Core Renewal**

In the fall 2025 competition, Dr. Botterill and Dr. Campanucci were awarded \$50,000 to support the revitalization of the electrophysiology suite in the Health Sciences Building. The planned restoration and upgrades will enhance research capacity by increasing experimental throughput and improving the quality of electrophysiological recordings.

Seven laboratories within the neuroscience research cluster have already indicated that they will benefit from the proposed equipment. The awardees also anticipate expanding access to researchers from additional disciplines, including those working with diverse species and tissue types

# CLUSTER OPERATIONS & RESEARCH ESSENTIALS (CORE) FUNDING

This initiative supports interdisciplinary research by funding core operational needs within research clusters, such as shared consumables, maintenance of shared infrastructure, and other communal operational costs.

8

Clusters had CORE funding proposals approved.

\$92,900

With approved CORE budgets of \$92,900

## EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT FUNDING

The Emergency Equipment Fund is made available to provide support for unanticipated emergency repairs or replacement of multi-user research equipment.

This limited funding is available to faculty in cases where:

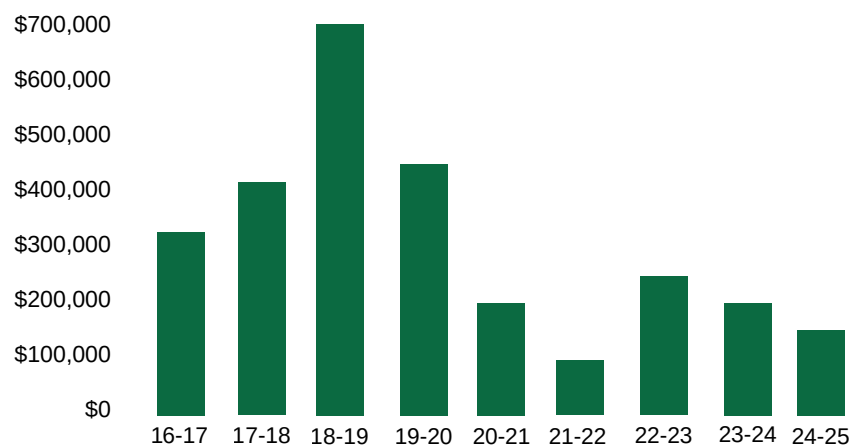
- The repair or replacement is essential to sustain the productivity of a significant number of researchers;
- When alternative equipment is unavailable; and
- When the urgency of the repair or replacement precludes the possibility of applying for new funding to purchase of new equipment.

# CoMBRIDGE

Initiated in 2016, the CoMBRIDGE program seeks to support research excellence and encourage re-application for Tri-Agency funding. Based on availability, Bridge Funding can be obtained by College of Medicine faculty who received a high score in a Tri-Agency competition but were not funded to assist their re-application efforts.

## FUNDED PROJECTS

The OVDR has funded 42 CoMBRIDGE projects between 2016/2017 and 2024/2025. Forty-one of these have supported CIHR Project Grant re-applications, and one supported a SSHRC Insight Grant.



## OVDR FUNDS COMMITTED

Awarded amounts are dependent on availability of funds, competition program, and number of eligible applicants. \$2,794,000 has been awarded by the CoMBRIDGE program from 2016/2017 to 2024/2025.

## RETURN ON INVESTMENT

**36**

To-date, the CoBRIDGE program has facilitated Tri-Agency re-submissions for 36 projects, resulting in

—

**20**

Successful Tri-Agency awards, and

—

**\$14.4 M**

Awarded funding dollars

## FAIR RESEARCH GRANT

The FAIR (Funding to Ameliorate Interruptions to Research) Research Grant was established in 2021 to help researchers maintain or revitalize their research programs following a leave from College of Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan.

Applicants may request up to \$10,000 to contribute towards research assistance (personnel to perform data collection, analysis, etc.), travel for research purposes (conferences, workshops, etc.), publication costs, and operating expenses excluding equipment.

The OVDR has funded eleven Fair Research Grants since its inception, for a program total of \$108,780.

# COLLEGE OF MEDICINE GRADUATE RESEARCH AWARD

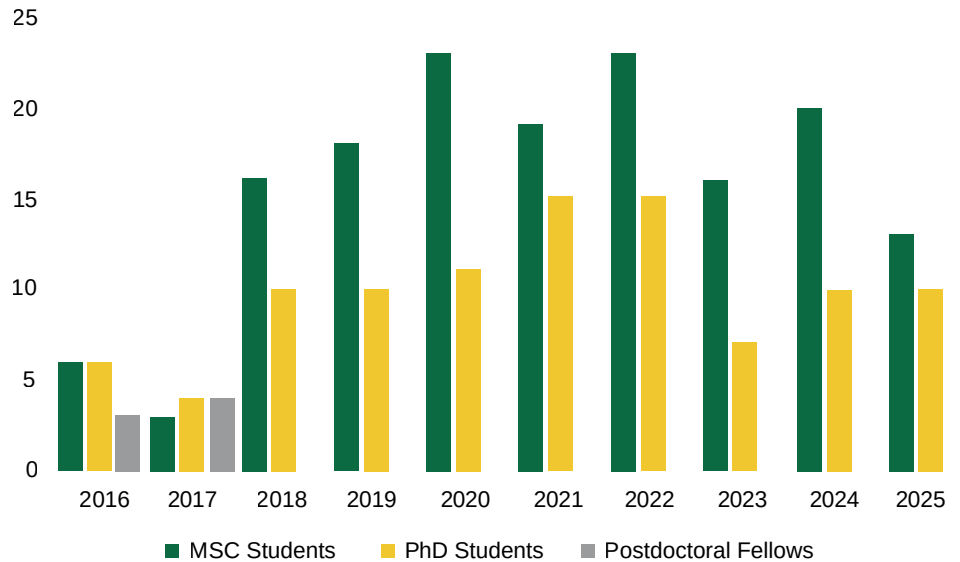
The College of Medicine Graduate Research Award (CoMGRAD) is a competitive funding opportunity available to College of Medicine graduate students who demonstrate a passion for research that has been, or will be, translated into advancements in science.

Effective September 2025, all new and ongoing award stipends were increased to \$25,000 (MSc) and \$30,000 (PhD) per year, with the CoMGRAD award cost split evenly between the OVDR and supervisors.

## FUNDED TRAINEES

In 2025 we awarded 23 new CoMGRADs; 13 at the MSc level and 10 at the PhD level.

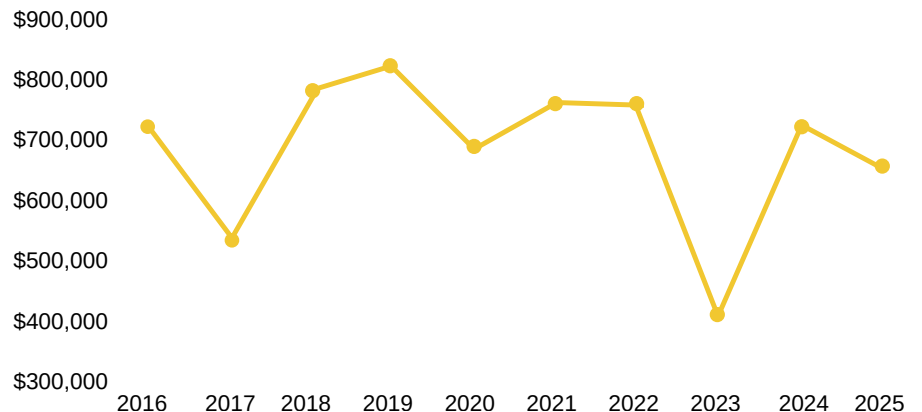
To date, CoMGRAD has supported 262 graduate students and Postdoctoral Fellows.



## OVDR FUNDS COMMITTED

In 2025, \$512,500 was awarded in new awards to CoMGRAD awardees, and an additional \$140,500 was used to top-up prior awarded students to the updated stipend amount.

The OVDR has invested \$6,678,333 to support CoMGRAD trainees since 2016.



# EMERGENCY LEAVE GRANT

Available once per student per academic program, College of Medicine graduate students may apply for financial assistance during a medical or compassionate leave occurring prior to the completion of the student's program. Applicants may receive \$1000/month for up to two months.

# PARENTAL LEAVE FUNDING

The College of Medicine has implemented a progressive parental leave grant program intended to support graduate students with growing families. CoM graduate students not receiving other forms of financial support may apply for financial assistance during a leave to serve as the primary care-giver immediately following the birth of a child prior to the completion of the student's program.

Since piloting this program in September 2018, seven students have been granted parental leave funding.

# MATERNITY LEAVE BRIDGING FUNDING

As a complement to the Parental Leave Grant, the Maternity Leave Bridging Funding initiative was introduced in 2021. The CoM recognizes that students may face delays and funding gaps during the transition to parental leave (e.g. delays in paperwork, needing to take leave early, etc.).

To address this issue, Maternity Leave Bridging Funding provides \$1,500 to students who have set up parental leave, regardless of the source of funding (e.g. CoM Parental Leave Grant, Tri-council support, etc.). This funding is payable during the first month of the planned leave or the month prior where a leave begins earlier than originally planned. There have been seven students so far who have received this funding.

# College of Medicine Travel Award (CoMTA)

Graduate students and post doctoral fellows in the College of Medicine are encouraged to participate in national and international scientific conferences and workshops. Trainees may apply to the Conference Travel Fund for up to \$1,500 to support attendance at scientific meetings.

Between 2017 and May 2025, the CoMTA has provided 202 awards to our trainees, for a total program cost of \$258,575.

## RETURN ON INVESTMENT

**202**

CoMTA funding has helped 181 students attend scientific meetings in

—

**19**

Unique countries, and supported

—

**565,175**

Total kilometers travelled by our students since 2017

# PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS FUNDING

New this year, the "Pathways to Success" funding program was designed for graduate students at the College of Medicine who face financial need, providing financial support to help them excel in their academic and professional endeavors.

In its inaugural year, the program distributed \$5,000 awards to six graduate students.

## MD-MSC/PHD AND MPT-PHD MATCHING FUNDS PROGRAM

A matching funds program for MD-MSc/PhD and MPT-PhD students was established in 2021 to catalyze the training of clinician-researchers in College of Medicine. This new program provides an up-front source of funds that can be matched (up to 50%) with supervisor grant funding or scholarships which require matching funds. In 2022 we provided the 40% match of a CoMGRAD award for one MD-MSc student.

## PUBLICATION FUNDING

Between the 2019/2020 to 2024/2025 fiscal years, the Publication funding has helped support graduate and undergraduate students, post doctoral fellows, and residents produce:

**83****PUBLICATIONS IN OPEN-ACCESS JOURNALS****4.05****AVERAGE JOURNAL IMPACT FACTOR****1315****PUBLICATION CITATIONS**

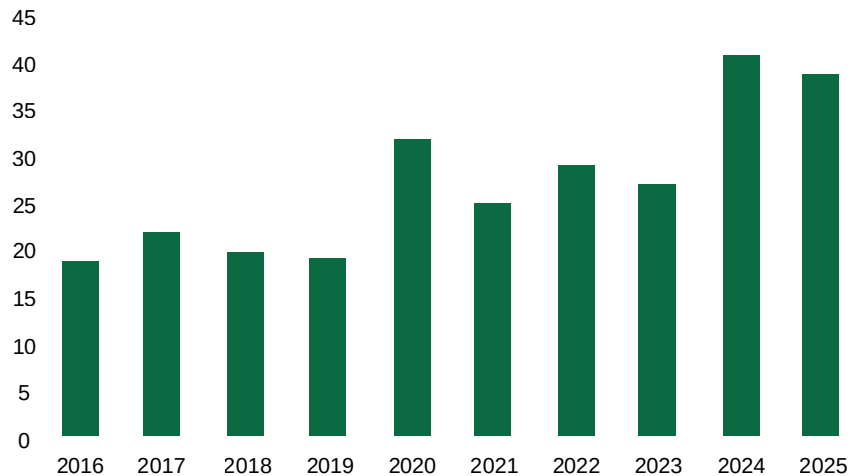
# BIOMEDICAL SUMMER RESEARCH PROJECTS

The Biomedical Summer Student Research Program is intended to assist in the research training of our undergraduate students enrolled in the Anatomy and Cell Biology, Biochemistry, Microbiology and Immunology, Physiology, and Pharmacology programs. The intent of these awards is to give students valuable research experience and encourage students to continue on to a graduate studies program.

This is a cost-shared award and supervisors are required to match 40% of the award amount.

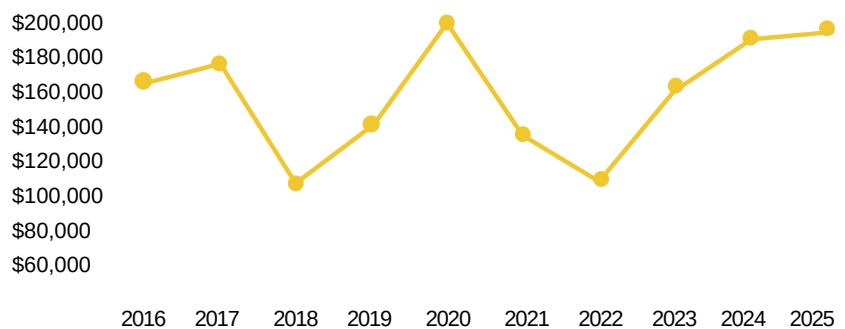
## FUNDED PROJECTS

The Office of the Vice-Dean Research has supported 273 undergraduate Biomedical Summer Research Projects since 2016.



## OVDR FUNDS COMMITTED

From 2016 to 2025 the OVDR committed \$1,606,800 to fund this initiative.



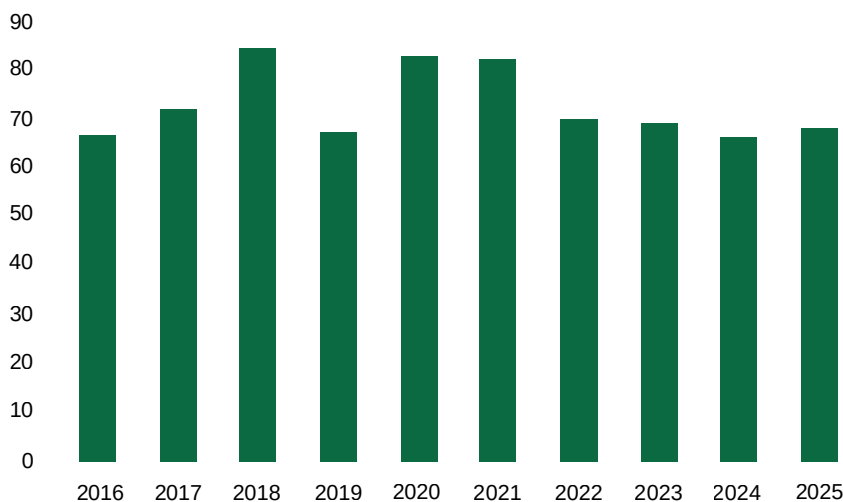
# DEAN'S SUMMER RESEARCH PROJECTS

The Dean's Summer Research Projects provide undergraduate medical students with exposure to scientific research. The program is intended to ignite a passion for research and facilitate an understanding of the vital role research plays in today's health care.

Dean's summer research projects span a broad range of research topics, reflecting the diverse interests and expertise within the College of Medicine. In 2025, students worked on projects with goals ranging from improving patient-centered care and advancing surgical techniques, to addressing health equity and the use of emerging technologies.

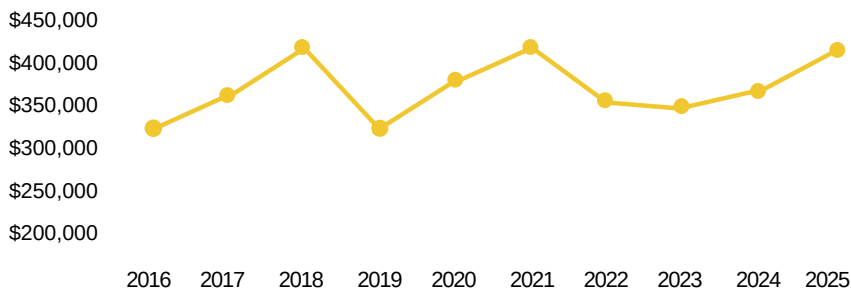
## FUNDED PROJECTS

The Office of the Vice-Dean Research has supported 727 undergraduate Dean's Summer Research Projects and Experiences since 2016.



## OVDR FUNDS COMMITTED

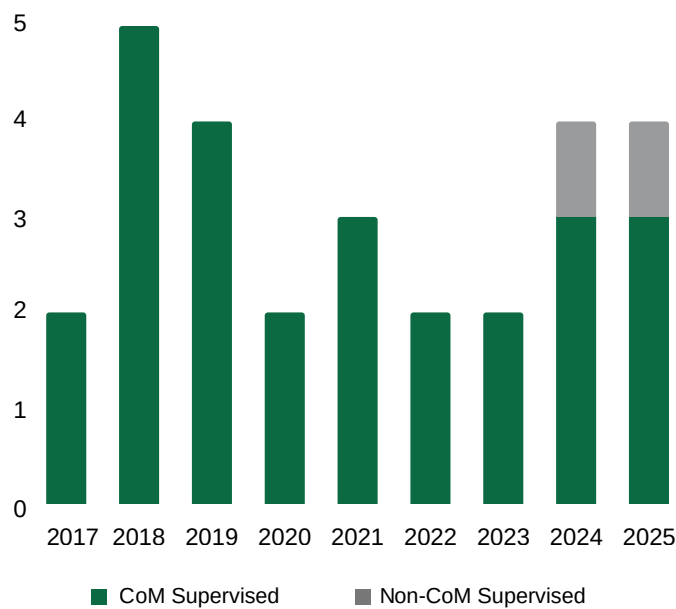
From 2016 to 2025 the OVDR committed \$3,702,076 to fund this initiative.



# INTERDISCIPLINARY SUMMER RESEARCH PROGRAM

The Interdisciplinary Summer Research Program, founded in 2017, provides competitive undergraduate salary awards to provide research training of summer students enrolled in either the College of Medicine or the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition, co-supervised by a faculty member from both colleges.

In 2024, this program expanded to include partnerships between Medicine, Pharmacy and Nutrition, Nursing, and Kinesiology.



## FUNDED PROJECTS

Twenty-four interdisciplinary projects have been funded since 2017, with a proportional program cost of \$98,470 to the College of Medicine.

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

*“Beyond technical skills, the program gave me valuable exposure to the research process from start to finish – Overall, this experience has strengthened my confidence in pursuing research as part of my future career and gave me a much better appreciation of how research informs patient care.”*

*“It was the best summer of my life without a doubt. I truly genuinely mean that. I wouldn't trade that last summer for anything and I would do it again in a heartbeat. I grew more and faced more challenges and responsibilities over a short amount of time than I possibly ever have. I found this summer helped and enabled me to grow tremendously as an individual and future physician.”*

*“This is a wonderful experience that I think any undergrad student who is serious about research should have. My techniques, confidence, and understanding of science has drastically increased. These are experiences and skills you do not get from a normal lab class so I think this program is vital for students to get a better idea if this is the path for them as well as if they want to hugely improve.”*

*“I am immensely grateful to the summer research program as it allowed me to pursue my passion and interest in research for the past few years as an undergrad. This helped me refine my scientific techniques and critical thinking, preparing me to pursue graduate studies and eventually a career in research”*

*“I had a wonderful experience with my Dean's Summer Research. Not only did I learn a lot about a topic in medicine and research, I also gained wonderful mentors from various fields in medicine.”*

# 75%

**OF 2025 SUMMER STUDENTS RATED THEIR RESEARCH EXPERIENCE AS:  
EXCELLENT OR EXCEPTIONAL**

## 79% OF 2025 SUMMER STUDENTS REPORTED THEIR RESEARCH EXPERIENCE MADE THEM MORE LIKELY TO PURSUE RESEARCH IN THE FUTURE

LESS EQUALLY LIKELY LIKELY

MORE LIKELY TO PURSUE RESEARCH



# FACULTY RESEARCH AWARDS

The OVDR is proud to continue recognizing the outstanding contributions in medical research through the second year of its faculty research awards.

These awards celebrate faculty members who have made significant advancements in their fields, demonstrating leadership, collaboration, and a commitment to improving patient care and healthcare outcomes. Below, we are excited to announce the recipients of this year's awards, whose exceptional work continues to shape the future of medical research.

For more information on award timelines and future recipients, please visit the College's awards webpage at [medicine.usask.ca/awards.php](http://medicine.usask.ca/awards.php).

## RESEARCH CAREER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



Dr. Goubran is the 2025 recipient of the Research Career Achievement Award, which recognizes faculty who have had significant research impact throughout their career. This includes recognition of excellence, leadership and capacity building through their research program as demonstrated by advances in knowledge as well as through research related to patient health, health services, health equity, behaviour, social impacts and/or medical education.

Dr. Goubran was recognized for his pioneering work in the development of fibrin sealant technology, and for his contributions to the safety of blood products, as well as to his commitment to patient health and safety.

His nominators emphasized his strong commitment to mentorship and education, as well as his sustained dedication to addressing the needs of developing countries.

## ANNUAL EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH AWARD

Dr. Manna is the 2025 recipient of the Annual Excellence in Research Award. This award recognizes faculty who have exhibited the highest level of excellence and had a significant impact on research over the past year.

Dr. Manna was recognized for her leadership in research-driven implementation of mainstream genetic testing for breast and ovarian cancer, her advocacy for oncology research and engagement in policy-shaping initiatives, her dedication to education and mentorship, and her commitment to knowledge dissemination and continuous learning.



## RESEARCH MINGLING MINDS AWARD

Dr. Daniel Fuller has been selected as the recipient of the College of Medicine Research Mingling Minds Award in recognition of his exceptional interdisciplinary research program, innovative approaches, and dedication to embedding equity and social justice in public health and urban planning practices.

Dr. Fuller was lauded by his nominators for his “unwavering commitment to interdisciplinary collaboration,” noting his leadership at the intersections of urban planning, public health and artificial intelligence.

His impactful leadership has set a benchmark for advancing interdisciplinary research and promoting healthier, more equitable communities.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The OVDR thanks our donors, the Tri-Agency Research Support Fund, and the College of Medicine for our funding. Our work and the consequent returns on investment to our learners, faculty, the College, the University, the scientific community and the public at large, are made possible only through their generosity.

The OVDR extends its thanks to Shelley-May Neufeld for preparing this report, and to all the incredible staff at the OVDR whose dedication and talent keep our office running.



Sydney Gengler (Research Navigation Specialist), Chantal Jantzen (Research Financial Analyst), Shelley-May Neufeld (Research Impact Analyst), Megan Truscott (Director of Research), Keleigh Garcea (CTSU - Project Manager Clinical Operations), Ally Wieggers (Project Coordinator), Nayoung Kim (Student Project Coordinator).  
Not pictured: Alyssa Gallagher (Graduate Programs Coordinator)

## COVER ART

**Sarah Ha,**  
MSc Student, Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology.  
*A Breath of Life Science. 2025.*



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