

2025 – 2026 LAIDLAW SCHOLARS PROGRAMME

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Welcome and thank you for your interest in the Laidlaw Scholars Undergraduate Leadership and Research Programme, also known as the *Laidlaw Scholars Programme*. The instructions in this document should help you accurately prepare and complete the application package.

If you have any questions about the application process, please contact the Centre for International Experience – International Scholarships team at laidlaw.scholars@utoronto.ca.

Two application options

You can choose one of the application streams to apply for the Laidlaw Scholars Programme:

- Self-proposed research projects
- Faculty-defined research projects – earlier deadlines

You may refer to the flow chart on page 3 to understand the application process for each option.

Option 1: Submit application for *self-proposed research projects*

You will need to decide on a research topic and find an appropriate research supervisor before you apply. Please note that the project must be completed in six weeks, so we recommend that you pick a research topic that fits this timeframe. After confirming a research advisor, you may start preparing the application package and submit it by **February 2, 2026**.

Option 2: Submit application for *faculty-defined* research projects

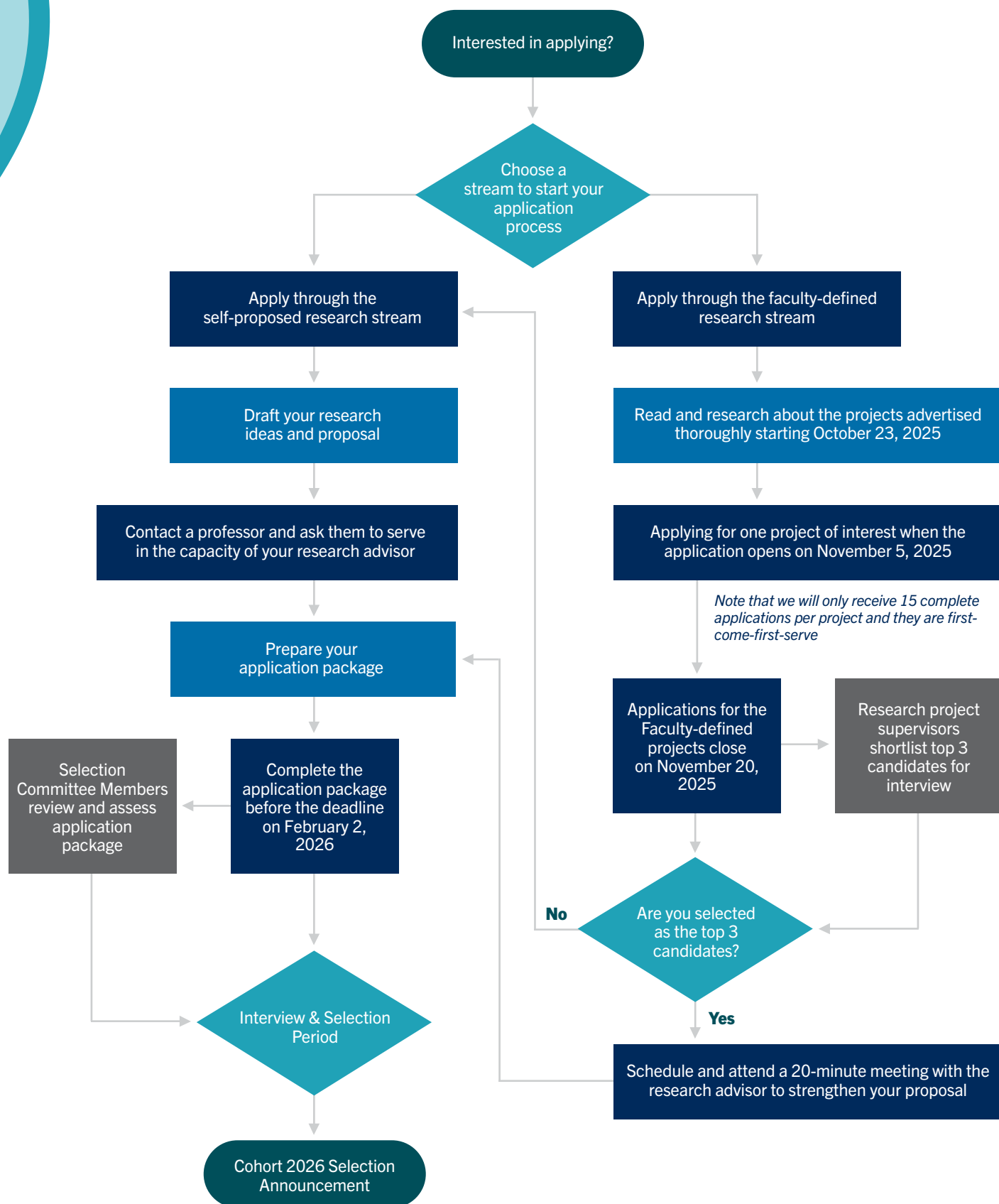
For the 2025-2026 Laidlaw Scholars Programme Application, we continue to offer an option for students to apply for a research project proposed by University of Toronto faculty members. If you choose to apply for faculty-defined research projects, you may refer to the following timeline:

- You will find out more about the research projects advertised through [the Centre for International Experience – Laidlaw Leadership and Research Program webpage](#) after October 23, 2025, once they are available.
- We will open the application for faculty-defined projects on November 5, 2025. Note that we will only accept 15 applications per project, so *we encourage you to apply early as it is first-come-first-served*.
- Applications for the faculty-defined research project are due November 20, 2025.
- The top three candidates for each project will move to the second application phase, where they will need to submit a revised application package with additional information outlined under the section “Laidlaw Scholars Programme Application Components” starting on page 4 of this document. This second phase of the application must be submitted by February 2, 2026.
- If you are not selected as one of the top three candidates, you can still apply for the program by self-proposing a research project (Option 1 above) and find a faculty member to oversee your work. We highly encourage you to apply through this option.

Your initial application package for faculty-defined research projects (due November 20, 2025) should include the following documents:

- **Research statement** (no more than two pages) including the following information:
 1. **Background and interest** - Why are you applying for this research project?
Please indicate any previous experience that meets the eligibility proposed by the faculty member and the significance of the project to your academic, career, and/or area of study.
 2. **Details on what you intend to do** - Explain how you would approach the research project. What are the academic sources you refer to?
 3. **Success and growth opportunities** - What do you hope to gain from participating in this research project?
- **Resume**

Laidlaw Scholars Programme - Cohort 2026 Application Streams



Laidlaw Scholars Programme application components

The application package is required for both application options (Option 1 – self-proposed; and Option 2 – faculty-defined). Your application package should include the following documents:

- Application form
- Research proposal (in Word Document or PDF)
- Research budget (in Excel)
- Personal leadership prompts (in Word Document or PDF)
- Research advisor statement of support/letter of recommendation (in PDF)
- Unofficial transcript (in PDF)

Notes: Please label the files using the following format “Application document_First Name Last Name” (e.g. Research Proposal_Jane Smith).

The application package is due on **February 2, 2026**. Note that we *will not* accept late or incomplete submissions.

Application form

You can access the “Laidlaw Scholars Programme – Cohort 2025” application through Workflow on Folio, which will be available on November 1, 2025. We recommend that you begin work on the components as early as possible, so you can submit a comprehensive and well-researched application.

Research proposal

The research proposal should be no more than 1,000 words (not including references, images if needed, and your budget) and should cover the following:

1. Research title page

Research title, your name, research advisor name

2. Introduction

Why did you pick this research topic? Why is it of interest to you? Please outline achievable goals you hope to reach through this research.

3. Research objectives/questions

Delineate the primary and secondary objectives of your study. Highlight the key questions that you intend to answer.

4. Methodology

What is the methodology you plan to use during your research? Please outline the in-person methodology being used to complete your research project in six weeks. While we understand that methodologies will evolve, please provide details on how you are currently planning to execute your research plan.

If possible, would there be travel involved in your research? If so, where? Why is it required? Is it possible to carry out your research without this travel?

5. Ethics review

First, review the following website(s) to determine whether your proposed research requires ethics approval (especially if research involves working with humans and/or animals). We recommend that you discuss this with your research supervisor to confirm, and any questions regarding specific questions on protocols can be directed to the MRHP helpdesk. It is your responsibility to confirm if your project methodology requires ethics approval before applying.

Ethics in Human Research

Ethics in Animal Research

If your proposed research requires an ethics protocol that must be approved by the U of T REB (Research Ethics Board), you must also confirm that your research supervisor has access to the MRHP portal at the time of application to help you receive your REB approval. Additional information on who is eligible to be a research supervisor can be found here:

- [Who Can be a Principal Investigator at U of T](#)
- [Guidelines Regarding Eligibility to be a Principal Investigator at the University of Toronto](#)
- [For Supervisors - How do I designate a student PI?](#)

All research projects that require REB approval must be supervised by a U of T faculty member or a member outlined in the Principal Investigators document above. We are not able to accommodate projects that require REB approval with a research supervisor who is not affiliated with U of T.

Based on the points above, please indicate whether your project requires REB approval and confirm that your research advisor has access to the MRHP portal to guide you through this process.

6. Interdisciplinary and/or international focus of your research

The Laidlaw Scholars Programme is looking for research topics that place a high value on interdisciplinary work and/or have an international focus. Please highlight how your research topic fulfills these requirements.

7. Outcomes

Discuss the significance of your research. What do you foresee being the impact of this research? How might it contribute to the field? What are the broader implications?

8. Research supervisor

Outline the role your research supervisor will play in your research. Highlight any external organizations or offices involved in your research.

Research budget

The Laidlaw Scholars Programme offers scholars up to CAD \$5,000 to cover any proposed expenses over the summer research period. Please briefly list how you anticipate this funding supporting your research goals by filling out the template provided.

Personal leadership prompts

You have 250 words for each question to address the following prompts. These questions should not focus on your research, but on the remainder of the program outside of the research summer.

1. What does leadership mean to you? Please reflect on this prompt, provide your thoughts and justify your points.
2. The Laidlaw Scholars Programme has eight competencies that all Laidlaw Scholars develop as they participate:
 - leadership abilities
 - self-knowledge and awareness
 - effective communication
 - critical and creative thinking
 - collaboration and team working
 - social and cultural intelligence and awareness
 - resilience and determination
 - research and project management

Select two of these competencies that you would like to develop for yourself and explain for each:

- Why do you choose the competency?
 - How will you need to use this competency in your future career?
3. Imagine that you are working on a group project in a team of four. Your team has three weeks to finish the project. You and your teammates all have individual responsibilities that were decided as a group at the beginning of the project. Two weeks have already passed and one of your team members takes a long time to respond to your emails.

You must constantly follow up with this person to get a response which further delays the communication and overall decision making. Your project supervisor isn't aware of the situation.

- What would you say to your team member? Please write an email to your team member addressing the situation and providing recommendations forward to resolve this issue.
- After sending out the email, what subsequent actions would you take to ensure the project's successful completion if you received an unsatisfactory response (or no response) from the team member?

Research advisor statement of support/letter of recommendation

Applying through self-proposed research projects

Each applicant is responsible for contacting a professor and asking them to serve in the capacity of their research supervisor. Research supervisors must be professors either at the University of Toronto or at another institution*. TAs and graduate students cannot serve as research supervisors.

Research supervisors must submit a one-page signed document on letterhead (PDF) confirming support for the student and their chosen research topic.

**Reminder: If your research project requires REB approval, your research supervisor must be employed at U of T. Faculty from outside U of T cannot submit for REB approval.*

See "Ethics review" above for more details.

- Their understanding of the proposed research project.
- Their interest in the project and how they plan to support you through it.
- The feasibility of the project: Is the proposed research something that can be completed in six weeks?
- Impact of the project – Is it an important topic to be covered within the field?
- Does it have an international and/or interdisciplinary focus?
- Ethics implications of the project: If REB/ethics approval is required for your project, confirm that they have access to the MRHP portal already and they are able to help you submit the paperwork in time to receive your REB approval by June 1, 2026. See "Ethics review" on page 5 for more details.
- Email contact information of the research supervisors.

In submitting this document, the supervisor agrees to:

- Support the student's research and serve as a guide through the summer.
- Support the lab/safety requirements of the project.
- Determine that the student's research interests align with the supervisor's research projects/ideals.
- Check in with the Laidlaw Scholars Programme Administrators in case of any issues over the summer and submit a feedback survey on the scholars' progress at the end of the summer.
- Ensure that the student achieves their research objectives through guidance and mentorship.

Applying for faculty-defined research projects

If you apply for a faculty-defined research project (Option 2) and you are selected for the top three candidates for the research project, you may ask for a **letter of recommendation from a professional who has known you for the past two or three years**. They can be your professors, course instructors, teaching assistants who are graduate students or post-doctoral fellows, previous employers/supervisors, or previous high school or educational institution teachers.