



Student Funding (Stipend) Policy

The following policy concerns student funding/salary support/stipends for graduate students in the Women+ and Children's Health Sciences (WACH) program. This policy should be considered as complementary to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies' [Faculty Handbook for Minimum Doctoral Funding](#).

Stipend Amount and Duration

Effective September 1, 2023, the required minimum yearly stipend for a full-time WACH student (MSc and PhD) is **\$26,000**. Students who commenced their graduate studies in the Reproductive and Developmental Sciences (RDS) or WACH program on or following September 1, 2018 are eligible for this guarantee.

The duration of the stipend is normally **2 years for an MSc student, and 4 years for a PhD student**. This time period excludes any official leaves of absence. For students transferring from the MSc to the PhD program, the time spent in the MSc program counts towards this period. After this point, continued funding is at the discretion of the supervisor, but is strongly encouraged for the full duration of the student's program.

The supervisor should inform the student (in writing, with a copy to the WACH program) at least 6 months prior to the end date of the student's stipend. A template for this letter is available from the program.

Funding is dependent on satisfactory academic and research progress (as determined by the student's supervisory committee), and on the research supervisor's continued grant support. Full time students can be expected to work at least 40 hours per week on academic activities (research, coursework, research assistantships, professional development). Students must also apply for scholarships for which they are eligible.

Admission to the WACH program includes a commitment (**Supervisor Agreement**) from the research supervisor to ensure that each student is supported to the required funding level. A conditional agreement to supervise may be made to a student, pending their success in a particular scholarship competition. In this case, the student would be informed that an official offer of admission cannot be made until this condition is fulfilled.

Students are responsible for paying their tuition.

The student funding policy does not apply to students enrolled in the part-time PhD program.

Please note: The annual stipend amount will likely increase each year and is projected to increase to at least \$30,000/year over the next 2-3 years. Such increases will also be applied to all PhD students who began their program in the previous 4 years, and all MSc students who began their program in the previous 2 years.



Sources of Funding

The \$26,000/year stipend can be paid from the research supervisor's grants, from an independent/external/internal UBC studentship or scholarship for graduate students, or from some combination of these.

Financial support from personal or family resources is not considered an acceptable source of funding.

Sponsorship from a foreign government may be considered, pending satisfactory verification of source, amount, and duration. Any governmental sponsorship should be the result of a formal application process. Students whose tuition is covered by an external sponsor are not eligible for the International Tuition Award.

Salary earned from teaching assistant (TA) positions or outside work does not count towards the minimum stipend requirement. TA positions are considered "in addition to" the student's stipend.

Tuition awards, such as the President's Academic Excellence PhD Award, International Tuition Award, and/or Graduate Student Initiative funds do not count towards the minimum stipend requirement.

Exceptions to this policy under exceptional or unusual circumstances should be discussed with the WACH Program Co-Directors. Where the source(s) of funding are uncertain (ie. pending grants or award applications), the supervisor may be asked to provide a written statement of their contingency plan for ensuring the student receives the minimum funding package.

Recommended Stipends for Award Winners (Top Ups)

Students are required to disclose to the WACH program any current or new sources (and the amounts) of scholarships/awards they receive.

WACH students who are award winners must receive a minimum of the difference between their award and \$26,000/year, ie. a top up to the minimum required stipend.

However, supervisors are strongly encouraged to provide additional top ups to award winners, so that their stipend during the award period is higher than the minimum. The amount of this top up is at the discretion of the supervisor. The WACH Program Co-Directors can provide guidance upon request.

Students awarded honorariums and other small awards (eg. conference travel award) are not required to disclose these values to supervisors, and this amount should not be considered as contributing to the student's stipend.