



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
MEDICAL GENETICS GRADUATE PROGRAM

**GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS IN THE MEDICAL GENETICS GRADUATE PROGRAM**

**RP Introduction**

The Medical Genetics Rotation Program (RP) is an opportunity for incoming graduate students to work in three different research labs under three supervisors during the first two terms (Sept.-April).

The Admission Committee of the MEDG department offers RP awards to the highest- ranking September-start applicants by March. 2-5 RP awards are offered each year, depending on available funds.

The RP is an opportunity to:

- Obtain cross-disciplinary research experience
- Be exposed to different lab cultures
- Complete rotations in complementary research areas that can occasionally facilitate collaborations throughout the student's graduate studies
- Develop a broad skill set
- Maximize the chances of a good fit between the student and supervisor

Rotation projects may be assigned by supervisors, or developed in consultation with the students, or both; they may include any combination of the following:

- Literature reviews
- Carrying out experiments designed by the supervisor and/or other lab members prior to the rotation start date
- Developing an application for access to a data set
- Data analysis, including developing methods for data analysis
- Assay development and other short-term projects
- Design of a thesis project, including designing and ordering custom reagents, including generation of genetically modified cell, animal, or fungal lines etc.

## Eligibility Requirements

- SEPTEMBER-START admissions applicants only
- Canadians, Permanent Residents, and international MSc and PhD applicants
- First-class grades in genetics and previous degree
- Outstanding references
- Advanced research experience
- Academic awards

### Accepting the RP Award Offer:

The Admission Committee shortlists the top-ranked RP candidates and notifies the Medical Genetics Graduate Program Coordinator to inform the RP candidates. The RP candidates will receive a “RP Award Offer letter” and have two weeks to inform the Graduate Program Coordinator ([medical.genetics@ubc.ca](mailto:medical.genetics@ubc.ca)) whether they accept or decline the award offer.

If the RP candidate opts to accept the RP Award Offer, they must inform the Graduate Program Coordinator as soon as possible. The Graduate Program Coordinator can assist in contacting potential research supervisors in the Department of Medical Genetics. If the Graduate Program Coordinator hasn't received a response after two weeks, the offer will be withdrawn and extended to the next candidate.

Once the candidate has secured the commitment of at least one rotation supervisor, the supervisor must email the Graduate Program Coordinator to confirm their commitment. After that, the Graduate Program Coordinator will be able to make the offer of admission to UBC.

Upon receiving the offer of admission, the student must read the conditional offer of admission and fulfill the UBC admission conditions, i.e., submitting the official set of transcripts to UBC, etc.

### Declining the RP Award Offer:

If the RP candidate accepts an offer of admission from another UBC graduate program or another university, they should notify the Graduate Program Coordinator as soon as possible so that a RP award can be offered to another applicant.

If the RP candidate opts to decline the RP offer to pursue finding a permanent thesis lab to enter in September, the program must be informed. The program might be able to assist in contacting potential supervisors.

## Funding

The Medical Genetics RP award provides funding for one year (September 1, 2024 - August 31, 2025). The \$22,000 award supports the RP (RP) student's first two terms. At the end of the third rotation (=near end of term 2), the student will have secured the commitment of a permanent Supervisor. The total RP Award and student stipend for a MSc student is \$37,000 p.a.; the permanent supervisor tops up the MSc student award in the amount of \$15,000 (paid out during term 3). The total RP Award and student stipend for a PhD student is \$38,500 p.a.; the permanent supervisor tops up the PhD student award in the amount of \$16,500 (paid out during term 3).

September – April:

- The award initially pays out in two sums (\$11,000 x 2 = \$22,000) in the first two terms (September 1 - December 31, and January 1 - April 30).
- Tuition and student fees will be automatically deducted from each instalment of \$11,000 and the remaining funds will be deposited in the RP student's bank account as a lump sum at the beginning of each of the two terms.

May – August:

- The thesis Supervisor pays the RP student the third and final portion of their award as a top-up which is paid out as a semi-monthly stipend (May 1 - August 31).
- The Supervisor will arrange for the semi-monthly stipend to start in May. The first payment will be deposited to the RP student's bank account on or around May 15<sup>th</sup>.
- **Note: the RP student has to pay tuition and student fees themselves in their third term.** Tuition and student fees will be due **before** the RP student receives their first payment from their Supervisor.
- If a **RP** student has an additional source of funding such as a CGS-M, they should notify the Graduate Program Coordinator. If an RP student wins a CGS-M award, the student must take up the award with the start date of September 1<sup>st</sup> or January 1<sup>st</sup>. An additional top-up will be provided to the student recognizing their success in both obtaining an RP and CGS-M award.

## Other Awards Opportunities

RP students can apply for awards even with a temporary RP project. If the RP student wins a one-year CGS-M award of \$27,000, **it is preferred that the RP student takes up the award on September 1.** The RP award will be paid out as a top-up to the CGS-M award (\$27,000) in the amount of \$12,500 for one year, for a total of \$39,500. The break-down of awards is as below:

- CGS-M award, \$9,000, September – December
- RP award, \$4,166.66 September – December

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- CGS-M award, \$9,000, January – April
- RP award, \$4,166.66, January – April

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- CGS-M award, \$9,000, May-August
- RP award, \$4,166.66, May-August

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## RP Structure

The rotations are from September to March – the first two terms of the student’s degree program. Each rotation is nine weeks long under the supervision of one research supervisor. The student usually performs independent or collaborative research, working with the rotation supervisor and/or members of the rotation supervisor’s team.

Like other Medical Genetics Graduate Program students, RP students must take 18 credits of courses over their first two terms (September- December and January- April). Please consult the [Guidelines for Students in the Medical Genetics Graduate Program](#) for details.

In the month of March, the RP students will make their decision on confirming a permanent research supervisor; they may consult with the Medical Genetics Graduate Advisor and Graduate Program Coordinator if they have any questions. The RP students must secure the commitment of a permanent thesis supervisor by the **end of March** so that they can be in their permanent lab starting on or around April 1. The permanent supervisor tops up the student’s award for the third term, May 1 – August 31.

The RP student should have their first committee meeting before **June 30<sup>th</sup>** of their first year. A committee meeting report form should be completed by the Research Supervisor at each committee meeting and signed by all attendees.

A grade for MEDG 548 (directed studies) will be assigned before the end of term 2. The permanent research Supervisor consults with the other two RP supervisors to decide on the MEDG 548 grade; the grade must be communicated to the Graduate Program Coordinator by April 25, and will be inputted on the Supervisor Committee meeting form at the time of the committee meeting. The signed copy of the form must be emailed to the Graduate Program Coordinator ([medical.genetics@ubc.ca](mailto:medical.genetics@ubc.ca)).