

Trev & Joyce Deeley Research Centre

High School Internship Program

Application Guidelines

2026

Deeley Research Centre

Xavier Pelletier High School Internship Program

Introduction:

BC Cancer's Trev & Joyce Deeley Research Centre at BC Cancer Victoria is a state-of-the-art cancer research centre supported solely by the BC Cancer Foundation through generous contributions from donors. A research facility of this caliber offers many opportunities to the surrounding community, one of which is the High School Internship Program (HSIP). The HSIP is designed to offer students the opportunity to explore cancer research from the front lines, learning the latest techniques in the fight against cancer, and provides interns with an unequaled opportunity to explore cancer research as a potential career path. Each student will undertake a research project, which they will develop and implement from start to finish with support from a designated supervisor and a team of research scientists.

Objectives:

- To introduce students to the scientific strategies and techniques employed in cancer research.
- To demonstrate the significance and impact of research and how discoveries can be translated to novel therapies for cancer patients.
- To introduce students to the fundamentals of research ethics and regulatory oversight governing cancer research.
- To empower high school students to raise awareness of BC Cancer research by serving as HSIP ambassadors and liaising with their schools and community.

Selection Criteria:

Eligibility criteria for acceptance to the HSIP is as follows:

- Students must attend a secondary school on Vancouver Island.
- Students must be in Grade 11 at the time of application (March) and at least 16 years of age at the time of the program start date (July).
- Students must be nominated by the Science Department Head (or designate) from their school and have the support of the school Principal.

Each high school may nominate 2 students for the HSIP.

We will apply the following evaluation criteria:

- Students must have a minimum **85% projected average** in Biology 11 or 12*, and any two of math, chemistry, or physics.
** Note: Grade 12 courses will be accepted in place of Grade 11 courses, provided the overall 85% projected average is met.*
- Three letters of reference must accompany each application, two of which must be academic references.

- Students must demonstrate an interest in cancer research and the pursuit of post-secondary education in a related field (i.e., medicine, biology, chemistry, physics etc.).
- If short-listed, students will be interviewed by the selection committee.

Our ideal candidate will fit the following profile:

- ✓ Team player
- ✓ Creative
- ✓ Independent
- ✓ Demonstrated interest in laboratory science
- ✓ Inquisitive
- ✓ Demonstrated public speaking ability
- ✓ Disciplined work habits (i.e., good time management, productivity, and attention to detail)
- ✓ Interested in a career in biomedical science/research
- ✓ Excellent problem-solving skills
- ✓ High level of maturity

Please consider these above noted skills and abilities as key aspects in determining the nominees.

Application and Processing of Awards:

Application deadline is **4pm, Monday, March 16, 2026**. Applicants invited to participate in the program will be notified by May 15. For the 2026 year, the program will start on Monday, July 6 and end on Friday, August 28.

Cancer Research Day:

All applicants will be invited to attend a Cancer Research Day at the Deeley Research Centre in mid-April. Applicants will attend a series of seminars focused on topics in cancer biology, therapies, and research. In addition, students will be placed into groups and participate in a cancer research activity within the laboratory. This hands-on activity will involve performing an experiment, collecting data, analyzing results, and ultimately applying the findings to inform treatment decisions for mock cancer patients.

Furthermore, the research day will include a panel discussion with current DRC researchers and former HSIP students. This open forum provides students with the opportunity to learn more about careers in cancer research.

Parents and teachers are welcome to join students in the afternoon for a Deeley Research Centre tour led by DRC scientists, including a visit to the Conconi Family Immunotherapy Laboratory, a cell manufacturing facility that produces clinical-grade cell therapies for patients across Canada.

Selection process:

After the Cancer Research Day, the HSIP selection committee will review and score all applications. Scores will be averaged across all applicants, and the top candidates will be invited to participate in an in-person interview with DRC team members and the project supervisor. Based on a combined assessment of the application and interview, two to four students will be selected to participate in the 8-week HSIP.

Bursary:

A \$5,000 bursary toward post-secondary education will be awarded to each student who successfully completes the 8-week program. Successful completion is determined by meeting all internship requirements, including full-time attendance throughout the entire 8-week term and completion of all assigned readings, presentations, and research projects. Students who do not fulfill these requirements will forfeit their entitlement to the bursary.

The bursary will be held in trust for a maximum of three years, with funds released upon successful admission to a post-secondary institution. Students who choose not to pursue post-secondary education will forfeit their entitlement to the bursary.

Application Checklist:

- Complete and submit the fillable 2026 HSIP Application Form available on the website.
- A letter of nomination from the student's school Science Dept. Head, co-signed by the school Principal.
- Three letters of reference – signed by referee, sealed, and addressed to Deeley Research Centre Administration.
- Official transcript of the student's academic record.
- Supporting document package sent as one package via mail (post-marked no later than March 16th) to:

Deeley Research Centre Administration
2410 Lee Ave
Victoria, BC
V8R 6V5

Pre-internship Preparation:

Successful students will need to provide the following to the BC Cancer Trev & Joyce Deeley Research Centre prior to starting the 8-week program:

- Signed Consent, Waiver and Indemnity form
- Signed Letter of Understanding

Upon selection, students will be sent the consent form and the Letter of Understanding.

If the students would like to gain work experience credit for their internship program, they will need to have a confirmed a teacher representative. *It is the sole responsibility of the student to obtain the work experience program agreement from their school.*

- Teacher representative to review the student
- Work Experience Program agreement from the school's counselor indicating that Career Preparation Program credits will be given (if applicable)

Student Responsibilities:

Students are responsible for all their own meals, accommodation, and travel.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and mature manner and adhere the requisite laboratory safety and ethics protocols. Participation in the program involves working full-time hours, Monday through Friday (37.5 hours/week), for the duration of the 8-week internship. Occasional evening and weekend work may be required. Project work-related expenses will be covered or reimbursed.

At the end of their 8-week internship each student will be required to present their research findings in a 20-minute oral presentation to complete the program. Parents, family, friends, and teachers of the students will be invited to attend this final presentation. A digital link to the presentation will be provided to those that are unable to attend in-person.

In addition to gaining exposure to cancer research, the internship emphasizes the importance of collaboration and teamwork between HSIP students and researchers. Students are expected to seek assistance when appropriate and to contribute to other research activities as needed. Participation in the program requires a full-time commitment for the entire 8-week duration; absences may result in delays to assigned research activities. In some cases, failure to meet attendance requirements may result in withdrawal from the program and forfeiture of the bursary. Any time away from the internship must be discussed in advance with the intern's supervisor and approved by the Research Operations Leader.

HSIP Program Outline

Research Project:

HSIP participants will be introduced to the various laboratory research methods used in cancer immunology research. Each student will work closely with a supervisor and a team of research staff who will mentor them for the duration of the 8-week internship. Students will plan, perform, and analyze a series of experiments that will form the basis of their project. They will be encouraged to work together and share ideas and findings with each other as well as DRC researchers.

Students will present a summary of their research project at the end of the HSIP in an oral presentation.

Book Club:

Students will participate in a book club that covers molecular and cell biology, immunology, and the fundamentals of cancer. They will be partnered up with another student and will be expected to read the required material. Each pair will present the readings to DRC researchers in a PowerPoint presentation format. DRC researchers will provide guidance and feedback to the HSIP participants.

Presentations will be scheduled for once a week at a predetermined time, date, and location. Each pair will present for Book Club at least twice during the internship.

Evaluation:

At the conclusion of the program, each student will be required to complete a program evaluation. Each student's supervisor will also complete a performance evaluation. Evaluations will be shared with the student and the school's Science Department Head.

Future Ambassador Opportunities:

To foster continued growth and development of the Trev & Joyce Deeley Research Centre, students who have participated in the program may be asked to participate in public speaking engagements as ambassadors for this program; we ask that during these presentations students acknowledge the support from the BC Cancer Foundation's sponsorship of the HSIP.

Contacts:

For further information, please go to our website: <http://www.bccrc.ca/dept/drc> or contact:

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