

MEaTnet Terms of Reference for Graduate Students

Funding Requirements

- MEaTnet funding is limited to two years for MSc students and three years for PhD students.
- Supervisors may provide additional “top up” funding if students require more time to finish their program than that provided by the MEaTnet.
- To receive funding from the MEaTnet, students must participate in the complete MEaTnet program as outlined in this document.
- Students that need to withdraw from the MEaTnet program must submit a letter of resignation to the MEaTnet Program Coordinator as soon as possible. The letter of resignation must include a date of withdrawal from the program.
- MEaTnet funding for students that withdraw from the program will be prorated to reflect actual time in the program.
- Students may participate in the MEaTnet program without being funded by the program but for a student to claim that he/she has graduated from the program the student must complete all MEaTnet requirements as outlined in this document regardless of the amount of money each receives from MEaTnet or the number of events in which each participates.
- MSc students converting to a PhD program must discuss funding implications with the MEaTnet Program Coordinator prior to converting their program. Funding for the PhD program beyond that originally planned for the original MSc is not guaranteed. All student funding decisions require approval by the MEaTnet Director and the Academic Committee.
- Travel to research sites, field research costs, research supplies, services and consumables and other direct research expenses will not be covered by NSERC CREATE funds and must be covered by supervisors, industry partners or other sources.
- Other graduate student program costs not related to the graduate student stipend or specified MEaTnet programs must be covered by the student, the supervisor, the department or by industry partners.

Stipend Funding

- Stipend funding may be from MEaTnet, student supervisors, student scholarships, collaborators, industrial partners, government partners, private organizations, or other sources.
- NSERC CREATE provides funding to MEaTnet students at the levels of \$20,900 for MSc and \$23,100 for PhD students. The value of the funding is fixed for the duration of the NSERC CREATE grant.
- This funding will pay the student stipend and mandatory employer payroll deductions. The exact stipend received by a student will be indicated in their acceptance letter. The stipend received by the student will be assessed annually by the Academic Committee and may decrease if the mandatory employer payroll deductions increase.
- If participating departments or supervisors require a higher student stipend, the difference must be supplied by the supervisor or their department or funds other than the MEaTnet program.

- Students on leave from regular employment may receive their normal salary or portion thereof, but the student will not receive a MEaTnet stipend unless the salary received is less than \$20,900 for MSc and \$23,100 for PhD students. If the salary or portion of salary is less than these values, then the MEaTnet program will supply funds in addition to the salary to the target amount of funds for the appropriate degree.
- **MEaTnet funding is a major award. If the terms of reference for another award or scholarship stipulate that a student cannot receive another major award, then the student cannot accept both MEaTnet funding and funding from the other award.** If the student accepts the other award, the student may receive MEaTnet funding for travel and may accept 'top up' funding to \$20,900 for MSc and \$23,100 for PhD so long as this 'top up' does not breach the conditions of the other award.
- Supervisors and students must report receipt of all non-MEaTnet funding for anything other than direct research costs to the MEaTnet Program Coordinator as soon as they are received and provide copies of the official letters of offer for the funding.
- Use of NSERC CREATE funds by a department must be reported to the MEaTnet Program Coordinator and Director on an annual basis for the purposes of financial reporting.
- Funds not used during an academic year must be returned by the student's department to the MEaTnet program.

Travel Funding

- MEaTnet travel funding will be allocated to fund annual experiential learning trips (up to \$14,800 per year) and to partially fund conference attendance by students (amount will vary per year of the NSERC CREATE).
- Students can apply to the MEaTnet program for additional funds to attend at least one conference per year. Conference attendance to present MEaTnet research results is encouraged and will be supported if sufficient funds are available.
- Students wanting to attend conferences that require funds exceeding that available from the MEaTnet program must obtain additional funds from their supervisors, departments or other sources.
- Students must apply for MEaTnet travel funding in advance of the conference and submit official expense claims for expense reimbursement after travelling.
- Eligible expenses for reimbursement by MEaTnet travel funds include conference registration, return transportation to the event (including return transportation between student home address and airport or ground transportation), transportation while at the event, educational field trips that are part of the conference if related to the student's research, accommodation, travel insurance, visas and travel papers required for entry into destination country, poster printing and meals that fall within the University's per diem rates and allowable expenses (<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/PoliciesProcedures/Procedures/Travel-Expense-Procedure-Appendix-A-Schedule-of-Allowable-Expenses.pdf>)

- As per University of Alberta policy for expense reimbursements, all expenses claimed must be supported by itemized receipts, tickets for transportation, and airline boarding passes. Additional documentation required by the MEaTnet program include official response letters to applications for supplemental non-MEaTnet funding and conference programs with their presentation clearly highlighted, and these documents must be submitted to the MEaTnet Program Coordinator.
- Money received from outside sources for conference and trip related expenses must be reported to the MEaTnet Program Coordinator and MEaTnet contributions to travel will be reduced by the amount of money from outside sources.
- Reimbursements from the NSERC CREATE funds will occur after travel and after the student has returned to her/his respective campus. Advance travel fund payment may be arranged through supervisors by students, but this is not the responsibility of the MEaTnet program and the MEaTnet program does not guarantee reimbursement of advance travel funds.

Training Program and Academic Requirements for MEaTnet Certification

- All training program and academic requirements for MEaTnet certification must be completed by the official end date of a student's program.
- MEaTnet students must be enrolled in full-time studies either at the University of Alberta, the Université Laval, the University of Saskatchewan or the University of Guelph.
- MSc and PhD students must complete all courses and academic requirements set by the Faculties of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) or similar and the departments at each of the partner universities. In addition, students must participate in a one current topics in meat science lecture series, a 2 week practical skills course, one communication in science course, and work with their supervisor to determine which other courses are necessary from: an introductory meat science course, a meat hygiene and safety course and an economics, policies and consumer behavior within the meat industry course at their respective institutions.
- Students must attend one professional summer short course at the Canadian Meat Council Annual General Meeting and one "Skills for the Meat Industry" short course at Olds College.
- Students must participate in a mentorship program for the duration of their time in the program.
- Students must present their research at professional and scientific meetings or conferences during their MEaTnet program. PhD students must give two presentations at different meetings; one national and one international. MSc students must give one presentation at a national or international level.
- MSc students must submit one manuscript and PhD students must submit two manuscripts.
- Students must acknowledge their participation and that of their supervisors in the MEaTnet program. Students must also acknowledge the financial support from NSERC CREATE, the MEaTnet, and any funding agencies that supported their work in all posters, publications and oral presentations. On posters and oral presentations the MEaTnet and NSERC logos must follow visual identity guidelines at <http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/VisualIdentity->

IdentiteVisuelle_eng.asp, saying next to NSERC logo “Funding provided by the NSERC CREATE program”.

- Students will meet with the MEaTnet Program Coordinator as needed to for assistance with administrative or other program requirements.
- If students are deemed by the MEaTnet Academic Committee and/or their supervisors to have unsatisfactory progress or participation in the MEaTnet program, students will be withdrawn from the program.

Student Research Topics

- Student research topics must focus issue pertinent to the meat industry. Although this is a research area with great breadth, the proposed research must meet the following criteria to be suitable for student support from the MEaTnet:
 - May be theoretical or applied.
 - Focus either on meat biochemistry, meat hygiene and safety, meat processing and product development or the economics of the meat industry or a combination of these areas.
 - Demonstrate applicability and transferability to the meat industry.
 - Provide training to the student that is suitable for the student to pursue a career in the meat industry.
 - Directly related to meat science or meat microbiology.
 - Results are likely to have wide ranging applicability to the meat industry.

Reports, Program Evaluations and Program Completion Surveys

- Students must prepare, in conjunction with their supervisors, an annual report on research activities to be submitted to the MEaTnet Program Coordinator and Program Director by March 31 each year.
- Students must participate in a half hour program completion interview with MEaTnet administrators to provide feedback at the end of their programs.
- Students must provide information on their program and research progress at the request of the MEaTnet Director or Coordinator for reports and promotional purposes as required.

Data, Publications, Copyright and Privacy Waivers

- Students must sign copyright and privacy waivers allowing the MEaTnet Director and MEaTnet Coordinator to use pictures, audio recordings and audio-visual recordings that they have produced or shared or of which they may be part of, for educational or promotional purposes.
- Students must ensure that the results of their research, including raw data, reports, and research implications remain confidential and are not discussed, posted or shared electronically or otherwise without the expressed written permission of their supervisors.

- Students must provide copies of their raw data, reports, presentations and pictures to their supervisors at the end of each term or as requested.
- Students will be senior authors on all publications and presentations arising from their research unless otherwise agreed to by the students and their supervisors. Supervisors will normally be last author unless otherwise agreed to by the students, their supervisors and their collaborators.
- All data collected are owned by the supervisor. Students may use the data for their research and for publications but cannot distribute these data without written consent from their supervisors.
- Students that do not complete a manuscript from their thesis (MSc) or two manuscripts from their thesis (PhD) will not be entitled to be first author on any publications arising from their research but will be listed as a co-author.

Leave of Absence

- Students requiring a leave of absence from the MEaTnet program for medical, parental or other reasons need to apply for a leave absence in accordance with their department or university policy.
- MEaTnet may provide NSERC CREATE funding for a leave of absence for up to four months after which supplemental funding from other sources may be accessed. The student is responsible for contacting the MEaTnet Coordinator and their supervisor regarding this leave of absence, its approval, its duration and stipend payment continuance.
- The amount of money that the MEaTnet provides to students and the time period for which the money is supplied is fixed; therefore, the MEaTnet is unlikely to have funds to continue stipend payments to students requiring extended medical or other leaves of absence approved by departments.

International Travel

- Students must have a current passport for travel outside of Canada to attend annual workshops, meetings, conferences and possibly to conduct research. The cost of the passport will be paid by the student. Students are responsible for determining the length of time to passport expiry date required by countries to which they will be travelling.
- Students are responsible for obtaining required immunizations as soon as it is determined international travel will be required as part of their program. Immunization costs may be covered by supervisors, to be verified by students before immunizations are obtained.

Other Conditions

- Students must participate in an industry internship placement for 20% of the length of their program (for a two year program, the internship would be 5 months).

- During the internship, student stipends will be paid by the MEaTnet unless the industry partner has agreed to provide funds for the stipend or agreed to pay the student wages during the internship. If the industry placement partner pays the stipend but not a salary, then the MEaTnet will pay for accommodation of the student during the internship if the student is required to relocate to participate in the internship.
- Students will abide by all safety requirements communicated by their university, department, supervisors, industry mentors and industry internship supervisors and students are responsible for purchasing required safety wear or equipment that is not supplied by the university, supervisor or industry partner. Safety equipment must be Canadian Safety Association (CSA) approved.
- Email is the main method of communication by the MEaTnet and so students are advised to check their university email account daily.
- Supervisors may have additional expectations of MEaTnet students.
- NSERC and the MEaTnet may periodically change program and reporting requirements and procedures through normal updating procedures and students and supervisors must adhere to these requirements. Changes to program and reporting requirements and any other policy changes will be communicated as soon as possible and with as much advance notice as possible and will be posted on the MEaTnet website.