



National Collaborating Centre
for Environmental Health

Centre de collaboration nationale
en santé environnementale

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The Ron de Burger Student Award

Overview

The Ron de Burger Student Award is an annual award offered in partnership with the Environmental Health Foundation of Canada (EHFC) for students enrolled in Canadian post-secondary institutions offering a Public Health Inspection (PHI) program or a degree in public health. It is dedicated to the memory of Ron de Burger, who was a celebrated leader in public health and a longtime NCCEH advisory board member.

This award is intended for students of public health to develop awareness and promote critical analysis of environmental health issues. We believe that quality student work should be encouraged and recognized.

Up to five (5) awards are made available annually, consisting of a certificate and a cheque in the amount of \$500. Winning submissions will also be posted, along with the students' names and programs of study, onto the NCCEH and EHFC websites.

For submission deadlines, access to the submission form, and examples of previous award recipients, please visit <http://www.ncceh.ca/content/ron-de-burger-student-award>.

Eligibility

Candidates must be a full- or part-time student at a Canadian post-secondary institution, enrolled in an environmental or public health program. Students who have graduated from their program in advance of the submission deadline by up to six months are also eligible to apply.

Submission Criteria

Each submission requires two components:

1. an original evidence review written by the applicant, and
2. a current Enrollment Verification Letter for confirmation of eligibility. This letter is available free of charge from most institutions. A Completion Letter may be submitted in its place for eligible graduates.

Submitted evidence reviews must cover a topic pertaining to environmental health practice or policy in Canada. The evidence review should focus on a specific question and synthesize research findings to provide a discussion on the state of knowledge, gaps, and implications for public health.

Suggested topic areas include, but are not limited to:

- Air (indoor or outdoor); e.g., radon, traffic-related air pollution, mould
- Water (recreation or drinking water); e.g., chlorinated compounds in swimming pools, arsenic in wells
- Food; e.g., food security, food safety
- Contaminants/Hazards (physical, biological and chemical agents); e.g., non-ionizing radiation, E. coli, pesticides
- Built Environment; e.g., green space, active transportation

Note: a course assignment from the current academic year can be eligible for submission, provided it is modified to fulfill the submission criteria.

Content

The evidence review should include the following sections:

- **Title** – a concise and informative title that describes the contents
- **Summary** – key messages of the review, presented in bullet points
- **Introduction** – an adequate background, avoiding a detailed literature review, that describes the relevance of the topic to environmental health and the key objective/s of the review
- **Methods** – a brief description of the literature search (details including search terms, databases, inclusion and exclusion criteria should be provided in an appendix)
- **Results and Discussion** – a synthesis of the literature (**not merely a summary; see note below**), including the implications for environmental health practice or policy in Canada; briefly include strengths and limitations, and any gaps in research, policy, or knowledge
- **Conclusions** – key findings derived from the literature and suggestions for future directions
- **Acknowledgements** (if applicable)
- **References**
- **Appendices** – literature search details

Note: summarizing is not synthesizing

Synthesis means the generation or creation of new knowledge, which occurs from identifying and drawing on relationships between studies. For more guidance, please consult [the NCCEH approach to conducting a literature search and semi-systematic review](#).

Formatting

The body of the evidence review is expected to be between 1500-2500 words in length, double-spaced, and presented in a legible, 12 point size font. No additional formatting is requested. The word limit does not include the summary, references or appendices.

References must be presented in Vancouver style. We recommend that candidates use reference management software (e.g., Endnote, Reference Manager, RefWorks).

Files must be saved in PDF format.

Evaluation

- **Summary section (10%)**
Key messages are accurately and concisely identified.
- **Purpose (15%)**
A problem or question is clearly stated, and there is clear rationale for why the question needs attention.
- **Search and selection criteria (15%)**
How and where cited literature was found is detailed, including search terms, databases, and inclusion/exclusion criteria used. Potential biases introduced by the chosen methods are identified.
- **Synthesis (40%)**
 - Appraisal (10%): The literature is critiqued effectively in relation to the objective of the review.
 - Strengths and limitations (10%): Strengths and limitations of the literature are considered, with attempts made to reconcile discrepancies and inconsistencies.
 - Gaps (10%): Gaps in research, policy, or knowledge are described.
 - Applications (10%): The review discusses the implications of the topic to EH practice or policy in Canada.
- **Conclusions (10%)**
Conclusions are justified and follow logically from the synthesis of literature. Further directions are suggested and there is discussion of whether the results are generalizable, where appropriate.
- **Overall presentation (10%)**
Spelling, grammar, readability, use of required sections and formatting, and appropriate length.

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