

Tips from Current Neuroscience Students

(written by Juana Ayala Castañeda, MSc candidate, and the GPN EDI committee)

How to Contact a Potential Supervisor

When contacting a faculty member with the intention of finding a potential supervisor keep in mind the following tips:

- Introduce yourself in a way relevant to the context, avoid personal details but give them the information they need to know about you.
- Make sure to familiarize yourself with the research this person does before reaching out, read their lab's website and maybe a couple of their papers.
- A prof will know when you have done your homework and read about them. If you're sending the same email to many profs, tailor your emails to their research. Make sure that you use the same font and font size throughout the email, or your email will look copied and pasted.
- Don't be afraid to follow-up if you don't get an answer. Typically, it can take a prof one or two weeks to get back to you. If you haven't heard back after two weeks, follow up.
- Use your school email address, if possible.

Template (please feel free to copy and paste, but also try to find your own voice):

Dear Dr. [supervisor name],

My name is [your name], and I plan to apply to the Neuroscience [enter degree type, either MSc or PhD] program at UBC (September [year] start). The work in your lab resonated with my interests, and I wanted to see if you might be accepting new graduate students in the upcoming year and are available to discuss research opportunities for me in your lab.

I completed a [enter degree type] in [enter field] at the University of [XX] in [year], and a [degree] in [field] at the University of [] in [year]. My undergraduate/Master's degree involved a significant amount of [enter relevant technical skills, such as programming and statistics] (see CV), and during this time I also completed [enter relevant courses taken] (see Transcript). The topic of my undergraduate Honours/Master's thesis [or topic of relevant other research experience] was [enter topic], and I am now looking at broadening my research experience toward [enter interests]. I am intrigued by your work on [what stream of this profs research are you interested in], particularly your recent publication in/on [which project are you specifically interested in], and would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this further with you.

Attached to this email you will find a copy of my unofficial transcript and CV.

I look forward to hearing from you and thank you for your time.

Best regards,

[your preferred name for communication]