

Canada Research Chair (Tier 1) in Water Quality Solutions

The [University of Saskatchewan](#) (USask) and the [School of Environment and Sustainability](#) (SENS) invite applications for a **Tier 1 Canada Research Chair** in *Water Quality Solutions*. The [Canada Research Chairs Program](#) is the flagship of a national strategy to make Canada a world-leading country in research and development.

Background

This is an **internal search**, limited to faculty members who currently hold a tenured appointment at the University of Saskatchewan, or have a firm offer of tenured employment to the University of Saskatchewan that takes effect by July 1, 2026.

The Chair

Water quality degradation—driven largely by nutrient pollution from urban, agricultural, and industrial activities—represents one of the most urgent and persistent water security challenges in Canada and globally. Impacts include harmful algal blooms, altered food webs, rising drinking-water treatment costs, and threats to recreational and traditional water uses. Despite substantial investment, the combined pressures of climate change, agricultural intensification, and ongoing urban and industrial development continue to amplify both the complexity and societal impacts of water quality challenges. Addressing water quality challenges requires new research to support solutions and adaptation across diverse lakes and watersheds.

This **Tier 1 CRC in Water Quality Solutions** will position USask as a leader in nutrient pollution and water security research. The Chair will strengthen and connect USask expertise across SENS, the Global Institute for Water Security (GIWS), the Global Water Futures Observatories program, the College of Agriculture and Bioresources, the Toxicology Centre, and allied units, enhancing the university's national and international leadership, and scholarship in the area of transdisciplinary water research.

The CRC will develop an ambitious, innovative, collaborative, internationally visible, and impact-oriented research program that advances fundamental understanding of water quality challenges while accelerating the translation of evidence into policy and practice. The successful nominee will lead a research program to:

- Advance fundamental understanding of elemental cycling in lakes and watersheds, focused on causes and consequences of nutrient pollution;
- Build new understanding of algal-bloom risks in lakes and nutrient cycling across seasons, including winter and cold-region processes;
- Develop and apply novel water quality assessment tools;

- Generate science-based, scalable approaches to address water quality issues in agricultural watersheds;

The CRC's research should span prairie, Canadian, and global contexts, and emphasize nutrient pollution. The ideal candidate will have experience in diverse and innovative methods (e.g., landscape surveys, sensor-based monitoring, cold regions sampling techniques, small-scale and watershed or whole-lake experimentation, process-based measurements, modelling, and social science approaches). The CRC must have experience in co-developed research, engaging communities, utilities, governments, industry, and/or NGOs and translating evidence into decision support tools for policy and water management.

The Chair's academic home will be SENS, with close integration across GIWS and partner colleges and centres. The Chair is also expected to provide leadership in large grants and institutional priority areas.

Qualifications

We seek an innovative, world-class limnologist or aquatic biogeochemist whose contributions and accomplishments have had a major international impact in fields central to water quality and nutrient pollution. The ideal candidate will bring a record consistent with appointment as Full Professor and Tier 1 CRC nomination, including sustained excellence in research, training, leadership, and engagement.

As a USask world-class research leader, the Chair will build and lead large, multi-partner initiatives aligned with multiple USask Signature Areas of Research (*Water, Agriculture, Communities & Sustainability, One Health*) and seek major external funding opportunities (e.g., NSERC CREATE, NFRF-Transformation, CFREF). The incumbent will drive interdisciplinary collaboration across hydrology, limnology, biogeochemistry, soil science, toxicology, engineering, policy, and social sciences—making fundamental advances linking water quality to land use, climate risk, and ecosystem services. To move science toward societal action, the Chair will elevate knowledge mobilization and strategic communications to inform public policy and operational decision-making for water treatment, monitoring, and risk management.

Applicants must have a PhD (or equivalent) in a relevant field; internationally recognized scholarship with a strong record of extramural funding and high-impact research outputs; demonstrated excellence in training and mentoring HQP (graduate students, postdoctoral fellows) and in equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) practice; and a proven ability to lead transdisciplinary teams and deliver research with measurable societal impact.

Preference will be given to candidates with strengths aligned with existing USask research in water security, including cold regions hydrology/winter limnology, cyanobacterial bloom dynamics and toxicity, risk forecasting, and evaluation of treatment/mitigation options for blooms and legacy contamination. Candidates with previous experience conducting whole-lake experiments; existing relationships with provincial and national water security agencies,

management bodies, and/or producer groups; and evidence of leadership of major, cross-sector research consortia and contributions to institutional grant success are also seen as valuable.

How to Apply

Applications for this position should include a cover letter outlining the candidate's fit with the advertised position and with SENS and GIWS; a short statement on how their research program contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals; a detailed curriculum vitae; a summary of research achievements (1-page max); an outline of the proposed research program (2-page max); a statement on how the candidate's teaching, research, and/or mentorship demonstrates a commitment to diversity and inclusion (1-page max); and the names and contact information for three referees.

Application packages should be addressed to:

Dr. Karsten Liber, PhD
Chair, Selection Committee
Executive Director and Distinguished Professor
School of Environment & Sustainability
117 Science Place, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK S7N 5C8, Canada
Email: sens_search@usask.ca

Applications will be accepted until **April 16, 2026**.

The impact of personal leaves, interruptions or slowdowns, and professional circumstances (e.g., extended responsibilities, cultural contributions) will be carefully considered when reviewing a candidate's record of research achievement. Candidates are encouraged to explain in their application how personal or professional circumstances may have impacted research productivity. The University of Saskatchewan is committed to supporting employees in need of accommodation in an employment context.

The University of Saskatchewan is committed to employment equity, diversity, and inclusion in its faculty complement and is proud to support career opportunities that address the under-representation of members of the Four Designated Groups (women and gender equity seeking groups, members of a racialized minority, Indigenous persons, and persons with disabilities) defined under the Employment Equity Act among chair allocations. All qualified candidates, Canadian and other nationalities, are encouraged to apply. Recruitment will be guided by the [Canada Research Chairs Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Practices](#) and by the strong commitment of USask to diversity, inclusion, and equity. *Applicants will be invited to self-identify as members of the Four Designated Groups. Self-declaration is voluntary and will be used in accordance with institutional equity, diversity, and inclusion practices.*

For questions related to this position or the selection process, please contact Jennifer Milburn, Executive Officer (jennifer.milburn@usask.ca).

Posted Date: 3/18/2026
Closing Date: 4/16/2026

The University of Saskatchewan aspires to be what the world needs and embraces equity, diversity and inclusion as foundational to excellence and innovation. We actively seek to create a welcoming environment where all individuals feel empowered to thrive, contribute, and grow. Applications from equity-deserving groups are encouraged as part of our ongoing efforts to reflect the diversity of the communities we serve: [EDI Framework for Action](#).

We continue to grow our partnerships with Indigenous communities across the province, nationally, and internationally and value the unique perspective that Indigenous employees provide to strengthen these relationships. Verification of Indigenous Membership/Citizenship at the University of Saskatchewan is led and determined by the [deybwewin | taapwaywin | tapwewin: Indigenous Truth policy](#) and the Standing Committee in accordance with the processes developed to enact the policy. Successful candidates that assert Indigenous membership/citizenship will be asked to complete the verification process of Indigenous membership/citizenship with documentation.

The University of Saskatchewan provides an accessible and inclusive workplace. Should you require support through any stage of this selection process, please contact Jennifer Milburn (jennifer.milburn@usask.ca) for assistance.