

Guidelines for SURP Proposals

Research and creative projects require not only dedication, planning, and a substantial time commitment, but also funding. Undergraduate researchers at UCI have the opportunity to submit proposals to request funding from programs sponsored or co-sponsored by UROP.

Call for Proposals

The Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP) is a research fellowship for UCI undergraduate students, that provides recognition and funding in support of students' time and effort. It is aimed at students with some prior research experience who plan to continue an intensive, faculty-mentored research experience in the summer. The fellowships are typically for 10 weeks, with a commitment of 20 hours per week. However, the total time commitment is flexible and should be appropriate for the proposed project. The award amounts are flexible and dependent on student need and the time commitment of the project. These stipends are capped at a maximum of \$3,000.

The SURP Call for Proposals is announced in the Spring Quarter of each year. Proposals that do not require funding or are already receiving adequate funding from departmental or other sources may be submitted for an Honorary Fellowship.

Submission deadlines, and the application, are on the UROP website (<https://uop.uci.edu/>)

Proposals are evaluated on:

- The intellectual merit of the student's research
- A complete application
- The level of support from the faculty mentor
- The level of student time commitment
- The student's transcript
- Available funding

The UROP Faculty Advisory Board reviews the proposals and makes funding recommendations.

Who is Eligible?

To be eligible for a SURP grant, students must be undergraduates in good academic standing. Students must also have some prior research before the beginning of the summer (we recommend at least one quarter working on a research project at UCI). Students who will graduate at the end of the summer are not eligible to apply.

Team Projects

Each undergraduate team member should submit their own separate proposal, because potential awards involve individual stipends for each participant's time.

The Research Proposal

Your proposal should convince the reviewers of the significance of the project and need for funding. Typically a proposal is about three to five pages, but should be the appropriate length to support your request completely and concisely. If needed, your proposal may include further documentation, such as a survey that you are administering or data that you have collected.

Proposals should answer these questions:

- Why am I doing this project? What issues/problems/questions will I explore and answer?
- What are my goals for the project? How will I get there? What do I hope to realize as a result of my efforts?
- What resources will I use in my project?
- How much funding should I request?
- Will I dedicate the time needed to complete the project within the timeline proposed?

You can see past proposals that have been accepted for funding on the UROP website (<https://urop.uci.edu/>).

Thesis, Purpose, Objective, & Approach

You will likely start your project by asking a rudimentary research question, usually with the help of your mentor. In a sense, your thesis statement is your answer to the central question or problem you have raised. Writing this statement will enable you to see where you are heading and to remain on a productive path as you plan and write. Beginning your proposal with your thesis statement frames everything that follows.

This section should also describe your purpose—what your topic is—with a clear research question, and why this topic is unique or important to your field. Make sure you clearly state the significance of your research to your field, and to the general public. Describe the objective by telling what you have completed in your project, what you will be accomplishing, and its intended outcome. Illustrate your methods and demonstrate the feasibility of the project as well. Support your research with details, and express any practical concerns and/or difficulties you may incur and how you will overcome them.

Responsibility

Describe your specific duties for the project. If it is a group project, describe the responsibilities of each group member. Explain how you will interact with your faculty mentor during the course of the research. Discuss any collaboration you may have with other research personnel involved in your project.

Timeline

Produce a schedule of activities for your summer research.

References

List books, articles, and any other outside sources that were used in preparing your proposal or that have contributed to your expanded knowledge about your area of research. These references help establish why your research is essential to the field and add credibility to your proposal by showing that you have done the research necessary to carry out your project.

Personal Statement

Each undergraduate researcher must submit their own personal statement. This tells the evaluators who you are, why you want to pursue this research, and what impact you expect this experience to have on your future career. It should discuss the following:

- Your research background; describe how it might have influenced your education.
- What you have accomplished so far in the field you are researching, including relevant classes that you have taken, and how this opportunity will help you realize your academic and career goals.
- Why you chose this topic for your research project and why you should receive funding.

A personal statement can also elaborate on information you normally include in your resume.

Letter of Recommendation

This is written by your faculty mentor(s) and is an evaluation of your performance and capacity to complete the proposed activities (only one letter is needed per project). We request your letter of recommendation from your faculty mentor(s) after you submit your proposal, but you should prompt your faculty mentor that s/he will need to upload it within a week after the deadline.

Research Conduct Rules

If your project involves human and/or animal subjects, you must adhere to UCI's research conduct rules. Please consult with your faculty mentor to determine if IRB or IACUC approval is needed. Undergraduate students proposing exempt human subjects research as part of their UROP proposal may evaluate their project to determine their exempt status without confirmation from the IRB. Please review the [Exempt Self-Determination Tool](#) to determine if your human subjects research is eligible. If it is, complete and follow the instructions on the form. Do not submit this form to UROP or the IRB. Visit the UCI Office of Research Regulatory Compliance site for more information (<http://www.research.uci.edu/compliance/index.html>).

Submission Process

The proposal should be prepared by the student applicant(s), under the guidance of their faculty mentor(s). Submit your proposal online by entering information about you, your fellow undergraduate researchers, and your faculty mentor(s), and uploading or providing the following:

- The proposal. Upload this as a separate document. Submit a single proposal for your project, regardless of the number of students included in the submission. Please include the name of each researcher on this document.
- A personal statement from each student. Upload these as separate documents. Please include your first and last name on this document.
- Complete the SURP Survey (<https://scout.eee.uci.edu/s/surpsum21>). Please review the survey questions ahead of time, and consult with your Faculty Mentor before responding. You can save and exit the survey before it is complete and return to it later. You will only be able to submit the survey once, and your proposal will not be complete until doing so.
- With your permission, we will download a copy of your transcript; you do not need to provide that to us.
- Letter of Recommendation (one per project) that will be uploaded by your faculty mentor after you submit your proposal.

A confirmation e-mail is sent to the undergraduate researcher(s) and faculty mentor(s) once the submission has been received. This confirmation provides a secure link that allows students and mentors to access and update their submission. In addition, the e-mail asks faculty mentors to upload one letter of recommendation. Please check with your faculty mentor to ensure that your letter has been uploaded within one week after the proposal deadline.

UROP Workshops and Deadlines

UROP offers one or more workshops that cover the proposal process in detail. These workshops will be offered in the weeks leading up to the submission date, and will be announced on the UROP website (<https://uop.uci.edu/>). They will also be recorded and posted to the UROP website for later viewing.