

## **2023 Distinguished Research Fellowship Proposal Guidelines**

UROP provides recognition and/or funding for undergraduate research and creative projects mentored by UCI faculty through two separate annual calls for proposals, announced in the fall and spring quarters of each year. As part of these Calls, undergraduate students can request reimbursement for research-related expenses. These awards—which are transferred to the mentors' departments—are for research being carried out by current UCI students for up to one year, or until graduation, whichever comes first. Students who do not need funding may apply for non-funded recognition.

- The Spring Distinguished Research Fellowship (DRF) offers higher maximum awards to proposals that are identified through a selective review process. Undergraduates can request up to \$3,000 with awards ranging between \$1,000 and \$3,000.
- The Fall Research Experience Fellowship (REF) provides funding to a wide range of students, with corresponding smaller awards for each proposal. Undergraduates can request up to \$1,000 for individual projects and up to \$2,500 for group projects, with average awards expected to be close to \$400 and \$1,200, respectively.

**The 2023 DRF deadline is Friday, April 7 at 11:59 pm.** You must complete your application and submit all required supporting materials before the deadline.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

- Current UCI undergraduate student through at least summer 2023
- Good academic standing
- UCI Faculty Mentor guidance
- One individual funding request per cycle:
  - You may submit one individual proposal for funding and another for recognition only (non-funded)
  - In addition to an individual proposal, you may also be involved in one or more group proposals that receive funding or recognition

### **Application Materials**

- Online application form
- Research Proposal
- Personal Statement
- Faculty Mentor Agreement Form
- Projects involving human and/or animal subjects must adhere to UCI's research conduct rules, and may require additional steps in collaboration with a Faculty Mentor

### **Application Information and Tips**

You must prepare and upload three documents as part of your application. Each is described later in this document:

- Research Proposal
- Personal Statement
- Faculty Mentor Agreement Form

In addition, consider the following:

- Begin your application early and save it as a Draft. This will allow you to see everything that is required and provide you with enough time to compile all of the necessary information before the deadline.
- You may save a Draft of your application as many times as needed before it is complete and return to finish it later.
- For group projects, submit a single application for the project. Select a “Primary Researcher” to complete the application. They will enter each researcher’s name and UCI email address, so must have that information before completing the application.
- Your Faculty Mentor must review your Proposal and complete the Faculty Mentor Agreement Form before the submission deadline, so meet with them well in advance.
- Include your Faculty Mentor’s email address in the “Additional Email Addresses for Notifications” field on the first page of the submission form. This ensures that they will receive future updates about your submission.
- Review the [UROP and SURP Proposal Scoring Matrix/Rubric](#) to see how submissions will be evaluated.

## Submission Instructions

To apply for the Distinguished Research Fellowship:

1. Go to the [UROP Opportunities](#) page of the UROP website.
2. Under Distinguished Research Fellowship, click “Details and Requirements” to show more information.
3. Click “Online Application” to open the application form.
4. Fill out the form and upload the required documents.
  - Include your Faculty Mentor’s email address in the “Additional Email Addresses for Notifications” field on the first page of the submission form. This ensures that they will receive future updates about your submission.
5. Save a draft of the application. This allows you to return and make any additions and/or changes before your final submission. You may save as a Draft repeatedly before completing and submitting the application.
6. When you have completely finished the application, click “Submit.”

**Important!** Do NOT click “Submit” until you are sure your submission is 100% complete. You CANNOT modify your application after it has been submitted.

## The Research Proposal

Your proposal should convince the reviewers of the significance of the project and need for funding, if requested. It should follow these formatting guidelines:

- 8.5" x 11" page size
- 11-point type or larger
- Times New Roman or equivalent standard text font
- 1" page margins
- Double spaced
- MS Word or PDF format

- Include the names of all undergraduate researchers and faculty mentors at the top
- Typically three to five pages, but should be the appropriate length to support your request completely and concisely

Proposals should answer these questions:

- Why am I doing this project? What issues/problems/questions will I explore and answer?
- What are my project goals? How will I get there? What do I hope to realize as a result of my efforts?
- What resources will I use?
- How much funding should I request, if any?

As you are preparing your proposal, review the [UROP and SURP Proposal Scoring Matrix/Rubric](#) to see how submissions will be evaluated. You can also see past proposals on the [UROP website](#) as examples of successful past submissions.

<b>Important!</b> For group projects: while one student will submit the application, all student researchers should work together to prepare a single proposal document.
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The following sections describe the information you should include in your proposal.

### **Thesis, Purpose, Objective, & Approach**

Describe your purpose with a clear research question. Thoroughly discuss the significance of your project, how it advances knowledge, and its potential impact on society. Describe work you have already completed, what you plan to accomplish, and your intended outcome.

### **Responsibility**

Discuss your specific duties for the project. Are you working in a lab or doing an independent project? Describe how your work is independent from that of your mentor(s). For a group project, describe the responsibilities of each group member. Explain how you will interact with your faculty mentor and other research personnel throughout the project.

### **Timeline**

Include a schedule—by week, month or quarter—of project tasks and deadlines. Discuss the progress you have made so far, where you are in your research, and expectations that you can complete the work within this time.

### **Itemized Budget**

As part of the Distinguished Research Fellowship, students can apply for funding to support their research. Undergraduates can request up to \$3,000, with awards ranging between \$1,000 and \$3,000.

If you are requesting funding, include an itemized list of projected expenses for the length of your project. Consult with your Faculty Mentor about your needs before developing your budget.

Use the format in the sample below for your budget. Clearly explain any expenses that could be seen as unusual. Include the total cost of your project and specify the amount you are requesting from UROP. List all additional sources of funding you may have.

Sample UROP Proposal Budget		
Item	Budgeted Amount	Explanation and Justification for Expense
Participant compensation	\$1,000	40 participants compensated \$25 each for 1 hour of time.
Parking fee	\$100	\$5 compensation for subjects who elect to participate in our lab, rather than their home. Estimated about half of participants will choose to do this.
Copying fee for measures	\$45	
Tapes	\$5	
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$1,150</b>	
<b>Total Requested from UROP</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	

Types of items that can and cannot be covered by a UROP grant:

<p><b>Items that CAN be covered</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Chemicals</li> <li>● Supplies</li> <li>● Reference materials not available for free</li> <li>● Animals</li> <li>● Copying/printing</li> <li>● Research poster for presentations</li> <li>● Mailing/postage</li> <li>● Mileage</li> <li>● Software</li> <li>● Compensation for human subjects</li> <li>● Presentation materials</li> <li>● Facilities rental</li> <li>● Other critical related costs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Items that are RARELY covered</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Major hardware purchases: expenditures for computers may be approved for exceptional circumstances only, and must include justification of why this is a mission critical expense.</li> </ul> <p><b>Items that are NOT covered</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Travel (UROP Travel Awards can provide limited funding for qualified expenses; see the UROP website for information)</li> <li>● Standard laboratory expenses</li> <li>● Salaries and stipends</li> <li>● Items that can be borrowed for free or rented at a much lower cost</li> </ul>
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Note that many books, software packages and other resources are freely accessible to you through the university as a UCI student. The UCI [OIT website](#) contains information on available software, and please check the [UCI Libraries website](#) for books and other reference materials that may be available for free.

## References

List books, articles, and any other outside sources you used in preparing your proposal or that have contributed to your research.

## Personal Statement

Each undergraduate researcher must prepare a personal statement, which describes their relationship to the research project. Use the same format you used for the proposal:

- 8.5" x 11" page size
- 11-point type or larger
- Times New Roman or equivalent standard text font
- 1" page margins
- Double spaced
- MS Word or PDF format

The personal statement should discuss the following:

- Why you want to pursue this research
- How pursuing this project will help you move toward your academic, career and/or personal goals
- Your research background, including what you may have accomplished so far in the field you are researching
- Why this project matters to you
- Include your name at the top

**Important!** For group projects, submit a single document that contains the personal statements for each undergraduate researcher. Include each student's name at the beginning of their statement.

## Group Proposals

Here are things to remember if you are submitting a proposal for a group of undergraduate researchers.

- Submit a single application for the project and select a "Primary Researcher" to complete the application. They will enter each researcher's name and UCI email address, so must have that information before completing the application.
- All student researchers should work together to prepare a single proposal document.
- The proposal must describe the responsibilities of each group member.
- Submit personal statements as a single document that contains the statements for each undergraduate researcher. Include each student's name at the beginning of their statement.

## Faculty Mentor Agreement Form

You must meet with your Faculty Mentor to have them review your draft proposal. After you meet, they must complete the [Faculty Mentor Agreement Form](#) and send it to you to include as part of your final submission. Provide them with this form as soon as possible, so that they will be aware of the questions they will need to answer.

**Important!** You must include your Faculty Mentor's email address in the "Additional Email Addresses for Notifications" field on the first page of the submission form. This ensures that they will receive future updates about your submission.

## Research Conduct Rules

Projects involving human and/or animal subjects must adhere to UCI's Research Protections standards. Consult with your Faculty Mentor to determine if [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee \(IACUC\)](#) or [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#) approval is needed.

- Review the [UROP Research Protections Instructions](#) for detailed guidelines, including instructions on how to complete the IRB Exempt Self Determination Tool for projects involving human subjects.
- Contact UROP if you and your Faculty Mentor have questions about this process.

## Need Help?

There are several resources to help you prepare your proposal for submission:

- UROP's Proposal Writing & Submission information session covers the proposal process in detail. Check the [UROP Calendar](#) on our website for dates or view the recording on the UROP website.
- Peer tutors at the [UCI Writing Center](#) offer drop-in sessions to help you with your proposals and personal statements.
- If you need further help, you can [Contact UROP](#) for assistance.