

2023 Research Experience Fellowship Proposal Guidelines For Engineering Senior Design Projects

Proposal Deadline: Wednesday, November 22 at 11:59 pm

UROP provides recognition and/or funding for undergraduate research projects and creative activities mentored by UCI faculty through our annual call for proposals, announced in the fall quarter of each year. As part of this call, undergraduate students can request reimbursement for project-related expenses. These awards—which are transferred to the mentors' departments—are for projects 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 Fall Research Experience Fellowship (REF) provides funding to a wide range of students, with corresponding awards for each proposal. Undergraduates can request up to \$2,500 for group projects, with average awards historically close to \$1,000.

Important! The Spring Distinguished Research Fellowship has been eliminated, so this will be the only opportunity to receive reimbursement for project-related expenses within this school year. We will be offering the Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP) for 2024, as usual, with a deadline in spring quarter.

Eligibility Requirements	Application Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Current UCI undergraduate student through at least winter 2024● Good academic standing● UCI Faculty Mentor guidance● One individual funding request per cycle:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 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

Need Help?

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

- Review the [UROP Proposal Scoring Matrix/Rubric](#) to see how submissions will be evaluated.
- Review past proposals on the [UROP website](#) as examples of successful past submissions.

- 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 and scheduled appointments to help you with your proposals and personal statements.
- If you need further help, you can [Contact UROP](#) for assistance.

Application Checklist

Complete the following before you click “Submit”:

- Prepare the Proposal document and review it with your faculty mentor.
- Have your faculty mentor complete and sign the Faculty Mentor Agreement form.
- Prepare a personal statement for each applicant.
- In the submission form, include your Faculty Mentor’s email address in the “Additional Email Addresses for Notifications” field so they will receive future updates about your

Submission Instructions

Required Documents

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

- Proposal
- Personal Statement
- Faculty Mentor Agreement Form

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.

Start the Application

To open the Research Experience Fellowship submission form:

1. Go to the [UROP Opportunities](#) page of the UROP website.
2. Under Research Experience Fellowship, click Steps 1–3 to read more information.
3. Click “Start Your Senior Design Project Application Here” to open the application form.
 - Engineering students submitting proposals for Senior Design Projects should follow instructions provided in class.

Application Notes

In addition, consider the following:

- Review the [UROP and SURP Proposal Scoring Matrix/Rubric](#) to see how submissions will be evaluated.

- You may save a Draft of your application as many times as needed before it is complete and return to finish it later.

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 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:

- **Page size:** 8.5" x 11"
- **Font size:** 11-point type or larger
- **Font:** Times New Roman or equivalent standard text font
- **Page margins:** 1"
- **File Format:** MS Word or pdf
- **Heading:** Include the names of all undergraduate researchers and faculty mentors at the top
- **Length:** Typically, three to five double-spaced pages, but should be the appropriate length to support your request completely and concisely

Proposals should answer these questions:

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

Important! For group projects: while one student submits the application, all undergraduate applicants should work together to prepare a single proposal document.

The following sections describe the information you should include in your proposal.

Thesis, Purpose, Objective, & Approach

For many research projects, you should 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.

If you are working on a creative activity, describe what led you to conduct the activity, and possibly what question(s) you want to answer or challenges you want to overcome. As in the previous example, you should discuss the significance of your project and its potential impact on society. Describe work you have already completed, what you plan to accomplish, and your intended outcome.

Responsibility

Discuss the specific responsibilities of each member of the project. Describe how your work is independent from that of your mentor(s). Explain how you will interact with your faculty mentor and other 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 project, and expectations that you can complete the work within this time.

References

List books, articles, and any other outside sources you used in preparing your proposal or that have contributed to your project. Use a reference format that is appropriate for your field of study.

Itemized Budget

As part of the Research Experience Fellowship, students can apply for funding to support their research. Undergraduates can request up to up to \$2,500 for group projects, with average awards historically close to \$1,000.

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
512GB Solid State Drives	\$100	
Copying/printing	\$100	
Website builder software	\$300	Includes domain and hosting costs for at least three years
Organic solvents for reaction and chromatography	\$150	
Clean room fees	\$200	

Proper Waste Disposal	\$200	
Poster for UROP Symposium	\$120	
Total Budget	\$1,170	
Total Requested from UROP	\$1,000	

The table below lists items and types of expenses that can and cannot be covered by UROP. 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.

CAN be covered	RARELY covered	NOT covered
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chemicals ● Supplies ● Reference materials not available for free ● Animals ● Copying/printing ● Research poster for presentations ● Mailing/postage ● Mileage ● Software ● Compensation for human subjects ● Presentation materials, such as a Symposium poster ● Facilities rental ● Other critical related costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Travel (UROP Travel Awards can provide limited funding for qualified expenses; see the UROP website for information) ● Standard laboratory expenses ● Salaries and stipends to compensate for project-related work ● Items that can be borrowed for free or rented at a much lower cost

Personal Statement

Each undergraduate researcher must prepare a personal statement, which describes their relationship to the project.

The personal statement should discuss the following:

- Why you want to pursue this project

- How this project will help you move toward your academic, career and/or personal goals
- Your relevant background, including prior accomplishments in your field
- Why this project matters to you

Use the same format you used for the proposal:

- **Page size:** 8.5" x 11"
- **Font size:** 11-point type or larger
- **Font:** Times New Roman or equivalent standard text font
- **Page margins:** 1"
- **File Format:** MS Word or pdf
- **Heading:** Include the names of all undergraduate applicants and faculty mentors at the top
- **Length:** Typically, one or two double-spaced pages, but should be complete and concise
- Include your name at the top

Important! Submit a single document that contains the personal statements for each undergraduate applicant. Include each student's name at the beginning of their statement.

Group Proposals

Here are things to remember:

- Submit a single application for the project and select a "Primary Applicant" to complete the application. They will enter each applicant's name and UCI email address, so must have that information before completing the application.
- All student applicants 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 applicant. 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.

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.

Other Fall Funding Opportunities

Three other fall 2023 programs offer funding for undergraduate research projects and creative activities.

LAEP Funding

Offered as part of the Research Experience Fellowship to qualified financial aid students. Qualified students will be notified via email and provided with further instructions.

- Group projects may receive a UROP award, and individuals in the group who qualify may also receive LAEP funding.

Travel or Publication Award

Refer to the [UROP Opportunities](#) page of the UROP website for details. Applicants must show proof of acceptance to eligible activity at the time of application, and there is one application deadline per quarter. Students can receive one award per academic year.