

2026

Application Guide



Recognition and Funding Opportunity

Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP)

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Undergraduate Research
Opportunities Program

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What is the Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP)?

The Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP) is an opportunity for UCI undergraduates engaged in UCI faculty-mentored research projects or creative activities to **receive recognition as a [UROP Fellow](#)** and/or a funded award while **continuing** an intensive, UC Irvine faculty-mentored research experience **over the summer**.



SURP is designed for UC Irvine undergraduate students who are currently involved in a research opportunity with a UC Irvine faculty mentor. The Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP) **does not** provide students with a research opportunity.

Application Timeline

- Application Deadline – April 3, 2026 at 11:59 PM
- Notification Emails Sent – June 5, 2026

Important: Your research must be conducted during Summer 2026

Note about completing the application:

- **Save as Draft:** Save your progress and return later to edit
- **Submit:** Final submission (no changes allowed after this)
- **Confirmation:** You'll receive an email confirmation.
 - If you do not receive a confirmation email, you must contact the UROP Office to ensure that your registration has been submitted correctly.

Save as Draft

Submit

Apply to SURP by Friday, April 3, 11:59 PM



Who Can Participate in SURP?

We welcome **all current UC Irvine undergraduate students** engaged in UCI faculty-mentored research projects or creative activities being **carried out in summer 2026**.

All applicants must:

- Be enrolled at UCI as degree-seeking undergraduate students through at least fall quarter 2026
- Have [UCI Academic Senate Faculty](#) Mentor guidance 
- Be in good academic standing (2.0+ GPA)
- Must submit an individual application
 - If you are part of a group project, your proposal must articulate independent aims that make **your focus unique and significant**.
 - Multiple group members **should not submit the same proposal as part of their individual applications**.

Funding Eligibility

Due to limited funding available, we prioritize supporting investigator-initiated research over class or club projects.

- Students enrolled in independent research units (e.g. 197, 199, Honors, etc.) or those whose project is not affiliated with a class or club may apply.
- Students enrolled in other classes or clubs are not eligible to apply.

IMPORTANT

All SURP recipients who are enrolled at UCI in spring quarter 2027 must **register and present at the [UCI Undergraduate Research Symposium](#)** in May 2027. Registration is separate from this application and will open in winter 2027. 

What is a UROP Fellow?

UC Irvine undergraduate students may apply for a UROP award to receive recognition of their faculty-mentored research or creative activity. **Upon selection, they become UROP Fellows and continuing students present their project at the UC Irvine Undergraduate Research Symposium in May after receiving their award. SURP is one pathway to becoming a UROP Fellow.**

Skills You'll Develop

As a UROP Fellow, you will develop valuable academic, personal, and career readiness skills that will prepare you for your future. Employers have identified the eight core [career readiness competencies](#) below that will equip college graduates to successfully transition to the workplace. 

Career & Self-
Development

Communication

Critical Thinking

Equity & Inclusion

Leadership

Professionalism

Teamwork

Technology

Participating in activities that build career readiness skills builds confidence and experience from which you can identify and articulate your skills in graduate school applications, resumes, interviews, and networking conversations. Employers are more likely to hire people who they believe are career ready.

UROP Fellow Benefits

In addition to building on your skills, SURP UROP Fellows will receive:

- ✓ **Graduation cord** for recognition at UCI Commencement
 - One cord per student, regardless of number of UROP awards earned
- ✓ **Use of UROP Fellow title** for recognition on Resume, CV, LinkedIn, and graduate school applications
- ✓ **Access** to UROP Fellow resources and community
- ✓ **Exclusive opportunity** to apply for the UROP Travel or Publication Award, which is limited to UROP Fellows

Note: These benefits are effective for any UROP recognition and funding opportunities **Fall Quarter 2025 and forward**. Past UROP Fellows do not receive these new benefits unless they are awarded in upcoming cycles (Fall Quarter 2025 and forward).

Ways to Become a UROP Fellow

There are several pathways to earning the UROP Fellow title:

Research Experience Fellowship (REF)

Apply in Fall Quarter

Interdisciplinary Research Teams (IRT)

Apply in Fall Quarter

Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP)

Apply in Spring Quarter

How Do I Prepare My Application?

Below is an overview of the information you will submit for your online application.

UC Irvine Undergraduate Student Applicant Information	• Name • UCI email • Phone number • School, major, & class level • Expected Graduation Date • Financial Aid Status • Additional Email Addresses for Notifications
Primary UC Irvine Faculty Mentor Information	• Name • UCI email • School & department • Optional: Information on additional mentor(s) (faculty or graduate students)
Project Information	• Project title • Funding information • Indicate if your project involves human or animal subjects • Indicate if your project is related to a class or a club
Required Documents	• Proposal • Personal Statement • Faculty Mentor Agreement ◦ Your designated faculty mentor will complete the form and confirm their mentorship commitment and your project details. You will upload this form to your application.

Writing Your Proposal

What is a proposal?

A proposal describes your project and should convince the reviewers of its significance and the need for funding, if requested.

PAGE MINIMUM: 2 PAGES

Writing Tip: Be Concise and Focused

The more concise and focused you are in your writing, the easier it is for reviewers reading your application, which could help your case in being selected and if requested, awarded funding. Our minimum recommendation is 2 pages, but this varies by discipline. Consult your UCI faculty mentor for guidance on how many pages you need to state your case for funding.

What should I include in my proposal?

Your proposal should address the following 4 core elements:

1

Thesis, Purpose, Objective, & Approach

- Describe your purpose with a clear research question
- Why is this project significant? Thoroughly discuss how it advances knowledge and its potential impact on society
- Describe work you have already completed, what you plan to accomplish, and your intended outcomes
- List the books, articles, and any other outside sources you used in preparing your proposal or that have contributed to your research

2

Responsibility

- Discuss your specific duties for the project. Are you working in a lab or conducting an independent project?
- Describe how your work is independent from that of your mentor(s)
- Explain how you will interact with your faculty mentor and other research personnel throughout the project

3

Timeline

- Create an outline of your specific research process, including what needs to be completed (e.g., data collection, analysis, trainings, meetings)
- 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 timeframe
- List specific goals to ensure that the project is progressing efficiently

4

References

- List all books, articles, and other outside sources used in preparing your proposal
- Include sources that have contributed to your research background and understanding
- Use appropriate academic citation format

As you prepare your proposal

Your proposal will be evaluated by faculty reviewers. [Review the rubric](#) to see how your proposal will be scored. Please note that they will also consider formatting. 



UROP has a collection of [sample proposals](#) organized by school. These samples are provided for reference and may not follow our current proposal formats and guidelines. **Refer to them at your own discretion.** 

Formatting Your Proposal

Use the information below to help you format your proposal. Content and organization vary by field of study. Talk to your faculty mentor to determine how you should organize your proposal (this includes citation styles e.g., APA, MLA, and Chicago).

Requirement	Specification
Header	At the top of the document Name of the undergraduate researcher and faculty mentor
Page Count	Minimum 2 pages If you need to write more that's okay, but keep it concise.
Spacing	Double spaced
Margins	1" margins
Font Size	11-point or larger type
Font Type	Times New Roman, Calibri, Arial
Document	Size: 8.5" x 11" File type: MS Word or PDF
Submission	Upload as PDF or MS Word file

Writing Your Personal Statement

What is a personal statement?

A personal statement describes your relationship to the project in a concise, focused manner.

WORD COUNT: 300 WORDS MAXIMUM

What should I include in my personal statement?

Please address the following in your personal statement paragraph, **using no more than two or three sentences for each:**

- **Interest and Motivation:** Describe your academic or professional interest in conducting this research or creative activity. Explain what sparked your curiosity or passion for this specific project.
- **Personal connection to the project:** Share personal experiences, values, or life events that uniquely connect you to this project. Discuss any personal motivations or values driving your commitment to this project.
- **Goals and Impact:** Explain how pursuing this project will help you move toward your academic, career, and/or personal goals. Discuss the skills, knowledge, or experiences you aim to gain from conducting the project. Discuss the impact your project can make in your field and community.
- **Relevant Background:** Highlight your background and experience related to this project, including any previous relevant accomplishments. Include information about any previous related research projects, coursework, internships, or activities.

Writing Tips:

- **Focus on your unique perspective** and connection to the research
- **Be specific** about your motivations and goals
- **Highlight only your most relevant experiences**
- **Do not repeat details already covered in your Research Proposal**
- **Use clear, concise language** to maximize impact within the word limit
- The UCI Writing Center offers [writing support and appointments](#).



As you prepare the personal statement

We recommend that you refer to this rubric as you prepare your personal statement. Considering these criteria will help ensure that your personal statement effectively presents your relationship to your project:

Content/Questions	Acceptable	Not Acceptable
Interest and motivation	• Clearly communicates the reason for pursuing the project • Interest/passion are demonstrated	• Motivation is not clear • Interest/passion are not demonstrated
Personal connection	• Examples clearly relate to the project • Limited to one or two compelling examples	• Relevance of the example(s) is not clear • Many examples
Alignment with goals and impact	• Goals are clearly defined • Establishes logical connection between the project and goals	• Goals are not clear • Project does not seem to lead toward the goals
Relevant background and experience	• Clearly related to the project • Relevance is clearly explained • Limited to most important examples	• No direct connection to the project • Relevance is not clear • Many examples
Writing	• Easily understood • Clear logical flow • Concise • No errors in spelling, grammar, or language use	• Not easy to understand • No clear logical flow • Wordy and/or repetitive • Errors in spelling, grammar, and/or language use

Formatting Your Personal Statement

Use the information below to help you write and format your personal statement.

For group projects, each member must write their own personal statement, but all statements should be combined into a single document for submission.

Requirement	Specification
Word Count	300 words maximum
Spacing	Double spaced
Margins	1" margins
Font Size	11-point or larger type
Font Type	Times New Roman, Calibri, Arial
Document Size	8.5" x 11"
Submission	Upload as PDF or MS Word file

Faculty Mentor Agreement Form

What is the faculty mentor agreement form ?

UCI [Academic Senate Faculty](#) may serve as a Faculty Mentor on a UROP Proposal. In order to have a complete SURP application, your Faculty Mentor must complete the Faculty Mentor Agreement Form. Then, you will upload the completed form in your application. Incomplete applications without this form will not be reviewed.



Your Faculty Mentor will need to verify that they, or their designee, will:

- **Mentor the student researcher** named on the proposal and provide ongoing guidance throughout your research project.
 - If they designate someone else to take on this role (e.g. graduate student, postdoc, etc.), please include their name, title, role, and email as an additional mentor in your application.
- **Review your research proposal** and certify that it is reasonable to expect that the project will be successfully completed within the timeline specified.
- **If your project involves Human or Animal Subjects, [review the UROP Research Protections Instructions](#)** and will advise the student(s) on how to proceed.



Faculty Mentor Requirements: Steps to Complete Your Application

- 1 Meet with your Faculty Mentor Early**
Schedule a meeting with your faculty mentor to review your proposal and get their input. If you are requesting funding, ask for their input on your budget and whether they can provide any funding to support your project-related expenses. **Share these instructions with them** so they are aware of what information they will need to submit. **Do this early to avoid delays in your application process.**

2

Send Faculty Agreement Form to Faculty Mentor

Send the Faculty Mentor Agreement Form to your faculty mentor electronically for completion as soon as possible after your initial meeting.

IMPORTANT: Your application is not complete without this form being uploaded to your application. It is your responsibility to ensure that your Faculty Mentor submits this information to you on time. Failure to do so may result in your application not being considered.

3

Faculty Mentor Completes and Returns the Form

Your Faculty Mentor returns the completed form to you electronically. You will then upload this form to your application.



Important Note

Only Senate faculty members may serve as faculty mentors. Graduate students, post-docs, adjunct faculty, research staff, and other non-Senate faculty may not serve as primary faculty mentors but can be designated by the faculty mentor on the form to assist with your research.

Conducting Ethical Research

Does your project involve human and/or animal subjects?

-  Yes, my project involves human subjects
-  Yes, my project involves animal subjects

If yes, projects involving human and/or animal subjects must adhere to UCI's Research Protections standards.



Have you consulted with your Faculty Mentor about research protections?

-  Yes, I have discussed this with my Faculty Mentor
-  No, I need to schedule a meeting with my Faculty Mentor

If no, consult with your Faculty Mentor to determine if Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval is needed.



Identify Required Approvals

Human Subjects?

Institutional Review Board (IRB):

Reviews research involving human participants to ensure ethical standards are met

- Required for some types of human subjects research
- Certain categories qualify for exempt status and do not need IRB review or approval



Animal Subjects?

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC):

- Reviews research involving live vertebrate animals
- Required for all animal research
- Ensures humane treatment and care



Click here to access the [UROP Research Protections Instructions](#).



Important Links

[Academic Senate Faculty](#)

[Career Readiness - UC Irvine Division of Career Pathways](#)

[Summer Undergraduate Research Program \(SURP\) Application](#)

[Sample Proposals by School](#)

[UCI Writing Center: Schedule an Appointment](#)

[Undergraduate Research Symposium](#)

[UROP Faculty Agreement Form](#)

[UROP Research Protections Instructions](#)

[ZotSpot - UROP](#)



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

How is the funding distributed?

UROP Fellows who receive funded SURP awards will receive their stipend in the summer, and will be provided with more details about exact timing upon selection.

Can I apply for SURP funding for the same project if I received it last year?

Yes. Students who received SURP funding last year can apply for SURP funding again for the same project. **However, you must demonstrate the progress made and the need for additional funding in your new application.** Be sure to provide clear updates and justify why further funding is necessary to continue your research or creative activities.

Is there another opportunity to obtain funding for project-related expenses?

The Fall Research Experience Fellowship (REF) is an opportunity to get reimbursed for project-related expenses, and it is only offered in the fall quarter. However, this is subject to change, so always refer to the UROP website for the most current information and opportunities. If your research is interdisciplinary, you may also want to explore the Interdisciplinary Research Teams (IRT) program as another funding option. More information is available on our website.

How can I increase my chances of receiving funding?

Ensure that you submit the strongest application possible: consult with your faculty mentor to write a well-justified and detailed Proposal and Personal Statement. Ensure that your budget is realistic and clearly outlines the necessity of each expense. Go to the UCI Writing Center to receive feedback on your documents. While we strive to fund as many worthy projects as possible, the UROP award budget is limited and it is rare to receive the maximum amount. The final funding decision is based on a variety of factors considered by our Faculty Advisory Board. You will increase your chances by following our Guide closely to submit the best application you can.

Can my grad student be my faculty mentor?

Graduate students can assist you with your project, but the official mentor must be a UCI faculty member. The Faculty Mentor Agreement Form indicates that your faculty mentor agrees to review your proposal and mentor the student researcher(s) named on the proposal. Graduate students may not serve as primary mentors but can be designated by the faculty mentor to provide additional guidance and support.

How many SURP applications can I submit?

You may request a stipend for no more than one research project or creative activity. Additionally, if you are involved in more than one research or creative activity, you can submit one additional individual application for UROP Fellow recognition only.

What if I don't know enough about my project to address all of the points in the proposal?

If you're unsure about certain aspects of your project, such as methods, timelines, and other details, you should ask your faculty mentor or graduate mentor for assistance. They are there to help you with these aspects and provide the necessary guidance. For detailed proposal components, your mentors will be the best resource.

Am I automatically registered to present at the UCI Undergraduate Research Symposium?

No, you must register separately in early April. You will only be **allowed to present one individual project** (you can also be involved in one group project).

Are there other opportunities to present my summer project?

Yes! We strongly encourage SURP students to present at the Fall Project Pitch challenge in early fall 2026. Learn more about this event and see [last year's finalists' presentations](#) on our website. Updated information will be shared via email in late Spring and Summer 2026.