

GUIDELINES FOR UROP 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.

Calls for Proposals

UROP provides funding for undergraduate research and creative projects mentored by UCI faculty through two separate annual Calls for Proposals, one in the Fall Quarter and one in the Spring Quarter. Once the Calls have been announced, students have approximately one month to submit their proposals.

UROP Proposal requests for research-related expenses for individual projects involving one student can be for up to \$1,000, with the average amount of funding expected to be close to \$500. For group proposals involving multiple students, requests can be for up to \$2,500, with the average amount of funding expected to be close to \$1,200. Students are required to submit an itemized budget of projected and actual expenses and revenues (see a detailed description in the Research Proposal section).

The 2018–2019 submission deadlines are Tuesday, November 13 and Monday, May 6, and the application is on the UROP Web site. Proposals that do not require funding or are already receiving adequate funding from departmental or other sources may be submitted for an Honorary Fellowship.

Proposals are evaluated based on the intellectual merit of the student's research, a complete application, the level of support from the faculty mentor, the student's transcript, and available funding. The UROP Faculty Advisory Board reviews the proposals and makes recommendations on funding. There is not a specific number of grants that need to be awarded each year; decisions are based entirely on the quality of the proposals and available funding. Note that students who receive a UROP grant **MUST** present their findings at the annual UCI Undergraduate Research Symposium held in May. We also invite students to submit their research findings to *The UCI Undergraduate Research Journal*.

Who is Eligible?

To be eligible for a UROP grant, students must be undergraduates in good academic standing. Students who will graduate within a quarter of submitting their proposal are not eligible to apply.

Group Proposals

For a team project, all of the UCI undergraduate participants' names can be included in one group proposal, although each member must submit an individual personal statement.

Contents of the Proposal

The proposal should be prepared by the student applicant(s) and jointly submitted by the student(s) and his/her faculty mentor(s). Proposals should convince the reviewers of the significance of the project and need for funding. Typically a proposal is about five pages, but if needed, you can add further documentation, such as a survey that you are administering or data that you have collected. Submit your proposal online by entering information about you, your fellow undergraduate researchers, and your faculty mentor(s), and providing or uploading the following:

- The proposal, which includes a thesis, purpose, objective, and approach; the student's specific responsibility; the project's timeline; an itemized budget; and list of works cited.
- A personal statement from each student.
- The appropriate IRB or IACUC protocol number, if the research involves human subjects or the use of live vertebrate animals.

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 the submission. In addition, faculty mentors are asked to upload one letter of recommendation per project.

The Research Proposal

Proposals should answer these questions:

- Why am I doing this project? What issues/problems/questions will I explore and answer?
- Is my topic too broad or narrow to manage?

- What are my goals for the project? How will I get there? What do I hope to realize as a result of my efforts?
- Are there sufficient sources for me to use in my project?
- How much funding should I request?
- Will I be dedicating 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 Web site (www.urop.uci.edu).

Thesis, Purpose, Objective, & Approach

You will likely start your project by asking a rudimentary research question. 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 research. Be sure to give yourself plenty of extra time in your timetable in case some activities take longer than predicted. Most applicants' schedules list tasks by week, month or quarter.

Itemized Budget

The budget section should include an itemized list of projected expenses. It may be as simple as a one-page itemized list of expenses (two columns, one for type of item and one for amount). If some of your expenses could be seen as unnecessary or unusual, please explain why they are needed. Include the total cost of your project, specifying the amount requested from UROP, and listing other sources of funding (other grants, personal funds, potential revenue, etc.). Items that can be covered by a UROP grant include chemicals, supplies, reference materials, animals, copying/printing, mailing, postage, phone calls/faxing, mileage, software, compensation for human subjects, travel, presentation materials, facilities rental, or any other related costs. Items that are NOT covered include standard laboratory expenses, major hardware purchases, salaries and stipends, travel expenditures only, or items that can be borrowed or rented at a much lower cost.

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

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. Include your research background and describe how it might have influenced your education. You should also explain 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 goals. Also include 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. For a group proposal, each undergraduate researcher must write their own personal statement. With your permission, we will download a copy of your transcript; you do not need to provide that to us.

Letter of Support

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 will request your letter of support from your faculty mentor(s) after you submit your proposal.

Research Conduct Rules

If your project involves human and/or animal subjects, you must provide the appropriate IRB or IACUC protocol number approving your study. The IRB or IACUC approval must be obtained at the beginning of your project. If a protocol that includes your name has been submitted for review to the appropriate IRB or IACUC committee, but a protocol number has not been provided, then please enter "pending." Visit the UCI Office of Research Regulatory Compliance site for more information (<http://www.research.uci.edu/compliance/index.html>).

Effective Fall 2017, all undergraduate students who are lead researchers on faculty-mentored human subjects research that meets the criteria for exempt review must submit the UROP Exempt Review Protocol Narrative (<http://www.urop.uci.edu/grants/UROP%20Exempt%20Review%20Protocol%20Narrative.docx>).

Additional Research Funding

In addition to the UROP Fellowships, which support research-related supplies and expenses, UROP administers or co-sponsors several programs that pay UCI undergraduates a stipend in support of their time and effort conducting a faculty-mentored research project or creative activity during the summer. These programs, which include SURP, E-SURP and SURF-IoT, are described on the UROP Web site.

Because the funds are designated for different purposes, students who receive a UROP Fellowship may also apply for and receive funding through these programs. Students wishing to improve their chances for funding may apply for more than one summer program. No student, however, will receive an award from more than one of these programs.

UROP Workshops and Deadlines

Proposal Writing Workshops

Wednesday, October 31, 2018, 3–5 PM
Calit2 Auditorium

Tuesday, April 23, 2019, 3–5 PM
Calit2 Auditorium

UROP Fall Call for Proposals

Deadline: Tuesday, November 13, 2018

UROP Spring Call for Proposals

Deadline: Monday, May 6, 2019

Related Deadlines and Workshops

SURP Call for Proposals

Deadline: Monday, May 6, 2019

E-SURP Call for Proposals

Deadline: Monday, May 6, 2019

SURF-IoT Call for Proposals

Deadline: Monday, May 6, 2019

Contact Information

UROP

Student Services II, Suite 2100
Irvine, CA 92697-5685
Phone: (949) 824-4189
E-mail: urop@uci.edu