

2025-2026 Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Award Instructions

Fall Cycle Deadline: September 26, 2025 5:00PM EDT

Spring Cycle Deadline: January 16, 2026 5:00PM EDT

Please read all sections thoroughly and consult with your mentor about providing specific information for Section B to make your application complete. Go to Section E when you are ready to submit your application.

A. Eligibility: To be considered for an award, student

- Must be a full-time degree-seeking undergraduate student at ECU;
- Must have completed a minimum of 12 credits at ECU by time of application;
- Has an acceptable record of academic achievement with a minimum GPA of 2.5;
- May only receive one URCA per school year (fall and spring cycles)
- Cannot have received an URCA as either PI or Co-I more than two times
- Agrees that by completing this application, you are allowing us to gather information about you through Banner.
- Can only submit one application as either **Principal Investigator (PI)** or **Co-Investigator (Co-I)**, but cannot be either on more than one application
- For faculty mentors (**student – please have your mentor be aware of this**):
 - No more than two awards are funded to one faculty member overseeing the research/creative projects of multiple students in one application cycle
 - If a faculty mentor supervises multiple projects that have significant scholarly overlap in the same application cycle, all applications submitted by their students may be deemed ineligible by the pertinent URCA Review Committee. Please ensure that the project is unique from other ongoing projects supervised by the same mentor.
- If requesting an Assistantship, see additional eligibility requirements from the [Department for People Operations, Success, and Opportunity \(POSO\)](#) in Section B.7 (Budget Information).

B. A complete application has these parts addressed:

1. Applicant Information

- Banner ID, name, email, credit hours completed (exclude hours in-progress);
 - Name and email of the Co-I, if applicable. There can be up to two students on one project, but one must serve as the PI;
 - Mentor's complete name and information (email, college unit, and department unit). If there is a co-mentor, add that person's name and email;
 - Name and email of the mentor's unit administrative associate (UAA) who is [are] responsible for managing funds on their behalf. Ask your mentor for this information;
 - Indicate whether or not IRB approval (for human participant research) or IACUC (for animal research) *is required*. If required, enter the date of submission or approval. No awards will be made without a *pending* or *approved* human participant or animal use protocol (AUP).
2. **Project Category:** 1) Humanities/Arts, 2) Social Science, 3) Biomedical Science, or 4) STEM (non-biomedical science, technology, engineering, and math). If you are unsure, please ask your mentor or the Office of Undergraduate Research
 3. **Project Title (Limit:** 150 characters with spaces)
 4. **Description: Describe the proposed research/creative activity, thesis, or project.**
 - **Limit:** about 400 words; absolute limit of 3,000 characters with spaces;
 - **For beginning research:** purpose, hypothesis or problem statement, significance, your role in a larger project (if applicable), methodology and any preliminary results;

- **For ongoing research:** purpose, hypothesis or problem statement, significance, your role in a larger project (if applicable) methodology, previous results;
 - **For creative activity:** purpose, significance, medium, anticipated venues for presentation/performance.
5. **Revision to Previous URCA Application?**
- **Limit:** 200 words or 2,000 characters maximum with spaces
 - If you applied for an URCA award for this project on a prior cycle and were not awarded, please provide a short paragraph explaining revisions you made.
6. **Personal Statement:**
- **Limit:** 300 words or 3,000 characters with spaces
 - Provide a short paragraph on how an URCA award will impact your career goals. The essay should speak to a personal experience that has had a broader impact on your education/training thus far. A few examples of topics could include: A person who has inspired you; The importance of local advocacy and outreach efforts in your field of study; The importance of conducting rigorous science; The importance of creativity.
 - The essay must be your own creative work. Using someone else's work without citing the source is not permissible – this includes copying, rephrasing, and borrowing facts, statistics, or other material.
7. **Presentation Outlet:** Specify an outlet(s) that you anticipate presenting your research or creative work at in the future.
8. **Budget Information**
- **Limit:** \$1,500 or \$2,000 (see table below)
 - Round all values to whole numbers using the 0.5 rounding rule.
 - Examples:**
 - If \$990.49 or lower then \$990
 - If \$990.50 or greater then \$991
 - Undergraduate Research Assistantship
 - Limit (within project limit): \$1,000 per investigator;
 - May range from \$500-\$1,000 per investigator
 - Student must have a minimum 2.5 GPA at the time of employment;
 - Student must have completed 30 semester hours;
 - Student must be enrolled full-time (at least 12 credit hours) in an on-campus ECU undergraduate degree program;
 - Assistantships may supplement the wages that a student currently receives for an on-campus job, provided the total number of hours across both are within the current policies set forth by Human Resources. It should not be relied upon as an additional source of income *per se*.
 - The Undergraduate Assistantship Policy can be found at ECU UGA Policy: [Student Policies & Procedures | Human Resources | ECU](#)
 - Honors College students may apply for additional funds of up to \$500 towards **project costs** (e.g., supplies, materials, equipment, participant gift cards, etc), pending availability of funds from the Honors College. Project costs do not include Assistantships.

Number of Investigators	Member of Honor's College	Assistantship Max Allowed	Total Allowed
1	No	\$1000	\$1500
1	Yes	\$1000	\$2000
2	No	\$1000/investigator	\$2000
2	Yes	\$1000/investigator	\$2500

- **Project Expenses:** Provide an estimated itemization of **non-Assistantship project expenses**. Do provide a justification for each expense. You do not need to include a justification for an Assistantship. If you are only requesting an Assistantship, please enter N/A. **Limit:** 150 words or 1,500 characters with spaces. Please see the Budget and Spending Guidelines (Section C) to assist you with the itemization.

9. Funding Period:

- If the PI is graduating in Fall 2025, then choose Fall 2025.
- If the PI is graduating in Spring 2026 or later, then choose Spring 2026.
- Please see Spending Deadlines (Section D) for more information on cut-off dates.

10. Additional Notes:

- A committee comprised of ECU faculty will review applications. All applicants will receive notification by ECU email regarding the status of their applications as soon as possible after the review. See the URCA Timeline on Page 4.
- Applications may be awarded at a reduced level. Budgets should be adjusted accordingly with your mentor and the administrative associate(s) in the unit you specified in the application.
- **Awardees are required to carry out post-award actions in Section F.**

C. Budget and Spending Guidelines:

1. Undergraduate Assistantships are set at a minimum of \$500 and a maximum of \$1000 per investigator. The minimum is set to reduce administrative burden.
2. Any equipment that is required to carry out the project and is purchased with these funds remains the property of ECU.
3. Student travel cannot be paid for with these funds. If your research requires you to travel, it is suggested that you request the maximum Undergraduate Assistantship and use those funds to pay for your travel expenses. If you are presenting at a conference or venue within your discipline, funds can be requested by applying for a Conference Award through the Office of Undergraduate Research [website](#).
4. Food cannot be purchased with these funds.
5. If you are requesting funds for participant incentives, please consult with your mentor and UAA regarding the current participant incentive procedures and requirements.

D. Spending Deadlines:

1. For projects funded through Fall 2025, all funds must be spent by December 19, 2025. If the funds are not spent by this deadline remaining funds may be pulled back.
2. For projects funded through Spring 2026, all funds must be spent by May 15, 2026. If the funds are not spent by this deadline remaining funds may be pulled back.
3. Funds cannot be rolled over into the next fiscal year which begins July 1.

E. Are you ready to submit an application? Use this [Smartsheet form](#) and complete the application by 5:00PM EDT on the due date. At the end of the application, you have the option to check the box “Send me a copy of my responses” and retain the resulting email for your records. After submission, Smartsheet will route the **application to your mentor for approval**. No recommendation letters are required nor will be accepted. See the URCA Timeline on Page 4 for anticipated meeting and processing dates.

F. Post-Award Actions

1. These should be submitted using the [Final Report Link](#) on the URCA webpage for the relevant award period.

- a. **Fall 2025 graduates:** Submit a final report by December 31, 2025 to enable your mentor's students to be eligible for future URCA awards.
 - b. **Spring 2026 graduates:** Submit a final report by May 31, 2026 to enable your mentor's students to be eligible for future URCA awards.
 - c. **Summer Term I or later graduates:** Submit a final report by September 30, 2026 to enable your mentor's students to be eligible for future URCA awards.
2. Awardees are also required to present at a research or creative activity venue such as ECU's Research and Creative Achievement Week, SNCURCS, ECU's Summer Undergraduate Research Symposium (SURS), national/local conferences outside of ECU's purview, or any other discipline-relevant activity appropriate for their work **as guided by their mentor - please consult with the mentor.** These events/activities may be included in the final report.

Fall 2025 URCA Timeline

Application Cycle Open:	August 28, 2025
Information Session for Students*:	September 3, 2025 4:00PM-4:45PM EDT Microsoft Teams Meeting Link
Application Due Date:	September 26, 2025 5:00PM EDT
Applications to Reviewers:	September 30, 2025
Reviewer Decisions:	October 15-16, 2025
Letters:	October 17, 2025
Disbursement of Funds:	Week of October 20, 2025

***Mentors and unit administrative associates are welcome**

Spring 2026 URCA Timeline

Application Cycle Open:	December 15, 2025
Information Session for Students*:	November 19, 2025 3:30PM-4:00PM EDT Microsoft Teams Meeting Link
Application Due Date:	January 16, 2026 5:00PM EDT
Applications to Reviewers:	January 20, 2026
Reviewer Decisions:	February 3-4, 2026
Letters:	February 6, 2026
Disbursement of Funds:	Week of February 9, 2026

*** Mentors and unit administrative associates are welcome**

Questions?: Please contact Dr. Tran at ugresearch@ecu.edu or call 252-328-6445.