

2023-2024 Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Awards Application Instructions

Fall Deadline: September 29, 2023 5:00PM EDT

Spring Deadline: January 26, 2024 5:00PM EDT (application active in January 2024)

Please read all sections thoroughly and consult with your mentor about providing specific information for Section B to make your application complete. **Failure to include all required items or to adhere to character maximums is what commonly results in proposals not being reviewed or not scoring high enough to warrant funding.** Go to Section E when you are ready to submit your application.

A. Eligibility: To be considered for an award, an individual must

- Be a full-time degree-seeking undergraduate student at ECU;
- Have completed a minimum of 12 credits at ECU by time of application;
- Have an acceptable record of academic achievement with a minimum GPA of 2.5;
- Agree that by completing this application, you are allowing us to gather information about you through Banner.

B. A complete application has these parts:

1. Applicant Information (required unless stated as optional)

- Demographic information (**optional** - will not affect your eligibility);
- Banner ID, name, email, credit hours completed (exclude hours in-progress);
- Name and email of your co-investigator, if applicable. There can be up to two students on one project, but one must serve as the primary applicant;
- Mentor's complete name, email, and department/school where you will perform the work. If there is a co-mentor, add that person's name and email;
- Name and email of the faculty mentor's administrative staff who is responsible for managing state funds. 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 research protocol.

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 (50 characters with spaces maximum)

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?

- 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. This should be no more than 200 words or 2,000 characters maximum with spaces.

6. Personal Statement:

- 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.
- Limit: approximately 300 words or 3,000 characters with spaces.

7. Budget Information

- Project Limit: \$1,500 or \$2,000 (see table below)
- 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 at least half time in an on-campus ECU undergraduate degree program (minimum 6 sh fall/spring semesters);
 - Assistantships should replace the wages that a student receives for an on-campus or off-campus job, not supplement them.
 - The Undergraduate Assistantship Policy can be found at [ECU UGA Policy](#).
- Honors College students may apply for additional funds of up to \$500 towards project costs, pending availability of funds from the Honors College. However, an Assistantship will not be higher than \$1,000.
- Please refer to the chart below or use the budget calculator at [URCA Budget Calculator](#) (it is within a spreadsheet).

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

- 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 input 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.

8. **Funding Period:** Applicants can request funding for Fall 2023, Spring 2024, or Summer Term 1. No funds will be awarded for Summer Term 2 or Summer Term 11-Weeks. Please see Spending Deadlines (Section D) for more information on cut-off dates.

9. **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.
- Some applications may be awarded at a reduced level. Budgets should be adjusted with your mentor and the administrative assistant in your unit who will administer the funds after transfer.
- Only one application per investigator and one application per project is allowed.
- **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. Minimum is set due to the administrative burden.
2. Any equipment that is required to carry out the project and is purchased with these funds remains the property of the department where your project will take place.
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 funds administrator regarding the current participant incentive procedures and requirements.

D. **Spending Deadlines:**

1. For projects being carried out in Fall 2023, all funds must be spent by December 29, 2023. If the funds are not spent by this deadline remaining funds may be pulled back.
2. For projects being carried out in Spring 2024, all funds must be spent by May 17, 2023. If the funds are not spent by this deadline remaining funds may be pulled back.
3. For projects being carried out in Summer Term 1 all funds must be spent by June 30, 2024. If the funds are not spent by this deadline all remaining funds will be pulled back.
4. For all terms, 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, please 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 2023 URCA Timeline on Page 4 for anticipated meeting and processing dates.

F. Post-Award Actions

1. Awardees are required to submit a final report due either December 29, 2023 (for students graduating in December), May 31, 2024 (for students graduating in May), or Sept. 30, 2024 (for those graduating later). These should be submitted using the [Final Report Link on the URCA webpage](#) for the relevant award period.
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 venue appropriate for their work as guided by their mentor - please consult with the mentor. These activities may be included in the final report.

Fall 2023 URCA Timeline (dates will be adjusted as necessary)

Announcement:	August 25 th
Virtual Student Information Session*:	September 7 th
URCA Application Due Date:	September 29 th
Application to Reviewers:	October 3 rd
Reviewer Meeting:	October 12 th or 13 th
Letters:	October 17 th
Admin Information Session*:	October 20 th
Distribution of Funds:	October 23 rd
Final Report (for Fall graduates):	December 29 th , 2023
Final Report (if graduating after SP 2024):	September 30 th , 2024

*Hosted by Dr. Tran and/or Ms. Traci Brown; mentors are welcome at both information sessions.

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