UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PROGRAM
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FISCAL YEAR 2021-22

August 2021

University of North Carolina System
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

UNC UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PROGRAM AWARD

FY (2021-2022) Request for Proposals (RFP) for the UNC Undergraduate Research Program Award

Introduction

The University of North Carolina Undergraduate Research Program Award is a grant mechanism to provide funding to universities or consortia of universities within the UNC System to support and enhance undergraduate research (UR). Undergraduate research, defined by the Council on Undergraduate Research as "an inquiry or investigation conducted by an undergraduate student that makes an original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline," is recognized as a high-impact practice.[1] Therefore, undergraduate research is aligned with the UNC System's mission to "impart the skills necessary for individuals to lead responsible, productive, and personally satisfying lives." Specifically, undergraduate research supports UNC's teaching mission of applying multiple approaches to student learning while allowing students and faculty to pursue scholarly activities of the highest intellectual caliber.

RFP Focus and Scope

The UNC System's Undergraduate Research Directors Council (URDC) has identified three areas of focus for this RFP: Course-based Undergraduate Research Experiences (CUREs), Inclusive Excellence, and Digital Learning. The areas are broadly defined, and the URDC welcomes proposals related to the scope of these three areas, either separately or in combination. Each proposal should include an assessment plan. ***Successful proposals will articulate a clear plan to have continued impact after the grant period and expand its reach and effectiveness.*** Competitive proposals will include Interdepartmental and/or interinstitutional collaboration (see rubric). Suggested topics include one or more of the following:

> **CUREs:** Development or expansion of novel and/or innovative curricula that substantively include UR, recognizing that the goal of CUREs is to enhance research skills development toward the expansion of access to UR opportunities.

> **Inclusive Excellence:** Development or expansion of novel and/or innovative strategies/methods to expand awareness, access, and participation in UR opportunities to all students, especially students from underrepresented groups.

> **Digital Learning:** Development or expansion of novel or innovative methods that include digital learning tools in support of undergraduate research by distance learning students (e.g., online learning)

Award Information

The maximum budget for these single year awards is $35,000. Funding constraints may require budget modifications for projects recommended for funding. Funds will be available and transferred to the institution as soon as possible after award notification and are subject to state fund regulations, which include expenditure by the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 2022). All awards are non-recurring state funds and cannot be used for food for meetings or conferences, out-of-country travel, or tuition for graduate students. Consult your campus budget office for guidance on allowable costs from state appropriated funds. Institutional spending policies may dictate an earlier deadline.

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[1] Kuh, G. and O'Donnell (2013) *Ensuring Quality & Taking High-Impact Practices to Scale*, AAC&U: Washington, DC.

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Guidelines for Proposal Submission

Proposals will be accepted from any institution in the UNC System. Although inter-institutional collaboration is not a requirement, proposals that significantly involve two or more UNC institutions are encouraged and have the potential for a higher overall score and priority funding.

Each institution may submit two proposals, and *the Undergraduate Research (UR) Coordinator of the lead institution must submit all* **proposals** to the UNC System Office*. Proposals are due by* ***5 pm on October 4, 2021***; UR Coordinators at the institutions may wish to set an earlier institution-level deadline to ensure sufficient time to evaluate and submit all proposals. Proposal writers should contact their respective UR Coordinators early in the process so that Coordinators can make arrangements to be available to submit the proposal(s).

UC Coordinators will submit their proposals to the following link:

https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/03c6fd167ed342e097dd4daad6cd3ef2

Proposal submissions must include a **single pdf file**. Please use margins no smaller than one inch (all sides) and font of either Calibri or Times New Roman, and size of either 11 or 12. The application must include the following:
- **Front matter** (1 page) including project title; institution name; principal investigator name, title, and contact information; unit/department; names of collaborating institutions; primary focus area (CUREs, Inclusive Excellence, or Digital Learning); name and contact information for co-PI(s) if applicable; names and contact information for key personnel; and amount requested.
- **Project description** including a detailed description of the proposed project (no longer than 1500 words); expected outcomes and assessment methods for the project; and timeline for project activities. (Note: Projects must include an assessment/evaluation and support for such a plan is an allowable cost). References, if used, may be included in the footnotes using a smaller font.
- **Letters of support:** A maximum of three letters of support are allowed and should be from constituents close to the proposal (e.g Dept Heads/Chairs, Unit Heads, others contributing to the success of the proposal). A letter from the Chief Research Officer is allowed but not required.
- **Budget** with accompanying justification (up to 600 words) specifically describing how the funds will be used. Please include any matching funds.

Timeline

- October 4, 2021: Proposals due at 5 pm
- Week of October 18, 2021: Award notice
- June 30, 2022: Deadline for expending all funds (institutional deadline may be sooner)
- July 29, 2022: Final progress report due. Awardees will be contacted with progress report submission instructions.

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Proposal Review and Evaluation
Proposals will be reviewed by a panel of UNC System Office staff, university representatives, and possibly external reviewers. Proposals will be evaluated using six criteria:

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following items:
- **Project goals**: Goals for the project are clearly described and thoroughly documented; proposal supports the RFP goals and objectives.
- **Project design**: Strong and innovative project design with procedures and activities that are well defined, fully explained, and clearly aligned to project and RFP goals.
- **Sustainability**: Project identifies clear plans to continue after the grant period expires.
- **Plans for Project Evaluation**: Proposal includes a variety of reasonable and realistic methods to evaluate the project.
- **Budget**: Budget is complete and contains all required information. Budget is cost effective and linked to activities and outcomes.
- **Scalability**: Project identifies clear plans to scale program to expand reach and effectiveness.
- **Collaboration**: Proposal includes a well-defined plan identifying appropriate collaborative partners, each of which adds value to the program.

If a proposal is a collaborative effort between two or more institutions, the additional criterion of Collaboration will be used (see above). Each category offers a maximum of 3 points for a total of 21 points. Proposals will be ranked by score, and awards will be made according to scores and available funds.

Inquiries
Questions regarding this solicitation may be directed to Erin Banks, Ph.D. or Jennifer Gerz-Escandón, Ph.D.

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