

DATE: Updated November 2023

TO: Faculty/Staff undergraduate research mentors

FROM: The Office of Undergraduate Research

RE: Undergraduate research funding through the Office of Undergraduate Research

The Office of Undergraduate Research ([OUR](#)) would like to remind faculty, staff, and others wishing to serve as research/creative endeavor mentors about funding options available through the OUR for student research involvement. The OUR supports all undergraduates in every college/discipline on campus. Students may also volunteer or interact with the OUR/mentor research spaces in additional manners than those listed below.

Options for funded involvement

We have **Project Supply Grants** for projects available in Fall, Spring, and Summer. You can review information on the OUR [Project Supply Grants page](#); proposals are due the semester before funding. Templates (required) and assistance are available. Students must have a mentor to submit. Students should be the authors of the proposal; mentors will need to answer a few questions about the potential of the mentee and project. Funds go to materials, supplies, and other project needs (some living expenses can be funded in Summer; see site for list of acceptable funds use). In the Summer, funding goes to students' accounts; while this is an option at other times, we encourage mentors to be the recipients of funding during the Fall and Spring (i.e., funds go to a mentor/department project).

For students who have been accepted to present work at a conference, the OUR provides **Travel Awards** of up to \$700 annually. Student must submit the application on the travel award site, mentors must submit a recommendation (brief indication of conference benefits for the student and merit of the student), and students will be reimbursed upon their return and submission of receipts. If attending a conference where the cost will exceed \$700, the OUR will assist students with finding additional funding (e.g., EYE for Engineers, CNR Enrichment Fund).

The OUR also pays all or part of the cost of **Research Assistant (RA)** positions. Students work with a mentor from any department, but the OUR pays (no cost to the mentor or department). Mentors should confirm with the OUR that we have funding; *do not create a position without communicating with the OUR*. Availability is based on the OUR budget. Graduate students may be mentors, but a faculty/staff member must be listed as the supervisor on paperwork.

- [OUR FWS RA](#)

For students who qualify for financial aid, the Federal Work Study (FWS) OUR RA is an opportunity to use these funds. Students **must** apply through the OUR application (please heed deadlines); they can either identify a mentor with whom they're already working/to whom they've already spoken *OR* apply without a mentor and we try to match them. If you have positions available for RAs and/or would be open to receiving potential matches, please let us know (you may also receive potential matches from us regardless). The OUR may request information about a position to ensure students have an engaging research experience.

- Funding: OUR 25%; Financial Aid 75%
- Opens in August for Fall/AY positions; opens in December for SP only positions

- [OUR PEP RA](#)
Mentors must have a position in mind. The OUR receives a set number of PEP positions per year. If we have one available, pending funding and viability of project, we can create a position for you based on the mentor-submitted application. The OUR will create the position with your description (you may be asked to update the description or receive questions to ensure students have an engaging research experience). PEP positions are not dependent on financial aid status and are open to all students.
 - Funding: OUR 25%; Provost 75%
 - Available for AY positions
- [OUR RA Program](#) (began Spring 2023)
Students must apply via ePack and already have a confirmed mentor. The student must provide a short paragraph describing tasks/responsibilities and how the experience contributes to the project or a bigger project in the application. The OUR holds the right to reject applications and will select final awardees based on viability of and contribution to the project. OUR RA Program positions are not dependent on financial aid status and are open to all students. OUR RA positions are meant to be intensive and require students to work ten hours per week. If you expect your mentee to work less than this, please consider allowing other students the opportunity for these positions.
 - Funding: OUR 100%
 - Open for Fall, Spring, and Summer (dependent on funding) positions

Payment to students

The OUR pays all RA positions at comparable rates (\$15/hour; first-year FWS is \$14/hour). Rates align with OUR budgeting; you should not adjust the pay that has been set. Positions have set gross pays (e.g., FWS packages are typically \$1500-2000 for the AY; sometimes, depending on budgets, there may be additional funds available) and hour limitations (read sites and contracts for more information).

Student requirements for OUR funding

All OUR-funded positions have associated requirements. As a mentor, be mindful of requirements and make sure the student can complete them during their research/creative endeavor experience. Failure to complete requirements can result in retrieval of funds or inability to be hired as a funded student in future semesters. Requirements include

- signing and submitting all paperwork (the contract!) by given deadlines,
- submitting a final survey to discuss the research/creative experience,
- completing a professional development experience in the form of an OUR Seminar,
- and presenting on the research/creative experience for which they are being funded at the NC State Spring (or Summer if a Summer RA) Symposium. Symposium presentations can be start-to-finish projects, in-progress projects, or focus on one section of a project with descriptions of context (that they should learn while working with you)/predictions for the project moving forward.

Posting positions

Due to the variable nature by which positions are posted across departments/colleges, the OUR encourages students to look for opportunities but also reach out to mentors with whom they would like to work (we assist with this process). To streamline student searches and reach a wider audience, you can also post positions on ePack with the OUR. ePack is accessible to all students and requires resumes for additional information on skills and knowledge. In the near future, we hope most (if not all) positions/faculty will be available on ePack and the OUR people database to assist students with finding research/creative opportunities, making the process more accessible and equitable.

To receive updates (sent weekly) about the OUR, events, deadlines, opportunities, etc., you can sign up for our Google group, "NC State Undergraduate Research Info" (link at the bottom of the OUR page). Please reach out to Dr. Catherine Showalter (ceshowal@ncsu.edu) or the OUR email (undergraduate-research@ncsu.edu) with any questions.