

ASSURE

Arts & Sciences Support for Undergraduate REsearch

Call for Proposals 2024-2025

Proposals requesting support for undergraduate research activities conducted with faculty mentors will be accepted on the following dates:

Wed., Oct. 30, 2024 (11:59 pm, CST), Awardees notified week of November 18, 2024

Wed., Mar. 5, 2025 (11:59 pm, CST), Awardees notified week of March 31, 2025

Questions or concerns should be directed to Anna Mariya Basauri Ziuzina, abasauriziuzina@ua.edu, ASSURE Committee Chair. Please do not submit proposals by e-mail.

Proposals for funding should be prepared and submitted as a single .pdf file and submitted through the ASSURE website: <https://icue.as.ua.edu/undergraduate-research/assure/call-for-proposals>. See Section 6 of this document for details about required proposal format.

1. Who can apply?

All undergraduates majoring in any degree housed within the College of Arts & Sciences and enrolled as a current, full-time student can apply. Students must have an A&S faculty mentor that will collaborate with the student or will serve as an advisor.

2. What kinds of activities are eligible for support and what are funding priorities?

Funding will be considered up to \$1000 per proposal for any project-related need, except for Salary. Proposal budgets should not include requests for salary, including faculty or student salary.

The committee will accept and consider funding requests for both student-led research (*the student is the instigator and plays the primary role in research question and methodological design*) and faculty-led research projects (*student conducts an aspect of research instigated and designed by a faculty member*). However, the student should be the primary author of the ASSURE proposal (see Section 6 below).

3. How are funds allocated by the College to awardees and how long are funds available?

Awardees should anticipate expending funds immediately upon award and should aim to spend the awarded funds before the conclusion of the fiscal year on Sept. 30th. In certain circumstances, extensions of six months may be granted for the expenditure of the original award.

Funds will be deposited in the faculty mentor's primary department by Mr. Jimmy Vail's office within 2-3 weeks of the award decisions.

Awardees, however, are allowed up to 12 months to meet the expectations of awardees and mentors (see section 4).

4. What are the minimum expectations of awardees and their mentors?

- **Students awardees** will be expected to present (virtually or in person, as permitted by pandemic conditions) the findings of their research, within 12 months of the award being made, at a conference, workshop, symposium, or UA's Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Conference. Please visit the URCA conference website for more details: <http://ovpred.ua.edu/urca/>. In addition, students are encouraged to publish their research. Any publication venue deemed appropriate by the faculty mentor is acceptable, including JOSHUA (Journal of Science and Health, <https://joshua.ua.edu>), an undergraduate research journal published at the University of Alabama.
- **Faculty mentors** of awardees will be expected to answer an online questionnaire reporting the outcomes of the project, including the professional mentoring received by the student participant 12 months after the date of award. Examples of desired outcomes include, but are not limited to, student participation in presentations, publications, training, and portfolio development.

5. What is the review process?

The ASSURE committee will begin reviewing submitted proposals at the closing of the submission deadline. Awardees will be announced before the conclusion of the semester of application.

Criteria used to review and prioritize funding includes the following:

- The Project Description should be primarily authored by the student, though editing and advising by the faculty mentor is encouraged.
- **The Project Description is understandable by a non-specialist**, contains all required proposal components, and is largely free of grammatical errors and typos.
- The research plans stated in the Project Description are clearly explained and are well thought out (achievable).
- Expenses (budget requests) are well justified, and it is apparent that the research could not be done without funding from ASSURE.
- Plans for student-led presentations, publications, or other professional mentoring that will result from the project are clearly specified in the proposal.
- The faculty letter of support demonstrates the student's ability to successfully conduct the research and that the faculty member is willing and able to oversee the research;
- If the student received ASSURE (previously UCRA) funding in the past, they will need to submit a 1-page report on the results of their prior funding that explicitly states how the funding resulted in mentoring outcomes for the student (presentations, publications, performances, new skills or abilities, etc.) along with the new funding request. The final project reports will need to explain how the current proposal submission is or is not related to the project that received funding in the past.
- **If a mentor has multiple mentees submit proposals to the same call, the mentor should e-mail (abasaurizuzina@ua.edu) a list of student funding priority order to avoid an individual mentor**

receiving disproportional amounts of the ASSURE funding. Failure to submit this priority list may result rejection of all proposals from that mentor.

6. Application Process and Required Proposal Components

Proposals for funding should be prepared and submitted as a single .pdf file through the ASSURE website: APPLY> SUBMIT ASSURE PROPOSAL. Each proposal should include **the following sections in the following order:**

- I. **TITLE PAGE [Page 1]** — A title page that includes name(s), academic rank(s), and affiliation(s) within the College of the applicant(s), and the signatures (digital signatures are fine) of both the student applicant and the faculty mentor (student advisor). Because applications are initially reviewed by ASSURE committee members within the three A&S Divisions (prior to full committee review), applicants **must indicate which A&S Division (Humanities and Fine Arts; Social Sciences; Mathematics and Natural Sciences) fits with your application.**
- II. **ABSTRACT [Page 1]** — This should not exceed 250 words and should be suitable for general publication or dissemination to the general public. This should be single-spaced in not less than 12-point type. *Position the abstract on the title page below the title and applicant information.*
- III. **FACULTY LETTER OF SUPPORT [Page 2; 1-page maximum]** — Letter written by the faculty member who will serve as the student(s)' mentor for the research or creative activity. The faculty member's letter of support should explain:
 - a. whether the project is student- or faculty-led;
 - b. how the project will contribute to the professional mentoring of the student;
 - c. the need for funding (would the research happen without ASSURE funding, explain whether requested funds are related to existing and/or future funding);
 - d. the student's ability to accomplish the proposed research (related coursework, experience, etc.) and why the proposed research is worthy of support;
 - e. certify that the student largely wrote the Project Description (some editing and reviewing by faculty is expected).
- IV. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION [Pages 3-5; 3-page maximum]** — Should be written entirely by the student(s) and include the following sections within the 3-page limit.
 - a. Objectives, Goals, or Questions;
 - b. Contributions to the Field of Study;
 - c. Research Plan: detail how objectives, goals, or questions will be addressed; if students are submitting a joint proposal, specify the role/activities to be done by each student;
 - d. Project Outcomes: significance to the professional mentoring of the student, when, and where presentations will be given; plans for publication submission;
 - e. Project Timeline: including when presentations will occur and any plans for publication submission.
- V. **BUDGET and BUDGET JUSTIFICATION [Page 6; 1-page maximum]**

The committee will consider funding requests up to **\$1000**. Provide a budget detailing expected and known costs associated with the creative activity or research project. If the budget exceeds \$1000,

please submit the entire budget and indicate if you have any additional funds available. Provide a brief justification for the budgeted items. All travel and purchases must abide by the terms and conditions consistent with UA Purchasing guidelines and protocols.

- VI. RESUME [Page 7, 1-page maximum]** – Resume from student applicant(s). The student resume(s) should include: (i) name and departmental affiliation/address; (ii) college level (i.e. freshmen, sophomore, etc.); (iii) experience related to the research or activity, and (iv) honors/awards.

- VII. REFERENCES CITED [Page 8], [no maximum]** — All references used in the project description to provide a framework for the question(s) being addressed. No single citation style is expected, but the referencing system used should be consistently applied throughout.