

## DEVELOPING AN UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH GRANT PACKAGE

Think of your research grant application as a package; it has many elements to help you make your case that your project is interesting and innovative and that you are the right person to do it. The entire application package must be submitted online:

[urg.northwestern.edu/](http://urg.northwestern.edu/). You will upload the proposal, budget (if required), and any supporting documents through the online submission system; it only allows for a single upload, so you may need to combine different documents into a single pdf file. Once you have submitted your portion of the application, the faculty sponsor will receive an email with instructions for submitting her/his endorsement. For more information on how to apply, see [undergradresearch.northwestern.edu/ayurg](http://undergradresearch.northwestern.edu/ayurg) (Academic Year URG) or [undergradresearch.northwestern.edu/summerurg](http://undergradresearch.northwestern.edu/summerurg) (Summer URG).

We do not expect you to know how to put all of this material together, so we strongly recommend that you work with an OUR advisor in advance of the deadline. To book an appointment, go to our advising Request Form:

[undergradresearch.northwestern.edu/advising-request](http://undergradresearch.northwestern.edu/advising-request)

### PARTS OF THE URG PACKAGE

1. **PROJECT PROPOSAL.** Your project proposal will be two-pages, single-spaced, 12 point font with one inch margins. Bibliographies and other appendices do not count toward the two-page limit. Please see our “Crafting a Research Proposal” guide for a fuller explanation of this crucial part of your package; it can be found on the Proposal Writing advising page of our website: [undergradresearch.northwestern.edu/proposal-writing](http://undergradresearch.northwestern.edu/proposal-writing)

2. **FACULTY ENDORSEMENT.** All applications require a written endorsement from a faculty sponsor. In the endorsement, your sponsor is asked both to comment upon the merits of the proposed project and to give her/his opinion of your ability to carry out the research. You should be meeting regularly with your advisor to work through the ideas and logistics of your proposal, well in advance of the deadline. The endorsement is due shortly after the grant deadline (within twenty-four hours for Academic Year Grants and within three days for the Summer URGs), so it is very important to give faculty a draft of your proposal and other materials well in advance. They can write a better endorsement if they are not under tremendous time constraints.

Please direct them to our faculty endorsement support page to learn more about our endorsement expectations: [undergradresearch.northwestern.edu/facultysystemhelp](http://undergradresearch.northwestern.edu/facultysystemhelp)

3. **BUDGET.** A budget is required only for Academic-Year URG applications. The budget should itemize the research expenses for which you are requesting funding—e.g. necessary travel (airfare, lodging, food), photocopies, compensation for research subjects (rate x number of subjects), lab kits, equipment rental, etc. The level of detail in the budget simply needs to reflect your understanding of the logistical aspects of the project. Grants cannot be used for the purchase of durable equipment over \$100 or for the purchase of books or other materials available through NU libraries or Interlibrary Loan. The budget should be placed as an appendix at the end of your project proposal, and our template can be found here: [undergradresearch.northwestern.edu/budget](http://undergradresearch.northwestern.edu/budget)

Summer URG applicants should include a budget only if the proposed project involves international travel. If you will be travelling internationally, you may request additional

## DEVELOPING AN UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH GRANT PACKAGE

travel support by including an itemized budget for your roundtrip international airfare. URG will typically provide additional funds of up to 50% of the cost of the international flight.

**4. APPENDICES AND ADDITIONAL MATERIALS.** While the text of your proposal cannot exceed two single-spaced pages, additional materials can be added as appendices to help clarify aspects of your project. Your proposal should stand on its own, so don't bury any critical information in the appendices. However, you can use appendices to provide an additional level of detail. Whether to include additional information, and what kind, will depend on the particulars of your project. Some projects need few or no additional materials; for others, supporting documents are essential. The list below will help you decide what additional information is required or might strengthen your application.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY.** All applications should have a bibliography (or list of works cited). Since all proposals have a literature review, you must include those sources that you cite. Use whatever style guide is common in your field.

**SURVEYS AND QUESTIONNAIRES.** If you plan on using surveys or questionnaires in your research, you must include a copy of them in your URG application. Such materials are crucial for the review committee to better understand the specific kinds of information that you will generate to answer your research questions.

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.** If you will be conducting interviews, it is required you include a copy of your interview questions (or a list of sample question). The review committee will want to know what questions you plan to ask in order to determine the effectiveness of your approach.

**INTERVIEW APPOINTMENTS.** If you will interview particular individuals whom you can identify in advance, you must include e-mail confirmations that interviewees have agreed to meet with you. The committee does not need specific times and locations, but simply a commitment from the people with whom you will work that they are, in fact, planning on meeting with you. This information is particularly important if you are conducting research abroad and/or have never been to the research site, or if you are meeting with government officials or professionals who often face time constraints.

**STATEMENTS FROM LOCAL CONTACTS.** Letters and/or emails supporting your research from contacts in the local area are important. These materials show the committee that you have developed connections to allow you to have access to data or communities. The letters may take the form of research permission from another institution's library or archives. They may simply be notes from professors or other institutional affiliates (like NGO workers, local government officials, etc.) to come and conduct research in a foreign locale. If your research depends upon assistance from such individuals or organizations to help you recruit research subjects or otherwise successfully complete your project, it is required that you include statements of support from them.

## DEVELOPING AN UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH GRANT PACKAGE

**DIAGRAMS, IMAGES, AND CHARTS.** Some types of information can be conveyed more clearly and concisely through visual representations, but these can be difficult to fit within the limited space of a proposal. Follow the conventions of your field (e.g., chemists typically should include target chemical molecules in the text of the proposal rather than in an appendix), but it's often perfectly acceptable to include such things as appendices. Make sure to label them and direct the reader to e.g., "See appendix 1." Use visuals sparingly; only include things that help the reader better understand what you want to accomplish with your project.

**ARCHIVAL BIBLIOGRAPHY.** If you request funds to work in an archive or special collections of a library, be sure to include not only a letter from the archivist confirming that you will have access to the materials, but also a detailed list of which materials you will consult. You won't know exactly what you will find until you get there, but your reader wants to know what types of materials you expect to find. Consult archivists or local librarians while you are developing your project proposal to help you prepare a list of archival documents or collections you intend to consult at specific locations.

**READING LIST.** If your research will involve a large amount of primary source reading (e.g., for a literature project), include a list of what, specifically, you plan to read. It is helpful, but not required, that the list be annotated.

**5. IRB APPROVAL.** If your project involves other people as part of the research, including surveys, interviews, observing people, clinical research, and more, then your project will likely require a separate review (and potentially approval) from the IRB (Institutional Review Board) before you begin. Certain kinds of projects are exempt from IRB review; however, it will be your responsibility to provide documentation from the IRB demonstrating that their project is exempt. If you work in a lab and your project is covered by the lab's IRB protocol, it is your responsibility to provide documentation that shows 1) the IRB protocol's approval and 2) your name as an approved study member.

If you are approved for funding by the URG committee, your funding will not be released until IRB has approved your project, you have provided evidence from the IRB that your project is exempt, or you have provided evidence that you are included on your lab's approved IRB protocol.

**ACADEMIC YEAR URG APPLICANTS** must 1) complete the required human subjects research training (CITI training, Social Science and Behavioral Science Research Course) and 2) apply for IRB approval BEFORE submitting a URG application. You do not need to have received approval back from the IRB before you apply for a URG, but you must have completed their application process. During our submission process, you will be asked to enter your IRB case number; without it, you will be unable to submit your application. The IRB process can be lengthy, so start early. To learn how to get started, check with the IRB website: [irb.northwestern.edu/process/new-study/requirements](http://irb.northwestern.edu/process/new-study/requirements)

**SUMMER URG APPLICANTS** must 1) complete the human subjects research training (CITI training, Social Science and Behavioral Science Research Course) and 2) attach proof of training completion to the URG application. You are NOT required to submit your IRB application prior to applying for a Summer URG. Instead, students who are awarded Summer URGs and need IRB approval will be required to attend a mandatory workshop

## **DEVELOPING AN UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH GRANT PACKAGE**

on the Evanston campus to complete their IRB applications after funding decisions are announced.

If you are unsure if your project needs IRB approval, you need to check with the IRB staff. The IRB is the sole authority on whether a project needs to go through the IRB process or not – do not base your decision on the experiences of friends or even your advisor.

### **NEED HELP WITH IRB?**

You can find answers to many of your questions on the IRB website ([irb.northwestern.edu/](http://irb.northwestern.edu/)). The IRB staff is happy to advise you before you submit your study, and we highly recommend taking advantage of this help as you prepare your IRB application. Check their website for drop-in hours, or contact Kathleen Murphy, IRB Manager, at [kemurphy@northwestern.edu](mailto:kemurphy@northwestern.edu).

### **INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS**

If your project will take place internationally, you are eligible for additional funding (50% of your plane ticket as long as you are not returning to your home country). Search via travel sites for the cost of your ticket for the expected dates of travel, and add it to an appendix of your proposal.

If your international project is approved for funding, you will need to complete additional health and safety pre-departure requirements for the Office of Global Safety and Security. All steps must be completed before funding can be released.

If your project will take you to a country on the US Department of State's Travel Warning List ([travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings.html](http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings.html)), then you will need to apply for a waiver. This waiver can only be signed by the University Provost, so the process will take a significant amount of time. If you are even considering going to a travel warning country, please set up an appointment with Julie Friend, Director of the Office of Global Safety and Security immediately.