

## **PROVOST'S UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH FUND (PURF) REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS Academic Year 2023-2024**

**Proposal Receipt Deadline: 4:00 p.m., Thursday, October 5, 2023**

**Notification of Award: December 2023**

### **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

Provost Undergraduate Research Funds (PURF) are intended to provide support for research, scholarship, and creative activity by undergraduate students under the guidance of a faculty/staff mentor or advisor.

Awards will support the direct project costs (e.g., supplies, materials, research-related travel, etc.) for current and ongoing research and creative activity and will support travel to conferences, exhibits and performances for the students to disseminate their work. Funds will be available for one year, unless an extension is requested and granted; will be accessed through a university account; and must be expended as per Ohio University spending policies and guidelines. The minimum grant provided by this program is \$100 and the maximum is \$1,500. Joint applications are allowed.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

All undergraduate students enrolled on the Athens or one of the regional campuses of Ohio University are eligible. Students must be currently enrolled and maintain undergraduate student status during the proposed project period. Awards will not be made for direct project costs that are currently funded by other means. This restriction does not include fellowships, stipends, and other forms of individual support.

Students may only receive one PURF award per year. Students who have previously received a PURF award are not eligible to receive additional funding for the same project. However, they may apply for funding in a subsequent year if they are undertaking a distinctly new research project, creative project, or scholarly work.

All awardees are required to present their funded project at the Student Research & Creative Activity Expo in the spring.

### **REVIEW AND EVALUATION/SELECTION CRITERIA**

The scholarly, technical, or artistic merit of a proposed project is the primary criterion used by the Review Committee for evaluation of proposals. The Review Committee is composed of faculty members from diverse disciplines. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the applicant to speak to this diverse review committee.

The distribution of funding will be determined by the number of applications received and the quality of those applications. Awards will only be made to students with the support of a faculty/staff mentor; the mentor does not need to be at Ohio University.

### **PROPOSAL PREPARATION GUIDELINES**

**These guidelines supersede previous versions.** Please review the guidelines before submitting a proposal. Very meritorious proposals are often not funded because guidelines are not followed and information needed to make an informed, objective decision is not available to the Review Committee. Many

members feel that the care with which a proposal is prepared indicates the care with which the work will be done by the investigator.

***The proposal must be conceived and written by the student and approved by the mentor*** (as signified by the signature on the cover page and the mentor's endorsement included in the proposal). ***Mentors are strongly encouraged to give feedback to the students during the proposal preparation process, but the application must be authored by the student.***

***The application must contain the following:*** a (1) cover page, (2) abstract, (3) proposal narrative, (4) biographical information, (5) budget and (6) mentor's endorsement letter. The bibliography and appendix are optional.

***Proposals must follow the word and page limits listed below*** and conform to the guidelines regarding font, margins, and line spacing described in each section. All proposal sections **must** be in 12-point font with 1 inch or greater margins.

**\*\*Please Note:** The Review Committee has the right to return without review any proposals that do not conform to these format requirements.\*\*

The goal of the requirements for type size, spacing, and margins is to provide legible documents of roughly similar length. The use of unusual typefaces defeats the goal that the Review Committee hopes to achieve. Please review the electronic PDF application before submitting.

Questions concerning the proposal preparation process should be directed to Dr. Roxanne Male'-Brune, Office of the VP for Research and Creative Activity, [male-bru@ohio.edu](mailto:male-bru@ohio.edu).

## PROPOSAL SECTIONS

- Number pages to facilitate the review process.
- Include the required sections in the order listed below.
- Do not submit any hard copies in any form.
- Proposal must be submitted as a single PDF document, including scanned images of the fully signed cover page

### 1. COVER PAGE:

Complete the cover page (download the fillable form at <http://www.ohio.edu/research/funding>). Signatures **must** be obtained by the applicant and are required on the submitted proposal. The cover page **must** be the first page of the proposal.

**If needed, applicants may submit cover pages with electronic signatures or multiple cover pages for individual signatures.**

### 2. ABSTRACT

On a separate page include a **100-word maximum** abstract that is a clear and concise summary of the proposed project. The abstract should briefly state what you propose to do, why the project is important, how you will accomplish your goals, and what the expected outcomes are. The abstract may be used to publicize funded proposals and should be a stand-alone description of the proposed project. To accommodate the varied backgrounds of the Review Committee, the abstract should be written in **language understandable by an informed layperson**. Avoid the use of discipline-based jargon in the abstract.

### 3. PROJECT NARRATIVE

The project narrative must be **no more than five (5) double-spaced pages and use 12-point font** that is clear and legible, and standard size. Figure, charts, tables and figure legends and footnotes may use a smaller font size and may be single-spaced but **must** be clear and readily legible. **Margins must measure one inch (1") or greater on all sides.**

The project narrative must address the following: goals and scope, context, methods, timeline, student's role, and significance. Please use these section headings in your proposal. Applicants are encouraged to use the first person narrative style (e.g., I will examine...).

#### **Goals and Scope:**

Describe the goals and scope of the proposed research or creative project. *What do you intend to do? What will this research or creative activity accomplish? What problem does this project address? Why does this project need to be done?* Avoid jargon or terms unique to the discipline. If you must use such terms, please define them so all committee members can understand your proposal.

#### **Context:**

Briefly contextualize your project in relationship to others' work. Explain how the project differs from or extends previous, related work: *What has previously been done in the area? How does this project relate to the previous work?*

#### **Methods:**

Describe the methods you will use to accomplish the research or creative work. *How will the work be accomplished?*

For research projects, the method discussion should relate to one of two major traditions: quantitative and qualitative, or a combination.

- For quantitative approaches, it may be helpful to discuss: hypotheses or research questions, operationalization and instrumentation, research sites or context, sample size calculations, research design, data collection, and data analysis.
- For qualitative approaches, it may be helpful to discuss: research objectives or questions, instrumentation (e.g., interview schedules, observation instruments), research design (e.g., ethnography, case study, or in-depth interviewing), the relationship of research design to research objectives, data collection, and data analysis.

For creative projects, the methods should explain the vision of the work to be created and the process or steps needed to complete the artistic vision.

Note: projects with multiple applicants must clarify the individual roles and expertise of each of the applicants.

#### **Timeline:**

Provide an expected timetable for the research or creative activity (e.g., when major activities will start, how long they will take, when they will be completed) and estimated hours you will devote to the project.

#### **Student's Role:**

Describe your role on the project – from conception to implementation to dissemination. If you are working with other students or on a larger project, detail your contribution. If applicable, describe specifically how your project fits within or is distinguishable from your faculty member's research.

## **Significance:**

Describe the significance of your research or creative project. *Why is it important to your discipline? What are the implications for theory, research, creative activity and/or practice?*

Also include a statement of the broader impacts of the research/creative activity (e.g., why is it important to other disciplines or to the general public). *Will your findings provide a better understanding of a societal problem? What is the potential impact of the project on society?*

**NOTE:** It is imperative that applicants ensure that all projects can feasibly be concluded within a year. Applicants with concerns should contact Dr. Roxanne Male'-Brune, [male-bru@ohio.edu](mailto:male-bru@ohio.edu), prior to submission.

## **4. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

The bibliography **must be no more than two (2) single-spaced pages**.

Literature cited in or used to inform the Project Narrative should be included in the bibliography.

A short bibliography should be presented whenever appropriate for the proposed activity. A carefully selected bibliography can strengthen a proposal by indicating to the reviewer that the applicant is aware of significant and current literature in the field. If appropriate to the discipline, an annotated bibliographic essay may be prepared but should include sufficiently detailed citations for the references listed. Bibliographies that are obviously lifted en-bloc from a dissertation or other publication are a disservice to the proposal.

## **5. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

The biographical information section **must be no more than 200 words**.

Briefly describe any activities (course work, research, internships, etc.) you have completed that have prepared you to do the proposed project. Also, identify skills you have (e.g., language and computer skills, etc.) that are necessary for completing the project.

## **6. BUDGET:**

This section must be **no more than two (2) single-spaced pages**.

***Budget expenditures before the award date will not be reimbursed.***

Funds can only be expended for the duration that the applicant is currently enrolled and maintains undergraduate student status.

The maximum award is \$1,500. If the project costs more than \$1,500, please indicate the funding source(s) for the additional project costs. Funding is provided to cover the cost of items that are necessary to conduct the project and may include supplies, materials, and travel for research and/or dissemination of results.

All expenditures must comply with university and/or college policies and guidelines. It is suggested that if you have any budget questions concerning what will be allowable, that you contact your mentor and/or college financial representative PRIOR to submitting award request.

### **Please note:**

- *Supplies.* All supplies that must be purchased for the project should be described in adequate detail so that a person knowledgeable in the field of the proposed research may make an assessment of the

reasonableness of the request. If the budget item is a common consumable supply generally available in most laboratories, offices, or studios, please justify the purchase with PURF funds.

- *Equipment.* All major items of equipment, including computers, which are to be purchased with PURF funds, should be listed with the estimated cost of each item and components of each item if applicable. Because of limited funds available to the Review Committee, requests for equipment should be made only after a conscientious search has been conducted to determine whether this equipment is already on campus and available through a loan or share arrangement. If you request funds to purchase expensive equipment, such as computers, hardware, printers, cameras, etc., you must justify that the equipment does not exist elsewhere on campus for your use. Any equipment purchased with PURF funding is the property of Ohio University and must be turned over to the student’s department or the Research Division at the end of the project and/or prior to your graduation.
- *Tuition.* If you request funds to pay for tuition at another institution or training program, you must justify why your project cannot be completed unless you attend another school. No Ohio University tuition expenses are allowable with the possible exception of study abroad fees that are integral to the project. **Note, this request requires special consideration (see Special Instructions section below).**
- *Travel.* If you request funds for travel to present your research or creative activity, indicate the name and date of the conference, performance or exhibit and provide specific travel plans and dates. Travel expenses must be broken down into transportation, meals, and lodging categories, and the basis for the figures must be provided. Where appropriate use the OU Travel Reimbursement Policy 41.121 to determine limits on travel expenses. For domestic travel, meal and hotel expenses will be reimbursed as per the U.S. General Services Administration per diem rates, [www.gsa.gov/perdiem](http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem). For international travel, meal expenses and hotel rates will be reimbursed as per the U.S. Department of State per diem rates, [https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content\\_id=184&menu\\_id=78](https://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=184&menu_id=78).

**NEW! Students who are traveling beyond 100 miles of their Ohio University campus or to another state must register with the Office of Global Opportunities: [Travel Registration | Ohio University](#)**

For more support on domestic and international travel, risk ratings for destinations and planning an international experience, students are encouraged to contact the Office of Global Opportunities [global.opportunities@ohio.edu](mailto:global.opportunities@ohio.edu).

- *Other.* Costs for transcription charges, photocopying charges, postage, and the purchase of essential publications and fees paid to participants in the scholarly activity are eligible.

a. Itemize the project budget. Be specific. Create a table as per below. Note, sources of funds other than the PURF (e.g., department, college, personal finances, external grant) can be listed if applicable.

Item	Amount	Source	Justification
<b><u>TOTAL REQUESTED</u></b>			

b. If you are requesting travel funding only, please explain how you are funding the other parts of your project.

## 7. MENTOR'S ENDORSEMENT

The mentor's endorsement letter **must not exceed one (1) single-spaced page in 12-point font with 1 inch margins**. Mentors within the university do not need to use university letterhead. Mentors from outside the university should use their university/company letterhead. Applicants with multiple mentors within the university must submit one letter, jointly signed by the mentors. Applicants with both a mentor outside the university and within the university may submit two separate letters if needed.

**Only if necessary, and with prior approval**, the mentor may email the letter separately from the application. The letter **must be received prior to the proposal deadline** and the student should note in the application that the letter will be emailed separately.

The endorsement must include:

- (1) an assessment of the student's interest and preparation in relationship to the proposed project,
- (2) the perceived benefit of the research/creative activity to the professional development of the student, and
- (3) a description of the mentor's role in the project.

NOTE: Mentors take the financial responsibility for student work, so mentors should make sure they review the budget submitted and are also involved in the financial aspects once an award is given. Inappropriate or non-compliant expenses may be the personal responsibility of the faculty mentor, so it is important the mentor understands this commitment prior to agreeing to serve as a mentor.

**Mentors with multiple students applying in a single cycle are strongly encouraged to reflect on the benefits of research/creative activity experience and PURF funding for the individual student and to articulate this in their endorsement. *Mentor letters that are written as form letters do a disservice to the applicant.***

## 8. APPENDICES

This section is **limited to two (2) single-spaced pages**.

**NOTE:** *Appended materials are limited to the following: letters of collaboration or financial support.*

Inclusion of other materials in the appendices will make the proposal non-compliant with the guidelines.

All appended materials must be submitted electronically as part of the single .pdf file unless otherwise approved prior to submission.

## PRESENTATION REQUIREMENT

All PURF recipients are required to share their research, creative, or scholarly project with the university community at the annual Ohio University Research and Creative Activity Expo held in spring semester.

## PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

**The student must submit one (1) electronic copy\* of the proposal (with required signatures) to [PURFproposals@ohio.edu](mailto:PURFproposals@ohio.edu).**

Proposals must be received no later than 4:00 P.M. on the deadline date.

\*Electronic copies **must** be submitted as a **single file** in Adobe Acrobat format (Mac users must include the file extensions .pdf in the file name). Electronic copies **must** contain the entire proposal unless authorized prior to the deadline.

## SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

If there is anything about your proposal that requires special handling or consideration, it is essential that ***prior to the deadline*** you contact Dr. Roxanne Male'-Brune, Office of the VP for Research and Creative Activity, [male-bru@ohio.edu](mailto:male-bru@ohio.edu).

## EXAMPLE PROPOSALS

Examples of previously funded PURF proposals are available for review at:  
<http://www.ohio.edu/research/funding>.

Please Note: Efforts will be made to ensure that posted example proposals comply with current guidelines. ***However, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their proposal is compliant with current guidelines.***

## **\*NEW - TRAVEL BOOKING/PAYMENTS**

As per University policy, 41.121, all recipients **must** work with their respective department and faculty mentors to access funds. Funds **will not** be dispersed directly to recipients.

On the deadline day only, and after having tried to contact Dr. Male'-Brune by email, applicants can call her at 740-591-0930 for assistance/questions.