

Undergraduate Creativity and Research Academy (UCRA)

Mission and Goals

The mission of the Undergraduate Creativity and Research Academy is to (1) provide support for achieving excellence in integrative research and creative activities by undergraduate students and their College faculty mentors and (2) to highlight the outstanding contributions resulting from such activities. Outcomes from the research and creative activities will be featured at the annual College of Arts & Sciences (A&S) Summit for Undergraduate Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity (spring semester) and are also expected to lead to dissemination beyond the College and University level. [<https://undergraduateresearch.as.ua.edu/summit>]

Funding by the Academy is open to all undergraduate students and faculty collaborations within the College, and there will be no priority given to students or faculty on the basis of stage in their careers. The Academy encourages proposal submissions by all academic departments within the College of Arts & Sciences. The student-faculty research or activity effort must demonstrate that the level of student-experience is satisfactory to achieve success in the project outcomes and that the student has initiated or played a prominent role (depending on the standards of the respective discipline) in the project proposal and design. This will be evaluated on an individual basis based on the student experience and background as well as the faculty nomination letters.

Applying students must be supported by and seek guidance from a faculty member who agrees to serve as the advisor to the student on the creative activity or research project. Funding will be considered for any project-related need, with the exception of faculty or student salary, that will meet the goal of enhancing and stimulating undergraduate student creative or research activities in the College and University (i.e. travel, equipment, supplies, exhibition/presentation, conferences/meetings, etc.). Funding requests up to **\$1000** will be considered, but requests should be reasonable. It is anticipated that funding from the College Academy will enable applicants to achieve an advanced level of excellence in the proposed activity, provide a venue to showcase their work/outcomes, and enhance visibility and recognition of the outstanding undergraduate activities taking place in the College, University, and beyond.

Proposal/Application Form

Eligibility: Any undergraduate student declared as a major within the College of Arts & Sciences and enrolled as a current full-time student.

Applications for funding should be prepared and submitted as an electronic document (with the knowledge and support of the participating College faculty member) and **include the following sections in the following order:**

- I. Nomination letter from the Faculty member who will serve as the student advisor and director of the research or creative activity. The faculty member should provide a brief statement describing how the undergraduate's creative activity or research ties in with of his/her current project(s) or program. If the faculty member is nominating more than one student within their own research group, that faculty member (i.e. supervisor) should rank those students in terms of funding priority. [***1-page maximum***]

- II. Title of the proposed project, along with name(s), academic rank(s), and affiliation(s) within the College of the applicant(s), and the signatures of both the student applicant and the faculty mentor (student advisor) [**Page 1**]. Because applications are initially reviewed by UCRA faculty 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.**
- III. Project/Activity Type [**Page 1**] – Indicate if this is (1) New Research/Creative Activity or (2) Continuing Research/Creative Activity. For either selected category briefly address the following categories (i) provide details of previous funding received from this Academy and any other sources for the activity, (ii) provide student background in terms of experience and time working in this field, on this project, or with the faculty mentor.
- IV. Abstract of the proposed work [**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.
- V. Proposal, Budget, and Budget Justification [**3-page maximum**]
Proposal – The proposed work should be described (double-spaced; not less than 12-point type with 1-inch margins). Keep in mind that the proposal will be evaluated by faculty within the College who may not have detailed knowledge of the area; therefore, the proposed work should be described in sufficient detail for faculty within your division to evaluate its impact, but still at a level general enough for the non-specialist to appreciate. The proposal should address the following questions/areas:
a. What is the aim of the proposed work? Why is it important?
b. On what will the funds be expended?
c. How does funding requested from the Academy relate to existing and/or future funding for the work?
d. How will funding from the Academy specifically enhance the activity proposed?
Budget and Budget Justification – The committee will consider funding requests up to **\$1,000**. Provide a budget detailing expected and known costs associated with the creative activity or research project. Provide a brief justification for the budgeted items. All purchases must abide by the terms and conditions consistent with that of UA Purchasing guidelines and protocols.
- VI. Proposed Timeline of Activity/Project and Presentation [**1-page maximum**] – Include a brief timeline for the proposed activity or research project. The student must include the intended conference and/or meeting that the results of the creative activity or research will be presented (i.e. annual A&S Summit for Undergraduate Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity plus any other conferences, meetings, exhibits, venues, etc.). The student may apply for an extension of the presentation (up to 1-year) if results of the activity or project cannot be reasonably acquired/synthesized by the deadline for the spring annual A&S Summit for Undergraduate Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity.

- VII. A Reference List [***1-page maximum***] – All key references that help to provide a framework for the question being addressed should be included.
- VIII. Resume/Curriculum Vitae [***1-page maximum***] – Resume from student applicant(s) (limited to 1-page). The student resume should include (i) name and departmental affiliation/address; (ii) college level (i.e. freshmen, sophomore, etc.); (iii) synergistic activities to support the research or activity, and (iv) honors/awards.

Application Dates and Period of Activity

To ensure full consideration for funding requests (**Spring 2019**), applications should be received by **midnight, February 18, 2019 (Monday)**; the review process and award decisions will begin at this time. Applications should be submitted electronically as an email attachment to [Geoff Tick \(gtick@ua.edu\)](mailto:gtick@ua.edu), as a PDF file. Applicants will receive an email indicating that their proposal has been successfully received.

Funded applications may commence immediately or the start date may be delayed for up to one year. It is anticipated that the proposed work will be completed in a period not to exceed twelve months; however, in certain circumstances extensions of six months may be granted for the expenditure of the original award. It is also the responsibility of the student/mentor to inform the UCRA committee (UCRA Chair) immediately when the student decides to switch their research group or stop working on the funded project.

Points the committee will consider during review, if applicable for the project:

- Significance of research and/or creative activity
- Clear plan for the work
- Guided by a compelling question or creative idea
- Intelligibly written for non-specialist
- Interdisciplinary, if appropriate for the project
- Could not be done without this funding
- If previously funded by UCRA, a report on the outcome of the prior funding must be referenced (if already submitted)

Funding is also given priority to:

- New projects or new research groups (student/mentor) that have not previously submitted to UCRA
- Clear distinct differences between student applications/proposals submitted by the same research groups (i.e. faculty mentors)
- Written proposal is generally conducted by the student and in the student's narrative
- Multiple applications from one research group or mentor will need to be ranked and likelihood for funding more than two students per research group or faculty mentor is unlikely. Consideration for funding, dependent upon other factors, will be for the top one and two highest ranked students (in most cases).

Final Report and Colloquium Presentation

At the end of the project, the successful applicant(s) must submit a written report (not to exceed three pages) describing the results of the project, with a detailed evaluation of the success of the project.

Additionally, the successful student applicant(s) will, upon completion of the project, give a public presentation to College faculty and other members of The University community at the annual A&S Summit for Undergraduate Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity (spring semester). In addition to this venue, the Academy highly encourages students to present the results of their creative activity or research project at other regional, national, international and/or focused conferences/meetings, exhibits/venues, and/or performances, etc.

Details on the A&S Summit for Undergraduate Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity can be found at the following website: <https://undergraduateresearch.as.ua.edu/summit>