



# URI Undergraduate Researcher Stipend Program Guide for Applicants & Award Recipients (Fall 2017)

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## Information for URI Stipend Applicants

### 1.0 Purpose of the URI Stipend

The Undergraduate Researcher Stipend enables undergraduate students to carry out mentored, interdisciplinary research projects and creative activities. The URI stipend allows undergraduate students **in any year and any discipline** to enrich their university experience through hands-on discovery and skill development in a research-intensive university.

Targeted funding is also available through the URI Stipend program for projects meeting the following criteria:

- projects advancing campus sustainability (see [Sec 1.1](#))
- projects supervised by faculty members who are current Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) grant holders (see [Sec 1.2](#))
- project conducted by students in the Faculty of Agriculture, Life and Environmental Sciences (see [Sec 1.3](#))
- projects conducted by Indigenous students (see [Sec. 1.4](#)) **\*NEW IN FALL 2017**

These funding partnerships provide a mechanism for students to be considered for funding from various sources through a single application and adjudication process. Proposals for targeted funds are subject to the same adjudication process as general URI Stipend proposals, and are not treated preferentially. **Proposals that do not meet the criteria for targeted funding are welcome and encouraged.**

#### 1.1 Targeted funding for projects advancing campus sustainability

The URI is pleased to be a partner in the [Campus as a Living Lab](#) research program offered by the Office of Sustainability and Facilities & Operations. Campus as a Living Lab describes a collection of experiential learning opportunities linking learning, teaching, and research to the campus and broader community through sustainability-focused projects. These projects use the natural, social, and built environment of the campus as a testing ground to develop solutions to address sustainability goals on campus and beyond.

Funding is available through the Office of Sustainability program to support undergraduate research projects advancing campus sustainability. These stipends are funded by the [Office of Sustainability](#) and [Facilities & Operations](#), and the research funds are administered by URI.

Applications for Campus as a Living Lab projects submitted through the URI Stipend program will be reviewed for eligibility and adjudicated according to the URI Stipend criteria. These applications meeting these criteria for funding will then be shared with the Office of Sustainability for further adjudication.

#### 1.2 Targeted funding for projects supervised by current SSHRC-holders

Targeted funding is available through the URI Stipend for arts, social sciences and humanities projects supervised by current Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) grant-holders. Supervisors

must indicate their SSHRC-holder status in the application form to be considered for this pool of funding (subject to verification by URI).

### 1.3 Targeted funding for projects affiliated with the Faculty of Agriculture, Life, and Environmental Sciences (ALES)

Targeted funding is available in Fall 2017 through the Val & Morley Blanch Undergraduate Researcher Stipend. The student or supervisor must be affiliated with ALES and the project must align with ALES research themes.

### 1.4 Targeted funding for Indigenous students (NEW in Fall 2017!)

The URI is pleased to announce a new targeted funding opportunity for Indigenous undergraduate students. To be eligible for this funding, students must be Status Indian/First Nations, Non-Status Indian/First Nations, Métis, or Inuit. Applicants must indicate their status on the application form, and if selected for an award, must be able to provide proof of Indigenous ancestry to the URI office.

Acceptable documents of proof include: certificate of Indian Status, a status card or a valid band membership card; letter from their band verifying their status; Métis membership card or letter issued by the Métis Nation students are registered with; letter or membership card from the Métis Settlements General Council; a certified copy of a Nunavut Trust Certificate card or Inuit beneficiary card; letter of support from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) or Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated; and for a non-status person, a letter of support from a First Nations, Métis or Inuit organization.

## 2.0 Student eligibility

University of Alberta undergraduate students in **any year** and **any discipline** may apply for the URI Stipend, provided they meet the following criteria:

- Students must be **currently registered** in a full-time or part-time University of Alberta undergraduate degree program at the time of application.
  - International students are eligible to apply, provided their study or work permit allows them to work in Canada and is valid for the entire term of their award. Please consult [University of Alberta International](#) for more information or to confirm your status prior to applying for the URI Stipend.
  - Students completing their final semester may apply, provided they are not entering a graduate program during the term of their award.
- Students must have a **satisfactory academic standing** prior to the start of the project. (see [Calendar Sec 23.6](#)). The URI Stipend is not adjudicated based on GPA.
- Students must **not** have held the URI Stipend previously.
- Students may **not** apply for the URI Stipend to support a project for which academic credit is concurrently earned (e.g. research-based courses, honours projects).
- Students may **not** hold another award for the same project concurrently.
- Students must have a confirmed supervisor (see supervisor eligibility, [Sec 3.0](#)) prior to applying.

### 3.0 Supervisor eligibility

URI Stipend projects may be supervised by:

- U of A faculty members
- Faculty lecturers (provided their contacts are valid for the duration of the student's project)\*
- Postdoctoral fellows\*
- Graduate students\*
- Non-academic staff\*
- Staff at another institution or community organization\*

**\*Please note:** If the supervisor is **NOT** a U of A faculty member, applicants must also have a U of A faculty member to sponsor the application. The Faculty Sponsor need not be involved in the day-to-day supervision of the student, but must be willing to serve as a resource for the student and supervisor to ensure that the student's research adheres to U of A research policies and ethics guidelines.

Supervisors may support only **TWO** URI Stipend applications each award cycle. Each student must have a separate project.

### 4.0 Award details

- The URI Stipend consists of a \$5000 stipend only. The funds will be transferred from the URI to the student, in installments, over the duration of the project. Discontinued projects will receive partial funds pro-rated to the date of discontinuation. ([Sec 8.0](#))
- The URI Stipend may be held for a period of 4-12 months ([Sec 9.1](#))
- The project must normally commence within 60 days of approval.
- Students must submit a final report within 10 days of the completion of the project. Students are also strongly encouraged to present their work at an on-campus venue (see [Sec 10.0](#))
- URI staff will contact students and supervisors periodically to see how their project is progressing. Students may also be contacted for media requests.
- Upon satisfactory completion of the project and submission of the final report, students are eligible to have their URI Stipend recognized in their Co-curricular Record.

### 5.0 Application process

URI Stipend applications [must be submitted online](#). Paper or email applications will not be accepted. **Incomplete applications will not be sent for adjudication.**

We recommend that students and supervisors work together to complete their respective sections of the application [using the template provided](#), then copy the final version into the online form as Google Forms does not save work in progress.

**Please note:** Project proposals **must be written by the student**. Supervisors should only complete the Supervisor's section, as indicated in the application form, and support the student in completing the joint sections. Supervisors should NOT write the project proposals on behalf of the student.

## 5.1 Support for URI Stipend applicants

The URI offers the following support for URI Stipend applicants:

### **Seminar: How to apply for undergraduate research funding**

- Thursday, October 5, 2017, 12:35-1:20 pm, 1-031 CCIS (CCIS Career Centre)
- Thursday, October 12, 2017, 5:05pm-5:50pm, 2-100 SUB (SUB Career Centre)
- Monday, October 16, 2017, 12:05-12:50pm, 1-031 CCIS (CCIS Career Centre)

All sessions are free to attend. [Please register online.](#)

**Individual consultations:** Students may book an appointment with URI to discuss and receive feedback on their Stipend applications.

- [Contact our office to book a consultation](#)

## 6.0 Deadline to apply

The deadline for URI Stipend applications for Fall 2017 application cycle is **Monday, October 30, 2017 at 11:59 p.m.** Late applications cannot be accepted.

## 7.0 Adjudication process & criteria

URI Stipend applications are adjudicated by a multidisciplinary committee of faculty and undergraduate students. Stipend applications **must be written in language accessible to a general audience**. Please be sure to define technical terms and minimize jargon wherever possible. Please **do not** copy NSERC, Roger S. Smith, or other discipline-specific applications.

Applicants are normally notified of the competition results within four weeks of the application deadline. Adjudication decisions are not appealable. Applicants are welcome to reapply in a future application cycle, and are encouraged to contact URI for feedback regarding their application.

Please consult the rubric on the following pages for more information about how proposals are assessed.

## URI Stipend Adjudication Rubric (Revised Fall 2016)

**Note to adjudicators:** Intermediate or half points may be given in any category. Each adjudicator's raw scores will be standardized prior to ranking. Please provide some written feedback that URI may share with the student – this is incredibly valuable to students and much appreciated!

Criterion	Weight	Instructions to applicants	Scoring Rubric
<b>Quality of the proposal</b>	x2	<p><i>Provide a detailed description of your proposed project, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>project background (i.e. What is the context for this project? Why is it necessary?)</i></li> <li>● <i>project objectives or research questions (i.e. what is your specific question or hypothesis?)</i></li> <li>● <i>proposed methods (i.e. what is your approach to testing your hypothesis/answering your research question?)</i></li> <li>● <i>merit/impact of the project (i.e. how does your project advance your field? What are the potential benefits/outcomes of your research?)</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Your proposal will be reviewed by a multidisciplinary committee; please define technical terms, avoid jargon, and write for a general audience. A comprehensive reference list/bibliography is not required.</i></p> <p><b><i>Project proposals must be written by the student. Students should work with their supervisors to develop their proposal ideas, then write it in their own words. Supervisors should only complete the designated Supervisor's section, as indicated in the application form. Supervisors should NOT write the project proposals on behalf of the student.</i></b></p>	<p>0 = poorly developed proposal, unclear, proposal not accessible to readers outside the discipline</p> <p>3 = some aspects of the proposal are not clear or are undeveloped, proposal contains some technical jargon that is unclear to readers outside the discipline</p> <p>5 = clear and well developed proposal, proposal is accessible to readers outside the discipline.</p>
<b>Merit of the project</b>	x1	See above.	<p>0 = minimal merit based on abstract and proposal</p> <p>3 = project has some potential to make a contribution to the field(s)</p> <p>5 = outstanding potential to make an important contribution to the field(s)</p>
<b>Interdisciplinarity</b>	x2	<p><i>Describe the interdisciplinary nature of the project. Interdisciplinary work involves integrating or synthesizing methods, techniques, concepts, and/or approaches from different disciplines. Interdisciplinary projects typically include (but are not limited to) one or more of the following aspects:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>the application of theories or methods from one or more disciplines to a problem in a different discipline (i.e. what disciplines inform the research?)</i></li> <li>● <i>interdisciplinary teams involving researchers from different disciplines working together on a project (i.e. who does the research?)</i></li> <li>● <i>project outcomes or tools that can be applied to different disciplinary contexts (i.e. who can benefit or use the research?)</i></li> </ul>	<p>0 = no rationale for interdisciplinarity</p> <p>1 = interdisciplinarity is poorly described or artificial, no explanation is provided for how the interdisciplinary aspects contribute to the proposed research</p> <p>3 = the work incorporates some interdisciplinary elements, proposal is unclear about how the interdisciplinary aspects contribute to/advance the proposed research</p> <p>5 = clearly interdisciplinary work, the proposal clearly describes how the</p>

		<i>Please note: this section should be completed WITH the supervisor. SUPERVISORS: please discuss any interdisciplinary aspects of the proposed research with your student, and assist in the completion of this statement.</i>	interdisciplinary aspects are integral to the proposed research
<b>Impact on the student</b>  (addressed by both student & supervisor in respective sections of the application)	x2	<p><b>Student:</b> <i>anticipated personal skill development (i.e. how does this project support your personal/professional goals &amp; skill development?)</i></p> <p><b>Supervisor – role of student:</b> <i>Please describe the student’s role in the proposed project. If the student is completing part of a larger overall project, please describe the scope of the student’s involvement and how the student’s work contributes to the larger project. (Max 100 words)</i></p> <p><b>Supervisor – skill development:</b> <i>Please describe the specific learning objectives for the student, and how the student’s skill development goals will be achieved through the proposed project. (Max 100 words)</i></p>	<p>0 = minimal impact on student; student’s role in the project is not clearly described, superficial, or poorly developed.</p> <p>3 = some impacts on student in terms of skill development, proposal describes generic skills that could be obtained in a variety of settings (weak tie to the specific proposed research); student’s role is described, but does not clearly support the proposed skill development.</p> <p>5 = multiple impacts on student in terms of skill development, potential for publication or performance, proposal makes a strong argument for how the proposed research specifically contributes to student skill development, skill development is described in the context of the student’s overall career development. Student’s role is well developed and integral to the project’s success.</p>
<b>Financial need</b>	x1	<b>Supervisors:</b> <i>Please comment on the need for funding for the student. Describe what other sources of funding have been explored and your next steps in the event the student does not receive a URI Stipend.</i>	<p>0 = no demonstration of financial need</p> <p>1 = weak justification of financial need</p> <p>2 = clear financial need</p> <p>3 = strong financial need - project could not continue without support</p>
<b>Supervisor Commitment</b>	x1	<b>Supervisors:</b> <i>Please comment on how the student will be mentored through the proposed project. Indicate how progress will be monitored and how feedback will be provided (e.g. weekly contact hours, communication, reporting expectations)</i>	<p>0 = supervisor appears minimally committed to supporting student skill development</p> <p>3 = supervisor appears committed to supporting student skill development, but strategy is unclear or poorly developed</p> <p>5 = supervisor indicates a very strong commitment to the student and the project</p>
<b>This project MUST be funded:</b> place an “X” in the Must Fund column for truly outstanding proposals you feel really MUST be funded.			

## Information for URI Stipend Recipients

### 8.0 Stipend payment

#### 8.1 Pay administration

The total amount of the URI Stipend is \$5000, which will be paid directly from URI to the student, in semi-monthly installments, over the term of the award. The URI Stipend payments are administered directly by URI, and not through individual Departments or Faculties.

#### 8.2 Multiple awards

No other major award (e.g. NSERC, Roger S. Smith, AIHS Summer Studentship) may be held concurrently for the same project.

#### 8.3 Award top-ups

Supervisors may, at their discretion, provide a “top-up” to the URI Stipend from their own funding sources. Any supplementary pay offered by the supervisor is administered through the supervisor’s Department or Faculty independently of the URI Stipend payment, which is administered by URI.

### 9.0 Expectations during the project

#### 9.1 Time commitment to the project

Given the diversity of URI Stipend projects and project timelines, the URI does not prescribe specific hours of work for students. Students should discuss the expected time commitment with their supervisors prior to applying for the URI Stipend, and the time commitment should be considered when determining the project scope and term of the award.

Projects that are four months in duration typically require a greater daily or weekly time commitment from the student to achieve the project objectives, and therefore are typically undertaken outside of the academic year (i.e. during the summer) or during a term in which the student is not enrolled in full-time studies. Longer projects (5-12 months) may be feasible for a student to undertake during the academic year on a more “part-time” basis. Students are encouraged to discuss with their supervisors, **in advance of undertaking a project**, any commitments that may influence their availability, and come to a mutual agreement with their supervisors about hours of work during the project.

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the student’s hours of work comply with University policies and procedures.

#### 9.2 Vacation/time off

Because the URI Stipend is considered an award/bursary, students do not accrue vacation time or receive vacation pay. Any vacation or other time off during the term of the award must be arranged between the student and the supervisor.



### 9.3 Research ethics, risk management, and safety

For projects involving humans, animals, or biohazardous materials, supervisors are responsible for obtaining research ethics approval, and for ensuring that students receive the appropriate training and supervision to comply with the approved protocol(s). For information about research ethics approval and training, please consult the [Research Ethics Office](#).

Supervisors are also responsible for ensuring that students receive adequate safety training for their projects. Many research-related safety training courses are offered online through the [Environmental Health & Safety](#) office, free of charge to U of A students and staff. The [Field Research Office](#) also offers training and resources for projects involving field research.

### 9.4 Changes to the project

Students are generally expected to complete the project they were approved for, and the URI Stipend is not transferrable to another project. Major deviations from the proposed project or project scope must be approved by URI.

### 9.5 Communication with URI

Students are encouraged to consider URI a resource for any questions or concerns related to their research. The URI hosts an introductory mixer for URI Stipend recipients, which covers general expectations of the Stipend program, as well as other resources that may be helpful to students in their projects. Students are also invited to a closing mixer near the end of the project's term.

URI also conducts periodic check-ins with students and supervisors to ensure that students are making progress in their projects and to address any concerns.

## 10.0 Reporting & sharing results

### 10.1 Student final report

Within 10 days of the project end date, students are required to submit a final report/reflection summarizing their research and learning outcomes from the project. The final report is to be submitted online (via Google forms) [here](#).

The student final report is not a technical report, and should be written in language accessible to a general audience. Students may, if they wish, share supplementary information (e.g. posters, photos, etc.) via email. The information provided in the final report may be used to help URI improve the Stipend program, as well as in reports to our stakeholders and funders.

The supervisor is not required to submit a report.

### 10.2 Dissemination

Students are strongly encouraged, but not required, to present the results of their work at an on-campus venue. Many Faculties and Departments host student research days, or offer opportunities for students to present their work.

The URI also hosts a campus-wide Festival of Undergraduate Research & Creative Activities (FURCA) in March of each year. Abstract submissions are typically due in late January. All undergraduate students are welcome to submit abstracts for FURCA.

All presentations, posters, and publications arising from a URI Stipend project should acknowledge the support of URI. Please contact the URI office ([uri@ualberta.ca](mailto:uri@ualberta.ca)) if you need access to the URI logo for acknowledgement purposes.

### **10.3 Media and donor stewardship requests**

The URI Stipend is made possible through the generosity of donors. As such, recipients of the URI Stipend may be invited to share their research experiences through media requests and donor stewardship activities. Past recipients are our best ambassadors for the URI Stipend program, so we greatly appreciate your support in helping ensure this program is available for students in the future.

### **11.0 Contact information**

If you have any questions regarding the URI Stipend program, please contact the URI office at [uri@ualberta.ca](mailto:uri@ualberta.ca).