

URI Undergraduate Research Support Fund Program Guide for Applicants & Award Recipients Revised - April 2017



Undergraduate
Research
INITIATIVE

- [1.0 Purpose of the URI Support Fund](#)
- [2.0 Who can apply](#)
- [3.0 Fund details & process](#)
- [4.0 Eligible costs](#)
 - [4.1 Exclusions](#)
- [5.0 Deadlines](#)
- [6.0 Adjudication](#)
 - [6.1 Adjudication criteria](#)
- [7.0 Final report](#)
- [8.0 Reimbursement](#)
 - [8.1 Deadline for reimbursement](#)
 - [8.2 Reimbursement policies](#)
 - [8.3 Reimbursement process & required documentation](#)
- [9.0 Dissemination](#)
- [10.0 Media and donor stewardship requests](#)
- [11.0 Contact information](#)

1.0 Purpose of the URI Support Fund

The Undergraduate Research Support Fund is a reimbursement program that supports undergraduate research and creative works by offsetting direct costs associated with undergraduate research-related activities.

Eligible activities must align with one of URI's core functions:

- Raising undergraduate students' awareness of and interest in research.
- Supporting undergraduate students in developing the knowledge and skills needed for participation in research.
- Facilitating opportunities for undergraduate students to engage in research.
- Assisting undergraduate students in disseminating and celebrating research results and achievements.
- Creating and sustaining a culture of undergraduate research and at the University of Alberta.

Funding priority within each of these categories is given to activities offering the greatest impact to the student(s) relative the value of the investment.

2.0 Who can apply

Any University of Alberta researcher (academic, postdoctoral fellow, graduate student, undergraduate student) involved in undergraduate research is eligible to apply to the URI Support Fund.

Undergraduate students must normally have a supervisor who can verify the need for funding.

Note: Applications for activities involving groups of students are welcome and encouraged; however, we normally encourage one representative to apply on behalf of the group, rather than each individual group member applying separately to the Support Fund. If you are applying as part of a group and would like to discuss your situation prior to applying, please contact the URI at uri@ualberta.ca.

3.0 Fund details & process

The Support Fund offers **one-time reimbursement of up to \$500** to offset costs incurred at any stage of the undergraduate research process, with preference given to proposals demonstrating financial need (i.e. funding is necessary to support student participation in the proposed activity or project).

The process for applying to the URI Support Fund is as follows:

- **STEP 1:** Submit your URI Support Fund application **prior** to incurring any proposed expenses.
- **STEP 2:** After receiving approval from the URI Support Fund, incur your approved expenses within 90 days of approval.
- **STEP 3:** Within 30 days of incurring your expenses, submit a final report & reimbursement package to URI (see [Sec 7.0](#) and [8.0](#) for details)

NEW IN 2017:

URI can no longer directly reimburse most U of A speed codes. If you are approved by the URI Support Fund and your expenses will be paid with a U of A speed code or U of A credit card, **please contact URI prior to incurring your expenses** for instructions on how to charge the approved expenses to URI.

Please note: For any projects involving human participants or animals, supervisors are responsible for ensuring that research ethics approval is obtained and that any undergraduate students involved are added to and adhere to the appropriate protocol(s). **Proof of ethics approval will be required prior to URI Support Fund reimbursement.**

4.0 Eligible costs

All proposed expenses must align with one or more of URI's core functions (see [Sec 1.0](#)). Funding is prioritized based on the degree of alignment with these functions, the impact on the student, and financial need.

Examples of eligible activities include, but are not limited to:

Awareness-raising: on-campus conferences or symposia involving undergraduate students, activities encouraging students to get involved in research, etc. Priority is given to the first instance of an event or activity; funding for subsequent occurrences or for established, annual events is a lower priority.

Skill development: funding to offset training costs directly related to the student's research (e.g. training for specialized equipment or analysis). Priority is given to training that is essential to the student's project.

Facilitating opportunities: funding for direct costs (e.g. materials, supplies) that are essential to the project. Priority is given to proposals that have the potential to create research opportunities for students where financial constraints would otherwise be a significant barrier to student participation.

Dissemination and celebration: costs associated with dissemination of undergraduate students' research results (e.g. poster printing, undergraduate journals). Priority is given to dissemination activities that raise awareness of undergraduate research within the University of Alberta and surrounding community. **Conference-related travel expenses (including conference registration fees) for individual students to present research are not eligible.**

Culture of undergraduate research: costs associated with the integration of research and teaching (e.g. classroom activities, discovery-based learning projects), or other activities that support the involvement of undergraduate students as part of the U of A's scholarly community. Priority is given to activities that create or enhance experiential learning opportunities for students.

NEW IN 2017 - Limits related to Catering Expenses

Catering expenses approved by the URI Support Fund will be limited to a maximum of \$15/person. Supporting documentation for catering expense reimbursement must include the date of the event, the names of all attendees, and the total cost per person.

4.1 Exclusions

The following expenses are NOT eligible for reimbursement through the URI Support Fund:

- Equipment or materials that remain with the student after the project is completed.
- Publication costs (e.g. journal page fees) for publications coauthored with a faculty member.
- Conference-related travel expenses, including conference registration fees.
- Materials or equipment required for capstone or related-courses supported by a faculty or department, or for which supplemental fees are assessed to students.
- Expenses that have already been incurred, prior to your Support Fund application.

5.0 Deadlines

- **Applications:** URI Support Fund applications are accepted on an ongoing basis. Applications normally must be received **at least four weeks** prior to need.

PLEASE NOTE

The URI Support Fund does not reimburse expenses incurred prior to application and approval. You must apply to and be approved for the URI Support Fund **BEFORE** incurring your expenses.

- **Expenditures:** Once approved, the proposed expenses must be incurred within 90 days of your Support Fund approval.
- **Reimbursement:** Applicants are responsible for initiating the reimbursement process **within 30 days of incurring their expenses**. Expenses submitted after this 30-day period may not be eligible for reimbursement. If for some reason, you cannot submit your reimbursement within that time frame (e.g. due to travel or other extenuating circumstances), you must notify URI to make arrangements. **It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the reimbursement is submitted on time.**

6.0 Adjudication

Funding decisions will be made by the Academic Director of the Undergraduate Research Initiative or delegate. Applicants will normally be notified within three weeks of application. Decisions are not appealable.

6.1 Adjudication criteria

URI Support Fund applications are assessed based on the following adjudication criteria:

Alignment with URI functions & Support Fund priorities	0 = does not align with URI functions or Support Fund priorities 1 = weak alignment with URI functions & Support Fund priorities 2 = aligns with URI functions, lower priority activity 3 = strong alignment with URI functions and a high-priority activity
Impact on student(s)	0 = no impact 1 = small impact 2 = impact on student(s) 3 = important and lasting impact on student(s)
Financial need	0 = no demonstration of financial need 1 = weak justification of financial need

	2 = clear financial need 3 = strong financial need; project could not continue without support
Minimum score for funding = 6, with no zeros in any category	

7.0 Final report

A final report is due for all URI Support Fund projects within 30 days of incurring the proposed expenses, and must be submitted prior to reimbursement. The report is to be submitted online through [Google Forms](#).

The URI Support Fund is made possible through the generosity of donors. The purpose of the final report is to illustrate to current and potential donors the impact of their support in creating opportunities for undergraduate students to participate in research and creative activities at the University of Alberta. Please note that it is NOT a technical or financial report. Your report may be used for publication or promotional purposes, and must be written in language appropriate for a non-technical audience.

Please submit any web links, images, news articles, or other relevant documents you wish to share about the project via email to uriadmin@ualberta.ca.

8.0 Reimbursement

8.1 Deadline for reimbursement

Reimbursement of expenses must be made within 30 days of the expenses being incurred. Expenses submitted after this 30-day period may not be eligible for reimbursement. If for some reason, you cannot submit your reimbursement within that time frame (e.g. due to travel or other extenuating circumstances), you must notify URI to make arrangements. **It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the reimbursement is submitted on time.**

8.2 Reimbursement policies

- Only those expenses which were approved for funding and for which original receipts/proof of payment are provided will be reimbursed. We are unable to reimburse expenses without original receipts.
- The URI will only reimburse the amount you were originally approved for (up to a maximum of \$500).
- For any projects involving human participants or animals, proof of ethics approval must be submitted to URI prior to reimbursement.
- For group activities (e.g. poster sessions, student group events, etc.) your supporting documentation must include a list of all students whose participation was supported by the URI Support Fund.

- Expenses and reimbursements must be in alignment with University policies. Please refer to the following documents for more information:
 - [Travel Reimbursement Procedure](#)
 - [Schedule of Allowable Travel Expenses](#)
 - [Goods and Services Expense Reimbursement Procedure](#)

NEW IN 2017:

URI can no longer directly reimburse most U of A speed codes. If you are approved by the URI Support Fund and your expenses will be paid with a U of A speed code or U of A credit card, **please contact URI prior to incurring your expenses** for instructions on how to charge the approved expenses to URI. **Failure to do so may result in your expenses not being covered by the URI Support Fund.**

NEW IN 2017 - Limits related to Catering Expenses

Catering expenses approved by the URI Support Fund will be limited to a maximum of \$15/person. Supporting documentation for catering expense reimbursement must include the date of the event, the names of all attendees, and the total cost per person.

8.3 Reimbursement process & required documentation

STEP 1: Submit your report for your URI Support Fund project. **Your reimbursement will not be processed until your report has been received.** Please submit your report through [this Google Form](#). (See [Sec 7.0](#) for more information about the final report)

STEP 2: **The person who incurred the expense should complete the reimbursement process.** URI cannot, for example, reimburse a student for an expense incurred by a professor, even if the student is listed as the primary applicant on the Support Fund. If more than one person incurred expenses under the same Support Fund project, please consult URI for guidance about your reimbursement.

STEP 3: Ensure that you have all the appropriate documentation/proof of payment for your reimbursement. **Your reimbursement cannot be completed without original receipts and proof that the expenses were paid.**

NEW IN 2017 - Required documentation for group events

In addition to proof of payment required for reimbursement, supporting documentation for group events (e.g. poster sessions, student group activities, etc.) involving multiple students must include a list of all students whose participation was supported by the URI Support Fund.

Examples of appropriate documentation include:

- Original, itemized receipts from the vendor showing the amount paid, the date paid, and method of payment.
- For travel expenses, original receipts (as above) plus boarding passes indicating proof of travel.

Examples of insufficient documentation include:

- Receipts that do not include details about the vendor, items purchased, amount paid, date of payment, and method of payment.
- Receipts that are illegible
- Scans, copies, or photos of original receipts
- Order confirmations or invoices that do not indicate that payment was received.
- Moneris (credit/debit card) receipts that are unaccompanied by a complete itemized receipt showing the goods/services purchased.

STEP 4: Contact URI (uriadmin@ualberta.ca) to arrange your reimbursement. Depending on your situation (i.e. your student/employment relationship with the university, method of payment), different reimbursement procedures may apply. We may request that you schedule a brief appointment with us to review your receipts and complete your reimbursement paperwork.

9.0 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) if you need access to the URI logo for acknowledgement purposes.

10.0 Media and donor stewardship requests

The URI Support Fund is made possible through the generosity of donors. As such, recipients of the URI Support Fund may be invited to share their research experiences through media requests and donor stewardship activities. Past recipients are our best ambassadors for the URI Support Fund 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 Support Fund program, please contact the URI office at uri@ualberta.ca.