

DEVELOPING AN UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH GRANT PACKAGE

Think of your research grant application as a package; it has many elements to support your interesting and innovative project and to explain why you are the best person to do it.

PARTS OF THE URG PACKAGE

1. **Project Proposal-** Your project proposal should be two-pages, single-spaced. It should be targeted to speak to a group of educated people, but ones who are not necessarily specialists in your field. Please see our “Crafting a Research Proposal” guide for a fuller explanation of this crucial part of your package.

2. **Letter of Support from Faculty-** A faculty letter of support is required for all applications. Well in advance of the deadline, you should be meeting with your advisor to work through the ideas and logistics of your proposal. She or he is an important resource and can write a much better letter of support if s/he is well informed of what you want to do. You might ask the faculty member to elaborate on certain parts of the project that are customary to one discipline but not to all- such as the paying of participants in the project- in order to better explain your plans for the grant. Since their endorsement is due within twenty-four hours of the grant deadline, it is a good idea to give them your material well in advance, so they may begin writing your letter. They will write a better letter of support if they are not under tremendous time constraints.

3. **Budget-** A budget is required only for Academic-Year URG applications. The level of detail in the budget simply needs to reflect your understanding of the logistical aspects of the project. If you propose international research travel for a Summer URG application, include with the proposal an itemized budget for the travel costs only.

4. **Appendices and Additional Materials-** Such additional materials will help strengthen particular kinds of project proposals.

***Bibliography-** Include a bibliography in the Appendix if you cite published books and articles in your proposal. Use whatever style guide is common in your field.

***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 a detailed list of which materials you will consult.

***Surveys and Questionnaires-**Include a copy of any surveys or questionnaires you plan to use in the research. Such materials will help the evaluation committee determine which kinds of specific information you generate to answer the research questions.

***Samples-** If you are doing a creative project, you may submit samples of your previous work, so that the committee can better assess the merits of your proposed creative project.

***Interview Appointments-** Include e-mail confirmations that interviewees have agreed to meet with you during your proposed research dates, especially government officials or professionals who often face time constraints. 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.

***Statements from Local Contacts-** Letters and emails supporting your research (intellectual, logistical, etc.) from contacts in the local area are important for projects done away from campus. 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 be simply invitations from professors or other institutional affiliates (like NGO workers, local government officials, etc.) to come and conduct research in a foreign locale.

***IRB Approval-** If you will work with human subjects in interviews or experiments, you must apply for IRB (Institutional Review Board) approval before submitting the URG application. You do not need to have IRB approval 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. This process is a lengthy one, so start early. If you are unsure if your project needs IRB approval, you should check with them. They are the sole authorities 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. Talk to IRB. For more information, see the IRB website, and use the appropriate link for your discipline:

<http://www.research.northwestern.edu/research/oprs/irb/training/trainingReq.html>

Need Help?

Contact us at urg@northwestern.edu to set up an appointment, or drop by our weekly info sessions on Wednesdays at 4:00 at the Office of Fellowships, 1940 Sheridan Road.

