

# Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources

## Agricultural Research Division

### Undergraduate Student Research Program

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#### INTRODUCTION

The Agricultural Research Division (ARD) is committed to providing undergraduate students with an exceptional research experience to assist in fulfilling their thesis requirement or other scholastic research at UNL. Funds designated by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Reallocation Plan along with unit matching funds support the ***IANR ARD Undergraduate Student Research Program***. The Program will support undergraduate students working with ARD faculty. This competitive grant program will also acquaint students with the scientific method, provide strong research and learning experiences, stimulate interest in teaching and research careers, and inform students about opportunities in graduate study.

#### GUIDELINES

##### **STUDENT ELIGIBILITY**

The program is open to undergraduate junior and senior students proposing to conduct their research with faculty who have an ARD appointment. Students must be enrolled at UNL for the duration of the ARD Undergraduate Student Research Program. Enrollment in the appropriate undergraduate thesis seminar or other research oriented seminar courses before or during the period of mentored research is strongly encouraged. Undergraduate students that have previously received funding from this program are ***not eligible*** to apply.

##### **FUNDING**

ARD will provide funding of up to \$2,500 per student, for a maximum of 12 months. Also required are 100% matching funds from departments and/or faculty research programs. Funds may be used for research expenses, travel to conferences, registration fees, and student hourly wages. Unexpended funds will be returned to ARD.

Funds will be transferred to the faculty member's department to support the proposed research. Students ***will not*** receive funds directly.

##### **APPLICATION PROCESS AND FORMAT**

The proposal must be authored ***by the student*** with guidance from the faculty mentor. Proposals must be sent via email (***one combined PDF file***) to [ardgrants@unl.edu](mailto:ardgrants@unl.edu) and received by the published deadline.

The proposal must include the following:

1. Cover page (*download Application Cover Page*)
2. A clear statement of the problem and explanation of how the proposed research will address the problem (*maximum one page*)
3. A work plan that includes goals, objectives, methods and a timeline (*maximum two pages*)
4. A comprehensive budget table and detailed justification for the up to \$2,500 request from ARD and the 100% matching funds approved by the home department (*maximum one page*).
5. A letter from the faculty mentor describing their support for the student's research goals, and working relationship with the student

6. A statement written by the student describing career goals (*maximum one page*)
7. An independent study contract (available for download [here](#)) that describes the joint expectations of the faculty mentor and student for fulfilling the grading requirement (This is *optional* unless research opportunity is used for class credit.)

### **FINAL REPORT**

At the conclusion of the project, the student will submit a final report to ARD [ardgrants@unl.edu](mailto:ardgrants@unl.edu) within 30 days of project termination that includes a brief description of the project, budget/expenditure summary and a summary of the findings. A one-page executive summary should be included which provides potential impacts of the study.

### **RESEARCH PRESENTATION**

Each student is expected to present their findings at one of the following:

1. UNL Undergraduate Research Conference
2. Nebraska Academy of Sciences Annual Meeting
3. Professional meeting in their field

The student is required to notify the ARD Office [ardgrants@unl.edu](mailto:ardgrants@unl.edu) prior to their presentation with the time and location so that ARD faculty can be encouraged to attend. Students are also encouraged to make presentations to the appropriate student club or organization and at departmental seminars.

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

### **SELECTION PROCESS**

Proposals will be evaluated, by an ARD assigned committee, based on relevance and quality of the proposed projects according to the following criteria:

1. Research addresses issues in agricultural sciences, biology/life sciences, human sciences, or natural resources that are important within ARD
2. Originality of research and potential to contribute to the discipline
3. Potential for successful collaboration with faculty
4. The potential for the proposed research experience to contribute to the student's career goals
5. Appropriateness of proposed budget including matching funds
6. Distribution of projects throughout disciplines that are relevant to ARD
7. Proposal submitted with all required elements