

Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Agricultural Research Division

Undergraduate Student Research Program

Applications must be submitted to ARD by 5:00 p.m. January 30th 2026

INTRODUCTION

The Agricultural Research Division (ARD) is committed to providing undergraduate students with an exceptional research experience to assist in fulfilling their honor 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 encouraged. Undergraduate students who 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. Applicants must fill out the [online application](#) and attach the required documents. Application and documents must be completed by the published deadline.

The files may be submitted in different formats, however a single .pdf is preferred.

1. **A clear statement** of the problem and explanation of how the proposed research will address the problem (maximum one page)
2. **A work plan** that includes goals, objectives, methods, expected outcomes, impact, references, and a timeline (maximum two pages)
3. **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. Specify what items in the

budget will be covered by ARD and what will be covered by the department's matching funds (maximum one page).

4. **A letter from the faculty mentor** describing their support for the student's research goals, commitment to match, and working relationship with the student
5. **A statement** written by the student describing career goals (maximum one page)

Each section should be titled clearly.

FINAL REPORT

At the conclusion of the project, the student will submit a final report to ARD 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.

STUDENT PROFILE

Successful applicants will be featured on the ARD website, including a photo and a summary of their project.

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 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