



Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity

**2025-2026 Hooper Undergraduate Research Award (HURA)
and
Urdea Undergraduate Research Award
Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Application Period: Applications will be accepted
February 1 through March 1, 2025, at 11:59 pm

Applications and faculty recommendations must be submitted electronically using the online application system link below:

nau.edu/HURA

The Hooper Undergraduate Research Award (HURA) program is soliciting applications from full-time NAU undergraduate students for research, scholarly, or creative projects in any academic discipline. The HURA program, named for Dr. Henry O. Hooper in honor of his dedication to promoting research at NAU, encourages undergraduate students to pursue academic interests outside of their regular coursework by providing funding that will enable them to work on special projects of their own design. Since the inception of the HURA program, more than 500 students across all of NAU's colleges have discovered the benefits of these hands-on learning opportunities in laboratories, studios, libraries, and field sites.

For the Urdea Collaborative Research Awards, named for Dr. Mickey Urdea, students propose an interdisciplinary project that includes at least one student from the College of the Environment, Forestry, and Natural Sciences **and** one student from the Steve Sanghi College of Engineering. The Urdea application process and award administration are the same as the HURA, therefore for the purposes of this document HURA includes both Hooper Undergraduate Research Awards and Urdea Collaborative Research Awards.

Funding:

Students will be able to request funding for student-led research, scholarly, and creative activities. Proposals with one or two applicants can request up to \$5,000 and proposals with three or more applicants can request up to \$7,500. Urdea applicants may request up to \$7,500.

Funding may be used to pay an hourly rate to the student, purchase materials relevant to the project, and/or cover travel expenses related to the project, including travel to present the outcomes of the work. **Funds not expended during the award period will be forfeited.**

Funds cannot be used to replace existing funding being used to support undergraduates already involved in research, scholarly, and creative activities. This program is not intended to fund students working on faculty research projects; it is intended to support student-initiated projects. More than one proposal for the same project will be considered as one application.

Eligibility: To be eligible, students must be:

- Enrolled as a full-time student in an undergraduate program for the semesters they are receiving the award. If the student works on their project during the summer, enrollment as a full-time student in spring 2025 and fall 2025 is required; the student does not need to be enrolled in summer courses. For the Urdea award, one of the students can be a graduate student.
- In good academic standing at the time of application and during the period in which the project is funded.

Award Time Period

Awards can be activated June 1, 2025, if all award conditions are met. Projects must be completed and all funds spent on or before May 9, 2026. If you will be graduating in December 2025, all funds must be spent by your graduation date. Award notification will be made by **April 7, 2025**.

Submission Process

The student initiates the application process, completes all sections of the application described below, and submits the required documents through the online application system. The faculty mentor and one additional reference must review the application portfolio and complete the recommendation section prior to the deadline.

1. Download the Application Template as a Word document and download the Budget Template as an Excel document.
2. Complete the application as outlined in this document.
3. Upload the completed Application and Excel budget into the online application system.
4. Provide your faculty mentor's name and email address in the system to generate an automatic request for them to fill out a recommendation form. You will need one additional recommendation from a faculty, staff, or field-specific expert who can speak to the relevance and feasibility of your project and the viability of your timeline. It is the student's responsibility to verify that both recommendations are submitted by the March 1 deadline.
5. Formatting (applies to entire application):
 - Font: Any standard font (e.g., Times New Roman, Arial, Tahoma, etc.) may be used
 - Font size: 12-point or larger
 - Spacing: Text may be single- or double-spaced; must be consistent throughout document
 - Margins: Page margins should be no less than one-half inch on all sides

Complete application must be submitted through the online application system by March 1, 2025, 11:59 pm.

Applications will be assessed on the significance of the proposed work, quality of the proposal, feasibility of the proposed timeline, educational benefit to the student, diversity of disciplines represented in the proposed work, and where applicable, the inclusion of community engagement.

Academic Integrity

NAU expects every student to firmly adhere to a strong ethical code of academic integrity in all their scholarly pursuits. The primary attributes of academic integrity are honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, and responsibility. As a student, you are expected to submit original work while giving proper credit to other people's ideas or contributions. Acting with academic integrity means completing your assignments independently while truthfully acknowledging all sources of information, or collaboration with others when appropriate. When you submit your work, you are implicitly declaring that the work is your own. Academic misconduct may result in serious disciplinary consequences. All students are encouraged to complete NAU's online academic integrity workshop available in the E-Learning Center and should review the full [Academic Integrity policy](#). Any incidents or submissions that violate academic integrity expectations will be handled in alignment with processes outlined in this policy, with Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity personnel serving in the faculty and chair roles and Provost's Office leaders serving in the associate dean role.

Role of the Faculty Mentor

It is the role of the faculty mentor to help students refine and grow their grant writing skills. Mentors should not write or rewrite any portion of a student's proposal, which may be considered academic misconduct on the part of the student. While a mentor may give an example of how they might correct or improve a sentence, it is important that the student then put their thoughts into their own words. It is also important that the mentor identify any possible academic integrity issues in a student's proposal and help them learn to give credit to the sources they have used.

Generative Artificial Intelligence

Any work submitted by students is expected to be entirely generated by the student(s) themselves, working individually or in a group. Do not submit content generated using AI tools like ChatGPT or CodePilot for your application. Violations of this policy will be considered academic misconduct.

The Application Components (must be submitted in the order listed below):

1. Abstract of project

The applicant should clearly state the goals and purpose of the project and include an overall statement on the background of the project, potential importance, general overview of the methods, and expected outcomes. The abstract is limited to 250 words.

2. Project Description (may not exceed 5 pages, whether single- or double-spaced)

This section of the proposal provides a clear and concise description of the proposed project and **must include the following section headings in the order shown below**. If a given section is not applicable to a proposed project, the section heading should still be included, followed by the text "Not Applicable."

- a. **Introduction.** Include the purpose and relevance of the project (research hypothesis to be tested, rationale for the creative/scholarly activity, problem to be investigated, etc.; i.e., the how, what, and why of the project.)
- b. **Potential Importance.** Describe the benefit of the proposed work in its importance to the student, university, the community, and how it attempts to make a unique contribution to the academic discipline.
- c. **Methods.** Describe the research methods or creative techniques in detail that will be used for this project including a justification of why these techniques will be used to carry out project activities.
- d. **Expected Outcomes** Describe what you expect to find, learn, and/or produce as a result of conducting this project.

- e. **Dissemination Plan.** All work will be presented at the OURCA Reception and the Undergraduate Symposium in April 2026.

Optional: Students are encouraged to present their project to additional audiences through a presentation, workshop, publication, or other type of event. If you choose to pursue this option, discuss the venue, the specific audiences/communities you hope to engage with, and when the event will take place. If you plan to publish your work, what venue will be targeted? Should financial support be needed, those funds can be also requested in the budget. What will you need for successful execution of the event?

- f. **Roles of the Participants.** Describe the expectations and responsibilities of the student and those of the faculty mentor.

- g. FOR PROJECTS WITH A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMPONENT ONLY.

NAU is committed to engaging the local and regional community in a mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity. If your proposal engages the local or regional community, then your project will be considered for an additional \$500. Examples of eligible community engagement include but are not limited to: working with a local business or government entity to address one of their specific needs; disseminating the outcomes of your project in a local or regional setting beyond that of a traditional conference; or incorporating a service or knowledge exchange with a local or regional partner (e.g., hosting a workshop at a local school).

Please answer these questions (max 300 words):

- With which community do you plan to work?
- What are the steps you plan to take to engage this community?
- How do you plan to measure success for both your project and the community?

- h. FOR URDEA APPLICANTS ONLY. In addition to completing the requirements for a HURA proposal as outlined above, Urdea applicants also need to answer the following questions (max 400 words):

- How do you believe working as an interdisciplinary team (with students from different fields of study) will positively impact your project?
- How will working as an interdisciplinary team benefit the team members and the discipline(s) of those involved?

3. **Timeline.** Describe when the various phases of the project will be conducted. Sufficient time should be allocated for writing up the final report upon completion of the project. The timeline template is included in the Application Template on the [HURA website](#).

4. **References Cited** (if applicable/optional).

5. Qualifications of the Applicant

The applicant's **resume not exceeding 2 pages** should reflect past activities and experiences related to the proposed project, if applicable. Resumes are intended to demonstrate that the applicant(s) is/are qualified to carry out the work. If other students will be involved, resumes of those students should also be included. **Do not include student applicant names in resumes.**

6. Budget

There is no "typical" amount of funding per project as each project will have different funding needs. Budgets should be developed according to the needs of the project. Project budgets may not exceed \$5,000 for one or two students or \$7,500 for three or more students for an academic year project. **Budgets must be submitted using the budget form provided** on the [HURA website](#) or [Urdea website](#) and **all expenses must be justified.**

- a. **Personnel:** Funding may be requested for up to 15 hours/week of hourly wage (\$16.50 per hour) for a maximum of 15 weeks during the fall and/or spring semesters, depending on the needs of the project. Teams of three or more are eligible for additional funds to ensure all grant members receive fair and equitable pay for the time required for the project. Therefore, if personnel requests vary among team members, the team must explain the reason for the variation in the budget justification. During the summer (June 1-August 24), funding may be requested for up to 40 hours/week for up to eight weeks. The student will not be required to register for summer classes. All personnel costs must be justified in terms of the number of hours each specific project task and activity will take to complete. (See examples provided on the budget template spreadsheet.)
- b. **Operations/Equipment:** All purchases will need to receive prior approval by OURCA staff. Funding may be requested for necessary **expendable** project supplies and contractual (e.g., service-based) expenses. Operations expenses must be itemized and clearly justified. Non-expendable equipment purchases will remain the property of OURCA after the project has concluded. If you plan to reimburse research participants, you can use gift cards but not cash.
- c. **Travel: Up to \$1,500** of funding may be requested for travel expenses associated with fieldwork or the presentation of results of the project at a conference or professional meeting. All travel expenses should be justified by category of expense (e.g., transportation, lodging, registration fees).

NOTE: To receive travel reimbursement for the use of a personal vehicle, or to use a NAU vehicle, you must become a NAU authorized driver and pass an online defensive driving course; information is located on the [NAU Facility Services Safety & Training](#) website.

The HURA program does not require or encourage cost-sharing, matching, or in-kind contributions. Projects that include outside support will not be given a more favorable review than projects relying solely on HURA program support. However, if a project relies heavily on outside support, applicants must describe these outside contributions in the green columns of the budget form and in the budget justification so that the reviewers are clear that the applicant has the necessary resources to carry out the work.

7. Faculty Mentor/Department Recommendations

Two recommendations will be required for each application:

- a. one by the faculty mentor
- b. one by another faculty or administrator in your department who can speak to the relevance and feasibility of your project. This recommendation should not focus on the qualifications of the student. Rather, it should address the importance of the proposed research project to your discipline, the current need for the project and the alignment of methods to standard practices within the discipline, realistic expected outcomes, sufficient budgetary support to complete the project, and a realistic timeline.

Students will submit email addresses for both recommenders in the online application system. Once the emails have been submitted, the recommenders will receive an online request for the recommendation. Students should provide sufficient notice to the recommenders. The recommendations **must be completed after** reviewing the final version of the application materials.

The Application Process: Who does what?

Activity/ Responsibility	Student	Faculty Mentor
Develop the idea for a research, scholarly, or creative project	Students can find ideas for projects from a variety of sources such as courses they have taken, scholarly interests of a faculty member, or ideas of their own that they would like to explore further. Students may work within or outside of their major field of study.	A faculty mentor with a general area of interest may encourage a student to pursue a project in that area, but the formulation of the project itself should be primarily the student's responsibility. The faculty member may provide feedback and constructive criticism during the formulation of the project and proposal.
Review program guidelines and download application forms	The student should carefully read the Request for Proposals (RFP) guidelines and download the application forms from the HURA website. The student should forward a copy of the program guidelines to the faculty mentor.	Faculty mentors should identify and encourage outstanding students to apply. The faculty mentor should review program RFP guidelines to understand the role of the faculty mentor in advising the student throughout all phases of the application process.
Collaboration	The discussion between student and faculty mentor should lead to an agreement on the nature and scope of the project, the method of inquiry or creative activity, and expected outcomes. Discussions should also include a proposed budget and timeline for completing the project. Students and their faculty mentors should expect to meet multiple times during the application process.	
Complete the application	The student prepares all elements of the application described above.	The faculty mentor reviews the project description, timeline, and budget in the document to ensure that the proposed work can be performed and supervised within the space, time frame, or level of support indicated.
Submit the application	The student sends a request to faculty for recommendation through the application system and uploads the required documents no later than 11:59 PM on March 1, 2025. Late or incomplete proposals will not be accepted.	The faculty mentor reviews the final version of the application. The mentor then completes the mentor recommendation no later than 11:59 PM on March 1, 2025. Late or incomplete proposals will not be accepted.

Role of the Faculty Mentor

The Faculty Mentor is expected to:

1. Provide guidance to the student in all aspects of project management.
2. Mentor the student throughout the project period and meet with the student a minimum of every two weeks.
3. Oversee the implementation of the project as described in the original grant application and any approved subsequent amendments or modifications.
4. Oversee this project for its entirety.
5. Actively mentor the student during the summer, if applicable.
6. Monitor the student's budget. Our department will not approve any expenses in excess to the awarded grant funding. Any overage may be the responsibility of the student or the mentor's department.

7. Understand that this award has been granted to the student(s) on the initial proposal and cannot be transferred to another student should the grantees no longer be able to carry out the project.
8. Understand that the student is required to present at the Undergraduate Symposium in April 2026.
9. Agree to assist the student with IRB, IACUC, or Field Safety Checklist, if applicable.
10. Agree to attend the Faculty Mentor orientation meeting or watch an online video of the meeting.

Proposal Review

The review committee is made up of faculty and professional research staff at NAU from various colleges and departments. Because review committee members vary in their areas of expertise, applicants must use clear non-technical language and refrain from using unexplained jargon specific to their field of study in their project descriptions; your proposal will be reviewed by at least one faculty member *not* from your department.

The review committee scores each proposal, paying close attention to project design, faculty and student roles, outcomes and dissemination, and feasibility of budget and timeline. Applicants may request copies of their reviews after May 10, 2025.

Terms and Conditions of Award

Students may not receive more than 2 HURA awards per undergraduate academic career.

1. **Mandatory Awardee Meeting:** Recipients are **required** to attend an information meeting following the announcement of award recipients in April and May 2025. Faculty mentors have their own awardee meeting.
2. **Award Activation Documents:** All documents requested in the award letter (e.g., signed award acceptance and faculty acknowledgement forms, proof of academic standing and full-time status, completion of CITI tutorial) must be on file with the Undergraduate Research Coordinator **prior to beginning the project** to activate the award. Institutional Review Board or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee approval, a field research safety, or any other project-specific conditions plan must be completed before the student can start that portion of their research.
3. **Full-time Student in Good Standing:** Recipients must be full-time students in good academic standing with NAU during each semester of financial support. It is the student's responsibility to provide documentation of this requirement for the award to be activated and continued during the year.
4. **Academic Credit:** Recipients can enroll for up to three-credit hours per semester of undergraduate research, independent study, internship, field work, or another appropriate course for academic credit for every semester that they receive funding.
5. **Completion of CITI - Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Tutorials:** HURA recipients must complete and pass the RCR student training modules appropriate for their discipline with scores of 80% or better and submit a copy of the final transcript/certificate. Instructions on how to register and access these tutorials is provided on the [Research Integrity webpage](#).

6. Dissemination of Results: HURA recipients are **required** to present at the NAU Undergraduate Symposium and at the OURCA Reception in April 2026. Additionally, awardees are encouraged to make presentations at other public venues or professional meetings and should mention all such presentations in the interim progress and final reports described below. Any posters, publications, or presentations should credit or acknowledge the funding for the project to the Hooper or Urdea Undergraduate Research Award.

7. Project Reporting:

- a. Two one-on-one meetings and two reports are required from recipients: One-on-one meetings with the HURA Coordinator each semester: October and February
- b. **Interim progress report** (due December 13, 2025)
 - Use the template provided on the [HURA website](#).
 - Describe and assess progress toward outcomes compared to original timeline
 - Review (and revise) the project timeline and/or budget, if warranted
 - Include photos of you working on your project, if available.
- c. **Final report** (due May 9, 2026)
 - Description of extent to which the goals and objectives of the project have been achieved
 - Description of the outcomes/results of the project and how they were disseminated
 - Statement describing the benefits to the student as a result of participation in the project
 - Summary of how funds were used (e.g., budget vs. actual)
 - Summary of the departmental and/or other contributions to the project
 - Photos of you working on your project, or presenting your results, if available
 - Completion of online questionnaire about your experience

These last three steps may or may not apply to your project.

- 8. Protection of Vertebrate Animals:** If the project involves collecting data from vertebrate animals, you **must obtain approval** from the [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee](#), **before** you conduct work on or house vertebrate animals. To facilitate the timeliness of gaining approval, applicants should contact the applicable oversight group PRIOR TO submitting a proposal.
- a. Build sufficient time for IACUC approval into your plan.
 - b. Work closely with your faculty mentor.
 - c. For additional questions, contact Kathleen Freel, Kathleen.Freel@nau.edu.
- 9. Institutional Review Board:** Applicants proposing projects that involve human subjects **must contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB)**
- a. **Read the materials on the IRB webpages before you complete your IRB application:** [Institutional Review Board](#) and follow links to additional pages.
 - b. Build sufficient time for IRB approval into your plan.
 - c. Obtain Letters of Authorization to conduct research at off-campus locations in advance.
 - d. Work closely with your faculty mentor.
 - e. For additional questions, contact the IRB office at 928-523-4340, irb@nau.edu.
- 10. NAU Field Safety Checklist:** Recipients whose projects involve field research off campus must complete the [NAU Field Research Safety Checklist](#) to activate their funding. This document includes details regarding dates of travel, location, and description of field research activities, emergency procedures, physical demands of the work, assessment of risks

associated with the activity or physical environment, and methods for mitigating those risks. The form should be completed in collaboration with **the faculty mentor, who then signs it as the “University Contact.”**

Questions? Contact the Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity at ug-research@nau.edu (with “HURA Question” in the subject line), 928 523-5569, or by appointment.