

PROPOSER GUIDE FOR SUMMER FELLOWSHIPS

I. Introduction

The Summer Fellowships are designed to support the scholarly activities of ETSU undergraduate students. Proposals for these grants are solicited once in the Spring semester and awarded for the Summer.

The Summer Fellowship program provides funding for student scholarships up to \$3,000, plus up to an additional \$500 to be used for purchases that support undergraduate research activity. An example would be laboratory consumables related to a project for which an undergraduate is involved. Another example could be travel to a facility in order to conduct the research. A Fellowship recipient must enroll in at least 1 credit hour in a summer term. The scholarship will then be disbursed to the student via Financial Aid.

There are some purchases that are generally not supported.

- Funds cannot be used to purchase books or subscriptions.
- Funds cannot be used for travel to conferences. However, the Travel Award Grants do support conference travel for undergraduate presentations.

II. Elements of the Proposal

To compete for a Fellowship, an undergraduate student should submit the following items:

- Cover Letter:* The proposer is to produce a single page “cover sheet” that contains the following essential information:
 - a. Title of project
 - b. Name of the student
 - c. Email of the student
 - d. Name of the faculty mentor
 - e. Email of the faculty mentor
 - f. Department of the student’s major
- Statement of Intent:* In no more than 1 page, the Statement of Intent should describe the student’s preparation for the project (such as coursework) and the impact of the project for the student’s education and possibly career. This is a personal statement and should be written in first person.
- Description of Research:* No more than 3 pages, the Description of Research presents the hypothesis, research plan, and any plans for presentation of results (such as a conference). The Description accomplishes several things.

1. the goal(s) of the research;
 2. the feasibility of the study, which includes the ability of the proposers to complete the work in the stated time frame;
 3. the role of the student in the project;
 4. the relevance of the budget;
 5. expected outcomes for the student;
 6. how results will be shared in a broader context (for example, in a presentation at the annual ETSU Boland Symposium or in a poster at the annual ETSU Appalachian Forum).
- D. *Bibliography*: A bibliography, or works cited, may be included to accompany the Description of Research, if needed. The bibliography is in addition to the Description and does not count toward the 3-page limit for the Description.
- E. *Short CV for the Faculty Mentor*: Not to exceed 3 pages.
- F. *Two Letters of Recommendation*: One letter should be from the faculty mentor.
- G. *Budget Sheet*: An excel spreadsheet is provided at the Fellowship website (see the section on Submission). The Budget enumerates each item or category for purchase over \$50, along with any shipping costs. For example, if the project calls for a box of test tubes, one could list this cost as (say): box of test tubes (100 count) and the total cost. The Budget should include the scholarship amount as one of the line items. Please contact the Director for any questions concerning the budget (contact information is at the end of Sect. V).
- H. *Signature Page*: Signatures are required of:
- the student,
 - the faculty mentor,
 - and the Department Chair.

Note that a student who's major resides in one Department but who pursues research under the direction of a faculty member in a different Department, it is the Chair for the supervisor's Department who should sign.

The proposal must include the above items in the order as listed. Please avoid deviating from this order.

Proposal Writing Tip: *A professor who was very successful in winning grant funding once told me that the worst thing that a proposer could do was to annoy the reviewers. How could that happen? For example, avoid using a font that is too small. It is better to shorten your proposal rather than make the reviewers strain to read tiny print. Similarly, print in tables or in figures should not be too small. Pay attention to the instructions. For example, avoid running over stated page limits, since this will likely not reflect well on your proposal in the eyes of the reviewers. Ultimately, as you compose your proposal, consider how your proposal will be perceived by an anonymous reviewer, who may not be familiar with you nor the work.*

III. The Submission Process

Proposals are ONLY to be submitted online, and through the online process.

Proposers must complete an online form that contains a variety of information, such as contact information. All fields in the online form must be completed for the form to submit.

Along with field entries, the form requires the upload of a single file (preferably pdf) that contains items A through H from Section II. (Speak with your faculty mentor if you need help generating the single pdf file.)

The individual items A through H may often come in the form of multiple individual files or hardcopy printouts. The proposer is to assemble these items in the correct order and then scan them to produce the single document file for uploading via the online form at the submission website.

The following details special considerations and policies for proposal submission:

- A. Sometimes a writer for a letter of recommendation will prefer to submit a confidential letter directly to the Director. This is common and perfectly fine. In such cases the submission must be by email to durca@etsu.edu. Hardcopy submissions will not be accepted.
- B. Proposals are not to be submitted by email. Instead the Director will retrieve the uploaded proposal file upon successful submission via the online process. Any proposals submitted by email to the Director will not be reviewed.
- C. Proposals are not to be submitted in hardcopy to the Director. Hardcopy submissions will not be reviewed.

Proposal Submission Tip: *When producing the scan of individual documents to form the single proposal file for upload, be sure to review that file thoroughly before submission. It sometimes happens that a page will be missing or out of order. Submissions are considered to be final, and only what is submitted can be reviewed.*

IV. The Review Process

There are a number of proposals submitted each year. Often, there is not enough funding to support all grant requests. A selection process based on “peer review” is used to determine which proposals are funded.

Peer review is the “gold standard” for funding of grant requests. The Director of Undergraduate Research & Creative Activities seeks out knowledgeable ETSU faculty to read proposals and to provide recommendations for funding. These peer reviewers are asked to consider all of the items detailed in the section on Elements of the Proposal and also the GPA of the student proposer. In addition, reviewers are asked to evaluate proposals on the basis of the following definition of “research”, adopted from the Council of Undergraduate Research (www.cur.org):

An inquiry or investigation conducted by an undergraduate student that makes an original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline.

After receipt of all reviewer recommendations, the Director will determine which proposals may be funded, given budgetary constraints.

Note that reviewers are additionally asked to comment on the suitability of the budget. The reviewers may suggest specific reductions, or increases, for proposed budgets. In such cases the Director may award a grant at a funding level that differs from the request, taking all or part of the suggested changes into account.

Proposal Review Tip: *A prolific researcher once told me that, “a proposal can be won or lost in the first line.” This of course is an exaggeration. Nonetheless, first impressions do matter, and the first few sentences of the Description of Research often “set the tone” for rest of the proposal. Make the first impression count.*

V. Awardee Responsibilities

If funded, students must report to the Office Coordinator in the Honors College at Yoakley Hall. The Office Coordinator will arrange all purchases for Fellowship awards.

Here are a number of specific considerations regarding expending the Fellowship award.

Office of Undergraduate Research & Creative Activities

ETSU Honors College

- A. Recipients of a Summer Fellowship should contact Office Coordinator as soon as possible to arrange a transfer of funds for the scholarship to ETSU Financial Aid. The scholarship funds are used when the student enrolls in a summer session. The summer course could be anything, but must be at least 1 credit hour (such as Independent Study). Residual funds from the scholarship will be disbursed to the student by Financial Aid.
- B. The faculty mentor and the student must make arrangements for how the work will be performed.
- C. If funds for supplies or research travel are requested, it is preferred that the funds be spent prior to the end of the Spring semester (i.e., by end of finals week). ETSU suspends the use of ebucs for purchases in May of each year. However, it may be possible to make some purchases via procard. The Fellowship recipient should contact Ms. Bryant as early as possible to make arrangements for any purchases.

Additionally, all Fellowship awardees are to submit a report (not to exceed 1 page) that summarizes the outcomes of the research. Included in this report should be information regarding any presentations related to the project. Note that projects are usually to be completed by August 15. The report is due by September 15 and can be emailed to the Director at durca@etsu.edu.

If there are presentations from work funded by a Fellowship award, we request that an acknowledgement be included to indicate that the work was supported by the ETSU Honors College and the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs.

Tip to Awardees: The experience of conducting research can be truly gratifying. There is often a sense of contributing to the solution of a problem, advancing a body of work, helping people, and/or developing insight concerning a process. It is also an opportunity for skill building. In many respects, undergraduates doing research in an academic setting are exposed to "best practices" in basic research. Consider the research project as a professional development opportunity.

Please direct questions to Richard Ignace, Director, by email to ignace@etsu.edu, or by phone at 423 439-6078.

- ◇ **MOTTO:** Pursue your passion.
 - ◇ **MISSION:** To promote and advance the sciences, humanities, and arts by engaging and supporting undergraduates in research.
 - ◇ **VISION:** To make undergraduate research an integral part of the university experience at ETSU.
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Appendix A: Checklist

- Obtain items A – H from Section II for the proposal submission.
- Organize the items into the correct order.
- Scan the documents to produce a single document file (preferably pdf).
- Complete the online form for submission. This serves as the cover sheet (element A from Section II).
- To submit the online form, upload the document file.

Appendix B: The Budget Sheet

Summer Fellowship Grant Budget

Student:
 Faculty:
 Project Title:

- Instructions**
1. List all items over \$50 separately
 2. Expenses *not allowed include:*

*Travel to conferences
 Routine office supplies
 Books, Subscriptions, Memberships*

	Description	Justification	Unit Cost	Total
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
			<i>Total</i>	<i>\$0.00</i>