

The *Student Undergraduate Research and Creative Awards (SURCA)* competition encourages and supports students to undertake research and creative projects that will contribute new insights in the student's chosen academic field. Research and creative projects must contain a basic or applied research component that involves the generation of new knowledge to the discipline, or documentation of a "beginning to end" creative process.

The proposal must be written and prepared by the student with guidance from a faculty mentor. Each proposal submitted to the College of Arts & Sciences by the appropriate date and that follows the guidelines stated below, will be distributed to a faculty committee representing various disciplines, who will review the proposal using the selection criteria defined below. **PROPOSALS THAT DO NOT FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES WILL NOT BE DISTRIBUTED TO THE COMMITTEE FOR REVIEW.**

Important Dates

Deadlines for Submission: October 11

Final Report Due: One month after project completion and no later than Dec 31, 2025

Purpose: To facilitate undergraduate research and creativity in the College of Arts & Sciences at Northern Kentucky University.

Student Eligibility: This grant is available to College of Arts & Sciences undergraduate students who will complete the project before they graduate. Students who plan to graduate the same semester that they submit a SURCA application should not apply. The student must demonstrate intent to present the findings minimally at one of the celebration opportunities on campus. A student must submit a final report before applying for a second award, and priority is given to students applying for a first award. Final reports must be submitted within one month of project completion.

The maximum amount for each application is \$750. If more than one student is working with the same faculty member on a related project, they may submit a separate application and clearly articulate the roles of each student in the project. In any case, each application has a maximum budget of \$750.

Grant Amount and Use: The maximum amount of this grant will be **\$750** (minimum of \$100). Allowable expenses are research and creative projects-related only and include equipment, supplies, project-related student travel, printing, software and other justified costs. All tangible items and materials, including books and software, purchased with grant funds remain the property of NKU. All purchases must conform to University policies set by the Purchasing Office. Unallowable expenses include research participant incentives (i.e. gift cards, prizes), stipends, wages and/or travel in order to present research findings or perform creative projects. If support is being sought to present research findings or perform projects at conferences or events, please refer to the *Student Presentation/Publication Award* offered by the College of Arts & Sciences.

Selection Criteria: All proposals will be reviewed and rated by a committee made up of faculty reviewers and a member from the Dean's Office of the College of Arts & Sciences. Proposals will be reviewed for content

and adherence to guidelines. Below is a list of criteria used for evaluation. As you compose each section of the proposal, keep these criteria in mind and be sure to convey to the reviewers as effectively as possible the following considerations:

- 1) Quality and clarity of written proposal
- 2) Purpose and significance
- 3) Feasibility of successful completion of the project within the proposed framework
- 4) Likelihood the student will learn and utilize appropriate techniques and methodology
- 5) Potential for publication, exhibition and/or presentations (in addition to the Celebration of Student Research and Creativity)
- 6) Documented proof of animal/human/biosafety subjects protocol submission, if applicable

Proposal Format: Students must complete the **application form which requests a 500 word proposal summary**. This summary should describe the purpose, significance, and objectives for the project along with a brief explanation of the procedure/timeline. In addition to the application form, candidates need to submit a budget using the Budget Form.

THE COMMITTEE WILL NOT ACCEPT AND REVIEW IF:

- The **application** is incomplete or is missing signatures.
- The provided **budget format** is not used.

Special Notes:

- Follow the **BUDGET** format (see Excel spreadsheet)
- Include **CONFIRMATION OF IBC/IACUC/IRB POLICIES (IF APPLICABLE)**. If the project involves recombinant DNA, biological materials, and select agents as defined by U.S. federal agencies, then approval from the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) must be obtained before funds are released. If the project involves the use of animals, approval from the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) must be obtained before funds are released. If human subjects are to be used, approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) must be obtained before funds are released. Policy and forms for IBC, IACUC and IRB may be viewed at <http://gero.nku.edu/research/rgc/irb.html>. Please include a statement that you understand these requirements and a confirmation that you will submit. "I (name) have read and understand the policies of NKU's (IBC, IRB or IACUC). I will abide by these policies and will, along with my faculty mentor, complete the appropriate paperwork before starting my project. If my project is awarded, I will not begin my project or spend any funds until I receive approval from the appropriate compliance committee." After this statement, please sign your name.
- You may include no more than two pages of appendices that support your project directly.

Students must email application materials to Dr. Danielle McDonald, Associate Dean, at mcdonaldd1@nku.edu by 4 pm on the deadline date.

Award Administration

Applicants will be notified by email (the NKU email address provided on the cover page) whether their research and creative project proposal will be funded and, if so, at what funding level. In all proposals where required, students must secure approval by the IBC, IACUC, or IRB before funds are released. (See instructions above, "Confirmation of IBC/IACUC/IRB Policies") The student's faculty mentor should work with their department academic coordinator regarding spending of the funds.

Final Report

Acceptance of a grant under this program carries with it an obligation by the student to submit a final report of the project to the faculty mentor, department chairperson, and to the College of Arts & Sciences within one month of project completion and no later than 13 months from the award date. This report (which can be the poster, Powerpoint, or paper from a presentation) must include a summary of the methodology used, the results of the project and any publications/presentations resulting from the project.

All publications/presentations resulting from this grant must acknowledge the "Northern Kentucky University College of Arts & Sciences, Student Undergraduate Research & Creative Award (SURCA)" for partial or full funding. All projects must be presented at the Celebration of Student Research and Creativity held annually in April.

The Role of a Faculty Mentor

The mentor coaches the student through the proposal writing as well as through project implementation and completion. It is important that the student have primary responsibility for his/her own project, even though it may be part of an ongoing project currently being conducted by the mentor. Although collaboration between student and mentor will vary with the nature of the student's project, mentoring a student requires the following:

- Consult with the student on the design of the project and review a draft of the student's proposal. **The mentor may not write the proposal; this is the student's responsibility.**
- Oversee the student's work on the project and consult at appropriate intervals **through completion of the project.**
- Facilitate spending for this project ensuring that only items approved for this award are purchased. Faculty members will have signature authority over the account created and may want to work with their department academic coordinators to determine the easiest way to manage the funds.
- Advise the student about writing the final report. If the mentor will be away when the final report is due, he/she should authorize a colleague to approve the report.
- Help the student prepare for the presentation at the Celebration of Student Research & Creativity. This presentation is a requirement of the program.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Danielle McDonald (mcdonald1@nku.edu) or (859)572-5831.