



2024-2025 Student Belonging and Community Awards Request for Proposals (RFP)

Description:

A strong sense of belonging has a significant impact on student success and well-being. One of the key reasons that students consider leaving a university is because they lack a sense of belonging. Belonging and social integration also correlate with many of the things that drive student success and lifelong fulfillment, including academic success and motivation, self-efficacy, a greater sense of self-worth, and overall mental wellbeing. Further, students who feel like they belong on campus are also more likely to use support resources like academic advising and financial aid.

The Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarly Activity (URSA) has funding available for up to \$5,000 for projects focused on cultivating a culture of respect, connection, belonging, and community for undergraduate students at UAF and UAF-affiliated campuses. Priority will be given to proposals that align with UAF-wide initiatives for improving the experience for undergraduate students, promoting student success, and fostering a sense of belonging and community while advocating for fair treatment of students. Students, staff, and faculty are encouraged to apply to fund applied research or scholarly/creative activities that support priority areas including, but not limited to, one or more of the following:

- fostering connectedness, belonging, and sense of community;
- embracing both commonalities and diversity within the human experience;
- cultivating kindness, compassion, and gratitude toward each other and ourselves;
- highlighting connections between community/personal identities and sustainability in the UAF community/environment;
- sparking dialogue about environmental and social issues that have a disproportionately negative impact on communities of color;
- providing opportunities for project-based and applied learning for the UAF community.

Award Details:

- The funding limit for this RFP is \$5,000
- Applicants may apply as an individual or as a group but are required to identify at least one eligible undergraduate student upon awarding.
- Funds may be used towards an undergraduate student fellowship, undergraduate student tuition (up to 4 credits for a course related to the project), travel to a fieldwork location, consumable supplies, or contractual services.
- Project work must take place between mid-October (when funds are available) and June 30, 2025.
- Funds must be spent by June 1, 2025.
- Applications will open July 15, 2024 and close September 8, 2024 at 11:59pm.
- Awardees will be notified via email on September 30, 2024.

Student Eligibility:

- Degree-seeking UAF undergraduate students (working toward an Occupational Endorsement, Certificate, Associate's Degree or Bachelor's Degree) of any year of study, any discipline and any UAF campus are eligible to apply.
- Students must be registered for at least 3 credits during both the Fall and Spring semester of the award term.
- Cumulative GPA of 2.3 or better (students on academic probation are not eligible).
- Students that have graduated are not eligible to participate.
- Student applicants must have a confirmed mentor (faculty, staff, researchers, or graduate students) for their project.
- Applicants may only submit one proposal for each request for proposal (RFP).
- Students MAY NOT receive funding from URSA and another source (such as BlaST, INBRE, URISE, etc.) during the same semester. This is to allow the maximum number of students to receive funding during a given term.

Criteria For Selection:

Award selections will be based on:

- 1) Written quality of the proposal and quality of the work plan.
- 2) Intellectual merit and scholarly/creative contribution of the project and its potential outcomes. 3) Student learning outcomes articulated in the proposal.
- 4) Adequate involvement of an approved mentor as demonstrated in a mentoring plan.
- 5) Feasibility of completion within the given timeline.

Selections will be made by the URSA Review Panel and the URSA Director. Reviewers are from all disciplines - be sure to write for a general audience! Look on the URSA website under "Award Information" for more details on judging criteria. The online application form will not allow saving. Please complete your application in another document and copy/paste when you are ready to submit.

1. Applicant Information

- a. Name
- b. UA ID
- c. UA Email
- d. Applicant UAF-affiliation (Undergraduate student, graduate student, researcher, staff or faculty)
- e. Please include information for each member participating on this project. Please include the following: Name, UA ID, UA Email, UAF-affiliation, and Anticipated Graduation Dates of all Undergraduate Students listed.
 - i. *Note: at least one member must be an URSA-eligible undergraduate student.
 - ii. *Note: If an undergraduate student submits the application, Mentor(s) listed will be required to complete an "URSA Mentor Confirmation Form" prior to the application deadline to be eligible for review.
- f. Department related to the proposed project.

- g. Please indicate the Fiscal Office to administer the award:
 - i. College of Business and Security Management (CBSM)
 - ii. College of Engineering and Mines (CEM)
 - iii. College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences (CFOS)
 - iv. College of Indigenous Studies (CIS)
 - v. College of Liberal Arts (CLA)
 - vi. College of Natural Science and Mathematics (CNSM)
 - vii. Career and Technical College (CTC)
 - viii. School of Education (SOE)
 - ix. Geophysical Institute (GI)
 - x. Institute of Arctic Biology (IAB)
 - xi. International Arctic Research Center (IARC)
 - xii. Rural Campuses
 - xiii. UA Museum of the North

2. Project Information

- a. Title of Project
- b. Abbreviated Project Description (50 words or less)
 - i. This will be used for public announcements if awarded.
- c. Project Description (300 words)
 - i. Provide an introduction to your project including a description of what you are doing and why you are doing it. Consider your research question, the belonging & community focuses listed in the RFP above, and your project goals or objectives.
- d. Project Background (300 words)
 - i. Outline the previous research and/or project work that has already taken place to set the foundation for your current project proposal. You may include historical discoveries, references of present literature, and/or descriptions of completed project tasks. You may also include your qualifications, including relevant coursework, research experience, creative activity experience, and any relevant extracurricular activities that may provide a basis for this proposal.
- e. Project Design (300 words)
 - i. Summarize the methods, skills, techniques, procedures, and/or protocols you plan to use to achieve your project goals. Please include a description of any UAF equipment or facilities access that will be needed to complete your project.
- f. Deliverables (300 words)
 - i. Explain what deliverables you plan to produce as a result of your project, such as a research paper, artwork, a presentation, or other tangible outcomes.
- g. Mentoring Plan (300 words)
 - i. Describe both the student(s)'s and the mentor(s)'s roles for this project. Please include information related to the frequency of student/mentor and tentative objectives for meetings between the student and mentor.

- h. Project Training and Approvals
 - i. Some, but not all, projects involve special training and/or approvals. Please check all that apply.
 - 1. research involving human participants, use of vertebrates, use of radiation/lasers/ significant chemical hazards; equipment training needed; no approvals or training needed.
 - ii. If yes, please provide your appropriate approval number (IACUC, IRB, IBC)
 - iii. If yes, please describe what training will be needed or indicate when a protocol assurance will be submitted (and by whom).
 - i. Project Timeline (File Upload)
 - i. *Only URSA timeline templates will be accepted for review.
 - ii. **Timelines should be completed in consultation between students and mentors.
 - iii. ***All project work must be completed no later than June 30, 2025.
3. Project Budget
- a. Reminders:
 - i. Be sure the amounts add up to the total amount requested. If a category does not apply to you, put 0 (zero) or N/A.
 - ii. A student may not hire another person to assist them.
 - iii. Funds may not be used for the mentor.
 - iv. URSA does NOT fund conference/competition travel via project awards.
 - v. Eligible expenses include undergraduate student fellowship, undergraduate student tuition (up to 4 credits for a course related to the project), travel to a fieldwork location, consumable project supplies, or contractual services. Equipment, software, subscriptions, and personal gear will not be considered for funding.
 - b. Total Amount Requested
 - i. *Maximum request is \$5,000.
 - c. Budget Justification (300 words)
 - i. Provide a detailed budget that outlines the expected expenses associated with the project.
 - ii. Have you applied for and received any other funds for this project?
 - iii. If yes, please list your funding source and the time frame for these awarded/proposed funds.
 - d. Upload a completed URSA Budget Form (File Upload)
 - i. *Only URSA budget templates will be accepted. Applications omitting or submitting alternate budgets will not be reviewed.
 - e. Budget Quotes Document (File Upload)
 - i. Please upload a consolidated PDF of the quotes/receipts for planned purchases and/or services requested in your budget.

4. Applicant Agreements:

- a. Applicant(s) found responsible for plagiarizing any part of their application will be disqualified from receiving funding for this proposal and may be disqualified from future funding opportunities.
- b. Undergraduate Student Applicant(s) understand that...
 - i. ... eligibility for funding depends on undergraduate student applicant(s) maintaining a GPA of 2.3 or higher, registration in at least 3 credits during the award term (or 3 credits in the Spring before AND the Fall following for summer awards), and the completion of any previous URSA awards.
 - ii. ... they MAY NOT receive funding from URSA and another UAF source (such as BLaST or INBRE) during the same semester.
- c. All members of an awarded group will be expected to meet with the URSA Coordinator for an agreement meeting within one week of the award notice.
 - i. This meeting will be used to finalize funding distributions, discuss mentor and student expectations during the award term, and to complete paperwork.
 - ii. Group members will be asked to complete a model release form, to sign any applicable award documents, and to provide a photo for the award announcement (individual or group shots).
 - iii. Applicant(s) understand that supplies and materials purchased for use in a funded URSA project are the property of the mentor's academic department at UAF. Personal items are not eligible for purchase using this award.
 - iv. Failure to complete the project or to spend all project funds by the end of the award term will require applicants to return all remaining funds to URSA within two weeks of the end of the semester.

5. Notice of Award Reporting

- a. Awarded applicants will be asked to complete the following reporting requirements:
 - i. Complete a mid-award blog post/student spotlight for the URSA website (Q&A format)
 - ii. Complete an online student reflection form by the end of the award period. Reflection forms may be found on the URSA website under "[URSA Resources](#)">"[Forms.](#)" Final products to be submitted via the reflection form include:
 1. Two project photos with captions: one photograph of the awarded student or group conducting research and a photo of choice (action shot, project shot, students and mentor, etc.);
 2. Final Deliverable: a research paper, artwork, a presentation, or other tangible outcome from your funded project.
 - iii. All project students are required to participate in [Research Day and Creative Activity Day](#) in April 2025 where they will participate via poster entry or otherwise to share their project outcomes (achieved or anticipated). Failure to participate in Research and Creative Activity Day will impact eligibility for future URSA awards.

Plagiarism Notice: Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the use of another's words or ideas as if they were one's own, including but not limited to representing, either with the intent to deceive or by the omission of the true source, part of or an entire work produced by someone other than the student, obtained by purchase or otherwise, as the student's original work or representing the identifiable but altered ideas, data, or writing of another person as if those ideas, data, or writing were the student's original work. This includes cutting and pasting text from one student's application to another, even if you are both applying for funding. Students found responsible for plagiarism in any part of their application will be disqualified from receiving funding for this proposal and may be disqualified from future URSA funding.