Undergraduate Research & Creative Activities Project & Travel Funding External Handbook

2022-2023 Funding Cycle
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The Center for Transformative Undergraduate Experiences (TrUE) Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Project & Travel Funding is establishing a new structure for 2022-2023. Please carefully review the information below.

**Eligibility**

All qualifying undergraduate research and creative activities (URCA) projects and travel applicants must be supervised by a Texas Tech University (TTU) or Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) faculty mentor. Faculty mentors can come from any TTU/TTUHSC department; however, they must hold a terminal degree (e.g. PhD, MFA, JD, etc.) in their academic discipline. To receive project support funding, undergraduate students must be enrolled at TTU as full-time undergraduate students at the time of application. The funded project must be completed prior to the student’s departure from TTU or transition to a graduate program. Recent TTU graduates and graduate students are not eligible for TrUE project and travel funding.

Beginning in Fall 2022, all requests for URCA Project and Travel Funding require a cash match from the faculty mentor for consideration. Match requirement details are provided in the Faculty Role in Project & Travel Funding Request section below. Matching resources must come from external or departmental sources. For instance, requesting funding for the same student from both the TTU Honors College Undergraduate Research Scholars program and TrUE would not be classified as an acceptably matched proposal.

Funding preference will be given to students who are not already financially supported by an established TTU URCA program (e.g. Honors College Undergraduate Research Scholars, McNair Scholars, CISER Undergraduate Research Scholars, etc.). Undergraduates who are receiving financial support from another TrUE program are ineligible to receive Project or Travel Funding within the same year.

**Faculty Role in Project & Travel Funding Request**

TTU faculty mentor begins the Project & Travel Funding process by completing the initial nomination form. A separate nomination for each student is required. Although the nomination is ultimately being submitted by the faculty mentor, project teams are encouraged to meaningfully involve the undergraduate student in the development and editing of the nomination.

**Project Funding Requests**

Faculty mentors are now required to identify matching funding to support the student on a dollar per dollar basis (up to $1,000). Matching support can take the form of additional student financial support, research supplies, etc. Match support must be current purchases pertinent to the undergraduate student the mentor is supporting. For example, existing equipment or supplies in the lab the student will use does not qualify but new consumable lab supplies for their project do qualify. As another example, conference registration, airfare, and other travel costs (in accordance with Procurement’s guidelines) also qualify as match support. If proposing an alternative form of matching support, the faculty mentor will be asked to explain how TrUE can best verify that the student received a direct benefit from this additional support.
Travel Funding Requests
TrUE Travel funding is transferred to TTU academic departments via a Budget Revision (BR). Faculty nominating an undergraduate student for travel support must supply a 16A-class FOP in their department to receive the TrUE travel funding (up to $500). The faculty mentor will need to coordinate with their department/program business support team to complete a TTU Travel Application for the student. TrUE does not submit travel applications on behalf of student travelers.

Post-Funding Snapshot
Faculty mentors will be asked to complete a brief form at the end of each Fall, Spring, and Summer term providing an update on student and project progress and outlining what matching support has been spent to-date. Mentors will be asked to submit snapshots until they indicate that the student’s funded activities are complete and all commitment matching support has been expended.

Undergraduate Student Role in Project & Travel Funding Request
Undergraduate students interested in receiving project or travel funding are encouraged to proactively identify a suitable faculty mentor for their project. While the student is not responsible for submitting the initial funding nomination, it is expected that they actively participate in preparing the requested documentation. For instance, students should proactively ask their mentor how they will contribute to the research project.

Project Funding Requests
If a faculty project funding nomination receives preliminary approval, the nominated student will receive an email prompting them to:

a) Complete the TrUE Student Funding Application
b) Schedule a meeting with the TrUE Undergraduate Research Administrator (URA)
c) Schedule a subsequent meeting with the TrUE Business Coordinator (BC)

In the first (URA) meeting, the project funding student will review the program requirements and discuss any questions the student may have. Faculty mentors are welcome but not required to participate in the (URA) meeting. In the second (BC) meeting, the project funding student will complete all required employment eligibility and onboarding paperwork. Students should carefully review the Project Funding Student Documentation Processes section of this document prior to the BC meeting. Funding will be awarded in accordance with standard TTU Payroll processing timelines—usually 2-4 weeks after a student completes all required onboarding paperwork.

If a student cannot complete steps a), b), and c) within two weeks of the TrUE notification email, they should coordinate an alternative timeline with the URA or risk forfeiting funding.

Travel Funding Requests
If a faculty travel funding nomination receives preliminary approval, the nominated student will receive an email prompting them to:
a) Complete the TrUE Student Funding Application
b) Schedule a meeting with the TrUE Undergraduate Research Administrator (URA)

PLEASE NOTE: These steps will need to be completed at least 30 days prior to the trip.

In the first (URA) meeting, the travel funding student will review the program requirements and discuss any questions the student may have. Faculty mentors are welcome but not required to participate in the (URA) meeting. Travel funding will be transferred to the department completing the travel application once the travel funding student has completed steps a) and b).

If a student cannot complete steps a) and b) within two weeks of the TrUE notification email, they should coordinate an alternative timeline with the URA or risk forfeiting funding.

Review and Award Processes

TrUE will review both Faculty Nominations and Student Funding Applications in the order they are received, on a rolling basis, until all funds are committed for the award cycle. Typically, decisions will be announced via email within 2 weeks of the Nomination or Application submission.

What is an EOPS transaction?
EOPS stands for Employee One-Time Payment System. Funding through EOPS means that the student will receive a lump sum payment directly from Texas Tech University. The stipend will not include any fringe benefits (e.g. health insurance). The intent is to provide the student the highest degree of flexibility in using the funds to support their work; however, project teams should be careful to follow all TTU operating policies regarding the acquisition of any project supplies. For instance, TrUE project funding may not be used to purchase hazardous materials subject to special procurement and safety protocols.

Please keep in mind that EOPS transactions are subject to taxes. Texas Tech Payroll and Tax Services will send a W-2 Form to the student to report the award payment to the IRS. If a student is not eligible for employment in the United States, an alternate funding process will be determined during the student’s appointment with the BC. Please be aware that the tax withholding may be up to 30% for non-US residents. Student questions regarding the processes should be directed to the TTU Payroll and Tax Services Department. The Payroll and Tax Services Department cannot give tax advice, so questions about the specific tax implications of the Project Funding should be directed to a tax professional.

What is a BR transaction?
BR stands for Budget Revision System, an online system for submitting changes to the operating budget. In this particular case, the BR system will be used to transfer funds between departments. TrUE will transfer awarded Travel Funding to the department completing the travel application for the student. TrUE is not responsible for travel applications or travel arrangements.

Project Funding Student Documentation Process
1. The undergraduate student is responsible for responding to the preliminary award email to complete the Student Funding Application and coordinate in-person meetings with TrUE’s URA and BC within 2 weeks of the award notice.

2. During these meetings, the student will receive their Project Funding Award Packet.
   a. **TTU Photo Testimonial Release Form**
   b. **New Hire Forms**
      i. **I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification**
         1. Please look at page 3 as you will need to bring two forms of ID with you to the meeting, or you will have to reschedule the meeting.
         2. Please do not sign this form until your meeting with the BC.
         3. Noncitizen Students – Please contact the BC if you are not F-1 status; however, all F-1 students will complete their I-9 packet as usual.
      ii. **Employee’s Withholding Allowance Certificate (W4) Form**
      iii. **Texas Tech Biographical Data Form**
      iv. **TTU System Community Conduct, Intellectual Property Rights, Excerpts from the State Government Code, Excerpts from the General Appropriation Act**
      v. **Employee Acknowledgement**
      vi. **Proof of Selective Service Registration (males 18 – 25, US citizens only)**
      vii. **Voluntary Self-Identification of Disability**
      viii. **VEVRAA**
      ix. **TTUS Confidentiality Agreement**
      x. **Complete the TTU Student Records Confidentiality Agreements**

3. The Student Documentation Packet must be completed and submitted to the BC during the in-person meeting.

4. TrUE will process the Student Project Award Packet promptly and submit for funding; however, it is important to note that EOPS payments are subject to normal TTU Payroll timelines. Depending on factors such as direct deposit versus physical check payment, EOPS may take 4-8 weeks. **Students should note any special circumstances or concerns in their meetings with the TrUE URA and BC.**

### Travel Funding Student Documentation Process

1. The undergraduate student is responsible for responding to the preliminary award email to complete the Student Funding Application and coordinate an in-person meeting with the URA within 2 weeks of the award notice.

2. During this meeting, the student will receive their Travel Funding Award Packet.
   a. **TTU Photo Testimonial Release Form**

3. The student must follow TTU Travel policies as outlined by the department completing their travel application.

### Funding Requirements
To ensure the best experience for each student and assist TrUE in celebrating their incredible work, each funded student is required to complete the following:

1. Complete all required documentation from in-person meetings
2. Take at least 3 candid photos of the student actively participating in the research or creative project or presenting at a conference, which will be submitted through the Post-Project Survey
3. Complete TrUE Post-Project Funding Survey
4. Submit abstract for Transformative Undergraduate Experiences Symposium (TUES) or Undergraduate Research Conference (URC)**
5. Present research at the annual TUES or URC**

*Please note if all deliverables are not met, future TrUE funding for both the student and the faculty mentor could be negatively impacted.

**Students planning to graduate prior to the next available TUES or URC should refer to guidance in Presentation Requirement section below.

Presentation Requirement Details

Funded students are required to present their scholarly work during the annual Transformative Undergraduate Experiences Symposium (TUES) in the Fall or the TTU Undergraduate Research Conference (URC) in the Spring after they are awarded funding. If the student receives the funding notification during the semester where either event has already passed, the student will have the option to present at the next year’s URC/Symposium.

If the student intends to graduate before they have the opportunity to present their project, they must coordinate an alternative presentation deliverable with the URA. It is the student’s responsibility to alert the URA to any concerns regarding their presentation requirement prior to the initial funding transaction.

Project Funding Process Summary

1. Faculty submits nomination.
2. TrUE reviews the nomination and notifies student and faculty of preliminary award or sends declination letter by email within 2 weeks.
3. Student must complete funding application within 2 weeks of receiving preliminary award notification email.
4. After submitting the Student Funding Application, the student will schedule their 2 meetings, first with the URA and second with the BC.
5. Student will need to review the I9 document and bring the required forms of legal identification to the BC meeting in order to fill out paperwork.
6. Student meets with URA and BC to talk about their research and fill out the necessary payment paperwork.
7. Once all employment eligibility and onboarding documentation is completed with the BC, TrUE will process the award.
8. Student will receive link for post-evaluation to submit photos and quotes to TrUE at the end of the semester they are funded or when they have completed their research.
9. Student will fulfill their TUES or URC requirement or the approved exception by the next term.

**Travel Funding Process Summary**

1. Faculty submits nomination.
2. TrUE reviews the nomination and notifies student and faculty of preliminary award or sends declination letter by email within 2 weeks.
3. Student must complete funding application within 2 weeks of receiving preliminary award notification email.
4. After submitting the Student Funding Application, the student will schedule their meeting with the URA.
5. Student meets with URA to talk about their research and fill out the photo release form.
6. Once the student has met with URA, TrUE will process the transfer to the department preparing the student’s travel application.
7. Student will receive link for post-evaluation to submit photos and quotes to TrUE at the end of the semester they are funded or when they have completed their research.
8. Student will fulfill their TUES or URC requirement or the approved exception by the next term.