OSEEL Undergraduate Research Funding Application

Thank you for your interest in applying for an undergraduate research fund program. Through this application, you will have the opportunity to apply for either the Student Engagement Fund (SEF) or the Research, Engagement and Academic Diversity (READ) grant. **You may only apply for one grant per semester.**

Before beginning this application, please note that if you log out of the application, you must log back in on the same computer to pick up where you left off. We recommend you use Chrome for best results.

Additionally, you will be required to upload the following documents at the end of the application - whether for SEF or READ. Please prepare these materials in advance so you can submit them with your application:

- **Budget:** [Budget Template.xlsx](#)
- **Project Timeline**
- **Student-Faculty Contract:** [Student_Faculty Contract.docx](#)  (required at time of application for student applications)
- **Transcripts** (students only)
- **Reference Form** (students only): **Students, please have your faculty or staff reference complete the online reference form.** Forms must be completed by the application deadline in order to be considered. Provide the correct form to your faculty mentor depending on the program: [SEF Reference Formor](#) [READ Reference Form](#).

Please submit all materials as PDFs.

If you have any questions, please contact us at ugresearch@niu.edu.

**READ Grant**

The Research, Engagement and Academic Diversity (READ) grant provides funding to both faculty/staff and students interested in conducting research on topics related to social justice and diversity, and social innovation or social entrepreneurship projects with a particular focus on social and cultural issues. This grant is offered in partnership with the Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning, the Division of Research and Innovation Partnerships and the Office of Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. More information on program and funding guidelines can be found [here](#).

**Student Engagement Fund**

The Student Engagement Fund (SEF) is a collaborative effort by the Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning (OSEEL) and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) to provide funding for students working on faculty-mentored research projects and to support undergraduate student engagement projects. Requests can be made to cover compensation for undergraduate students and/or for student expenses associated with engaged learning projects, or a combination thereof. More information on SEF requirements and funding limits can be found [here](#).
Which undergraduate research funding opportunity are you applying for?
- READ Grant
- Student Engagement Fund

Are you a student or faculty member?
- Student Applicant
- Faculty Applicant

Which semester are you applying for funding?
- Summer
- Fall
- Spring

End of Block: OSEEL UG App Description
Contact Information - Faculty Application

- First Name
- Last Name
- NIU ID
- Email Address
- Department
- Department Chair Name
- Department Chair Email

Have you already selected the student(s) with whom you would be working next semester?
- No
- Yes

If yes (not necessary), then you will be asked how many (up to 3 for the application; let OSEEL know if you want to include more or include them in your budget details).

You will be asked for the following, if you declare above that you have identified your student(s) and wish to list them for the application:

Please provide your student’s information below:
- Student First Name
- Student Last Name
- Student Z-ID
- Major
- Student First Name
- Student Last Name
- Student Z-ID
- Major
- Student First Name
- Student Last Name
- Student Z-ID
- Major
Have you ever applied for the Student Engagement Fund before?
  o Yes (Please include the semester and year you applied below) _______________________
  o No

Are you applying for Travel (to a conference, competition, class field trip/activity, etc), or a Research, Artistry, or Community Based Research Project?

*Travel to conferences or competitions, group travel for class activity:*
Funding can cover travel expenses incurred by the students. Projects may be mentored by faculty or staff, as appropriate. Limited funding is available for non-CLAS applicants.

*Research, Artistry, or Community Based Research Project:*
Funding for undergraduate projects initiated by students or faculty to cover a student’s compensation (paid undergraduate research assistant position) and project related expenses for equipment, software, travel, etc.
  o Travel to Conferences or Competitions
  o Research, Artistry, or Community Based Research Project

Does this project address issues affecting civic life? (Won’t appear if you selected Travel above)
*This includes projects that promote diversity and equity, education, political participation, environment and food justice, technology and other societal issues.
  o Yes
  o No
SEF Research Project Information
Please read through the following information to determine which category your project falls under. Applicants that are able to clearly articulate their project type are more likely to receive funding.

*Research/Artistry Projects*
- Main purpose is to contribute to the body of knowledge on a specific topic
- Intends to serve the academic community
- Pursues the "truth" and "objectivity"
- Controlled by the researcher/artist

*Community Based Research*
- Main purpose is to provide the community with tools and information to enact change
- Intends to serve the local and academic communities
- Pursues community empowerment and mutual learning
- Controlled by community members and researcher/artist

For more information on how to determine the type of your project, please view the following PDF: [Types of Research](#).
- Research/Artistry Project
- Community Based Research Project
Research-Based Project Application Questions

Project Title:

Background
Explain the present state of knowledge and understanding of the community you will be working with or in your field of study, using proper citations when necessary. Provide the background of the topic in an engaging manner (e.g., relate topic to reader, raise interesting questions, note topics importance in field, etc.). Include descriptions of any partnering organizations. Make it clear why you want to do this project and why it needs to be undertaken to fill a gap in knowledge.
Minimum of 150 words.

If you are working with a nonprofit community or agency, please include their information below.
Examples of these types of organizations include community based nonprofits, FermiLab, Argonne National Laboratory, or other similar organizations.
  o Name of Agency ____________________________
  o Agency Website ____________________________

Impact
Explain the significance of your project as it contributes to the advancement of learning in your field (i.e. the big picture)
Minimum of 150 words.

Project Objectives
Clearly and concisely state the problem/question(s) or creative concept(s) that will be addressed during the period of the proposed project.

Methodology: Action Steps/Process
Describe in clear and understandable terms your general plan of work in order to fulfill your stated objectives.
Minimum of 150 words.

Final Product
How do you plan for your project to be disseminated? Examples include academic poster, report, a publishable article or chapter, a performance, a policy recommendation, or other. Be as specific as possible.
Minimum of 150 words.
Student Academic Experience
Indicate how the proposed experience is expected to enhance your student’s academic experience and future career. 
Minimum of 150 words.

Are you applying for student compensation, project supply funds, and/or travel? Select all that apply.
  o Compensation
  o Project supply funds
  o Travel
Travel to Conferences or Competitions Application Questions

You will now be directed to the application questions regarding travel to conferences or competitions.

- Funding can cover travel expenses incurred by students.
- Projects may be mentored by faculty or staff, as appropriate. (All College of Liberal Arts and Science (CLAS) undergraduates and faculty are eligible to apply for funding in this category.)
- Faculty are encouraged to apply for funding on behalf of students to be used for group travel expenses and student expenses for conferences and competitions.

Limited funding is available for non-CLAS applicants.

Conference Information
- Sponsoring Agency ________________________________
- Conference Title ________________________________
- Conference Website ______________________________
- Conference Location (city, state) ___________________
- Conference Start Date (Month/Day/Year) ___________
- Conference End Date (Month/Day/Year) ______________

If this is a professional meeting, is it:
- State
- Regional
- National
- International

What would be the student’s (students’) role in the conference?
- Presenter
- Organizer
- Participant
- Volunteer

Presentation Title: _______________________________________

Student Academic Experience
Indicate how this travel experience is expected to enhance your student participant(s) academic experience and future career.
Minimum of 150 words.

Will student be employed at NIU at time of travel?
- Yes
- No

End of Block: SEF Project Information
Additional Documents

Please download and submit the budget template, available here: Budget Template.xlsx
All applicants are required to submit an itemized budget when completing an undergraduate research fund application whether you are applying for funds related to project supplies, student compensation, funding for travel, or a combination of the three. Each category requires a separate budget.

Any budget submission that is not completed using the provided template will not be considered. It is important that applicants are as specific as possible when submitting their budget, including the following information:

- Description of item (including the cost and quantity)
- Justification of why the item is essential for the project’s success
- Student Compensation applicants- describe the amount of hours you plan for the student to work on the project per week and the tasks the student will be working on
- Distinguish if project supply purchases will be made by the student or the Department
  - Items purchased by the student directly- examples include: travel, hotel, poster printing, registration for a conference, training cost, travel-related per diem etc.
  - Items purchased by the department (these will require NIU property tag with a few exceptions) - examples include: group travel, software, hardware, other equipment, books, lab safety gear, and data storage.
- For applications that include travel, the budget MUST include: mileage, airfare, hotel/lodging, registration fees, per diem costs, and any miscellaneous expenses.
- Eligible expenses include (but are not limited to):
  - Project supplies (including printing costs)
  - Travel related to research or project
  - Conference travel for undergraduate students (must be presenting outcomes from this project)
  - Compensation for undergraduates

Upload a detailed timeline of your proposed project.

You will have the option to download and submit the Student Faculty Contract, available here: Student Faculty Contract.docx. It’s not required at the time of application; options will be presented.

Click "Next" below to submit your application.

End of Block: Additional Documents