

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.

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](#).

All applicants must be able to follow NIU's COVID-19 guidelines for undergraduate research, artistry and scholarly projects: <https://www.niu.edu/protecting-the-pack/academics/research>

Which undergraduate research funding opportunity are you applying for?

- READ Grant
 - Student Engagement Fund
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Are you a student or faculty member?

- Student Applicant
- Faculty Applicant

Contact Information - Student Application

- First Name _____
- Last Name _____
- ZID _____
- NIU Email _____
- Major _____
- Additional Email _____
- Faculty Mentor Name _____
- Faculty Mentor Email _____
- Faculty Mentor Department/Office _____

When is your graduation month/year?

Please note that students **cannot** graduate before completion of the semester they are applying for. _____

What is your current NIU GPA? _____

End of Block: Student Contact Info

How did you hear about this program? *Check all that apply.*

- Admitted Student Day
- Academic Advisor/Counselor
- Community Advisor
- Engaged Learning Drop-In Hours
- Faculty
- Flyer
- NIU Announcements
- NIU Staff
- NIU Today
- NIU Website
- Orientation
- OSEEL Staff
- Other students
- Other tabling event (List event below) _____
- Social Media
- Student Involvement Fair
- Other (List below) _____

End of Block: Marketing

Demographic Information

The following information will be used to help us better analyze our data and better serve NIU's diverse populations of students.

In which college do you study?

- Business
- Education
- Engineering & Engineering Technology
- Health & Human Sciences
- Liberal Arts & Sciences
- Visual & Performing Arts

What is your year in school?

- Freshmen
 - Sophomore
 - Junior
 - Senior
 - Other _____
-

Did you begin your time at NIU as a freshman or as a transfer student?

- Freshman
- Transfer

What is your cumulative GPA?

- 0.49
- 0.50 - 0.99
- 1.49
- 1.50 - 1.99
- 2.00 - 2.49
- 2.50 - 2.99
- 3.00 - 3.49
- 3.50 - 4.00

Are you in the CHANCE program?

- Yes
- No

Are you in the Honors program?

- Yes
- No

Are you a student athlete?

- Yes
- No

Demographic Information Continued

The following information will be used to help us better analyze our data and better serve NIU's diverse populations of students.

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary / third gender
- Prefer to self-describe _____
- Prefer not to answer

What is your ethnicity?

- African American
- American Indian / Native Alaskan
- Asian
- Hispanic
- Pacific Islander
- White
- Multiple Ethnicities
- Other
- Prefer not to answer

Are you a first generation college student?

- Yes
- No

Are you an international student?

- Yes
- No

End of Block: Demographics

SEF Application Questions

Thank you for your interest in the Student Engagement Fund (SEF) program!

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. Additionally, you will be required to upload the following documents at the end of the application. 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](#)

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

Have you ever applied for the Student Engagement Fund before?

- Yes (Please include the semester and year you applied below) _____
- 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.

- Travel to Conferences or Competitions
- Research, Artistry, or Community Based Research Project

Does this project address issues affecting civic life?

*This includes projects that promote diversity and equity, education, political participation, environment and food justice, technology and other societal issues.

- Yes
- 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

PREVIEW

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.

- Name of Agency _____
- 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.

Methodology: Expected Results

What are your expected results or the expected range of results for your proposed project?

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.

Does this project tie into a specific course?

- Yes (List course below) _____
- No

Are you applying for student compensation, project supply funds, and/or travel?

Select all that apply.

- Compensation
- Project supply funds
- Travel

PREVIEW

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.
- 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 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

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.

Download and submit the Student Faculty Contract, available here: [Student Faculty Contract.docx](#)

STUDENTS ONLY: Upload your unofficial transcripts.

STUDENTS ONLY: Please provide the email address for your recommender. Recommenders will receive an email stating that you requested a letter from them for the grant.

Click "Next" below to submit your application.