

CENTRE FOR
**SCHOLARLY
COMMUNICATION**

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AWARDS WRITING WORKSHOP

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CENTRE FOR
**SCHOLARLY
COMMUNICATION**

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UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AWARDS

Purpose:

To provide an opportunity for UBCO Arts and Sciences undergraduate students to pursue innovative research.



PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS



To see the wide variety of previously funded topics:

<https://fass.ok.ubc.ca/awards/undergrad/ura/> or <https://science.ok.ubc.ca/awards/undergrad/ura/>

WRITING A RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Purpose: an opportunity to develop an idea to solve a problem.



THE PROPOSAL WRITING PROCESS

BRAINSTORM: Come up with an idea

READ: What has been done before? What needs to be done?
How are you going to do it?

WRITE: Start to organize ideas; Create a rough draft;
Get feedback; Revise;
Edit final draft; Submit

DOWNLOAD: FILLABLE PDF APPLICATION FORM

[HTTPS://SCIENCE_OK_UBC_CA/AWARDS/UNDERGRAD/URA/](https://science.ok.ubc.ca/awards/undergrad/ura/) OR [HTTPS://FASS_OK_UBC_CA/AWARDS/UNDERGRAD/URA/](https://fass.ok.ubc.ca/awards/undergrad/ura/)

REDACTED EXAMPLE DOC: [HTTPS://DRIVE_GOOGLE_COM/FILE/D/1UFWZR4M1F2T4APDF9Y0EAWPWY1QBAT5D/VIEW?USP=SHARING](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uFwZR4m1F2T4aPDF9Y0EAwpWY1QbAT5D/view?usp=sharing)



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Irving K. Barber Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences
Okanagan Campus

For program information please contact:
Thomas Heilke at thomas.heilke@ubc.ca

Undergraduate Research Award Form A: Student Application

Application package must be received no later than 4 p.m. on **January 28, 2021**

I am an International Student and would like to be considered for the IURA or the URA PLEASE NOTE: Click on fields, do not use TAB

Student Application Process:

Step 1: Save both Form A and Form B. Open and complete Form A using Adobe Reader. Save and print Form A, and sign the

CHOOSING A TITLE



- Maximum 75 characters
- Needs to be **informative**
 - Most important idea or concept
- Create **interest!**

(typically written later in your writing process)



TITLE EXAMPLES FROM PAST WINNERS

- Gratitude and well-being: a mediator analysis
- The space-definedness of the blind, blindfolded, and sighted
- Enabled environment: Understanding bathrooms as sensory inclusive public spaces in the Okanagan
- Bias in the Legal System: How race and confessions impact a verdict



Find previous winners' titles at [HTTPS://SCIENCE.OK.UBC.CA/AWARDS/UNDERGRAD/URA/](https://science.ok.ubc.ca/awards/undergrad/ura/)
OR [HTTPS://FASS.OK.UBC.CA/AWARDS/UNDERGRAD/URA/](https://fass.ok.ubc.ca/awards/undergrad/ura/)

KEY WORDS (*...also written later in your process*)



- Maximum 5 words (or short terms) to describe your project
- Keywords tell the reviewer **what you think is most important** about your project:
 - Who should be interested? and Why?
 - Multi-word keywords are fine
 - E.g. “climate change”



ABSTRACT (... definitely written last in your process)



<http://blogs.plos.org/absolutely-maybe/files/2014/05/You-said-to-do-an-abstract.jpg>

Overview of project must include:

- Project rationale/ statement of problem
- Research questions/ hypotheses
- Methods proposed/used
- Expected results
- Broad implications/ applications of the results

Maximum 100 words



RESEARCH DESCRIPTION

Use these headers (see *Guidelines p. 3*):

1. Introduction and Background
 2. Research Questions and/or Objectives
 3. Methodology
 4. Significance and Impact
- Make it **easy for your reader to find important information** (e.g. indentation, capitalization, *italics*, spaces, etc.).
 - Proposal should have a **clear logic**.



SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- Describes the **problem** or the **area of investigation**.
- Brief review of the **most relevant literature** with citations.
- Sets the stage for your project.



**Note: the fillable form does not allow superscript notations for citations.
Use in text citations like APA or Chicago Author/Date styles,
e.g: (Author et al, year) or (Author & Author, year)**

PHRASES FOR ESTABLISHING IMPORTANCE

Evidence suggests that X is among the most important factors for ...

X is essential for a wide range of scientific and industrial processes.

There is a growing body of literature that recognizes the importance of ...

X is a vital component in the ... system, and plays a key role in Y.

For many more suggestions, see the Introducing Work section of the Academic Phrasebank



SECTION 2: RESEARCH QUESTION AND/ OR OBJECTIVES

- Use either or both; depends on your project (you may also use a hypothesis).
- At the end of your project, what is the main question you would like to answer or what do you hope to contribute?



***Write for an interdisciplinary audience;
make your intention clear.***

PHRASES FOR ESTABLISHING PURPOSE

The objectives of this research are to determine whether ...

Drawing on two strands of research into X, this study **will** ...

This research **will** examine the emerging role of X in the context of ...

The main aim of this study is to investigate the differences between X and Y.

For many more suggestions, see the Introducing Work section of the Academic Phrasebank



SECTION 3: METHODOLOGY

Describes what you are going to do.

- What **tools or techniques** will you use?
- How will this **approach** help achieve your objective?
- Is the approach unique? (*You may need to justify it*).
- May provide a timeline (*speaks to feasibility*).
- Indicates how you might deal with potential problems.
- Provides **concrete steps that are doable** within the 16 week timeline.



PHRASES FOR DESCRIBING METHODS

For a previously established method:

- Samples **will** be analysed for X as previously reported by Vishak et al. (2012).
- Analysis **will** be based on the conceptual framework proposed by Yang et al. (2002).



Describing the process:

- For the attitude questions, a Likert scale **will** be used.
- For the purpose of analysis, two segments **will** be extracted from each ...

Indicating methodological problems or limitations

- In observational studies, there is a potential for bias from ...

For many more suggestions, see the Describing Methods section of the Academic Phrasebank

SECTION 4: SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT

Describes the **expected outcomes** and indicates:

- the **impact** and **contributions** of the project;
 - This may be discipline specific or of interest to an external group;
- how the project fits into the “big picture”;
- potential follow-up studies if the project is successful.



PHRASES FOR ESTABLISHING SIGNIFICANCE

This work **will** generate fresh insight into ...

Understanding the link between X and Y **will** help ...

This is the first study to undertake an analysis of ...

The findings should make an important contribution to the field of

For many more suggestions, see the Introducing Work section of the Academic Phrasebank



Choose a phrase from the Academic Phrasebank

If you would like, practice writing your own statement of significance at the link that I paste in the chat



This work **will** generate fresh insight into ...

Understanding the link between X and Y **will** help ...

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QUALIFICATIONS AND PERSONAL IMPACT STATEMENT

- What experiences have you had that have prepared you for the project? (courses, research, volunteer work, etc.)
- Why are you interested in this research?
- Why did you choose this project?
- How does this project connect to your future goals?



YOUR QUALIFICATIONS

- Academic training relevant to the project (courses, previous research experience)
 - Articulate clearly **how past experiences or courses** have **specifically prepared** you for this project.
- Demonstrate that you are able to work independently (*and, if relevant, collaboratively*).
 - Consider including **specific examples** of previous employment and/or volunteer experiences.



BUDGET

Max is \$1,500 for supplies

- Ensure your expenses are allowed (*ask Julie/Jody if unsure*).

Some items that may not be allowed include:

- Computer equipment
- Conference travel
- [Consult list of appropriate expenses](#) (*p. 4 of Guidelines doc*).
- Provide details, but group types of supplies (e.g. chemicals, PCR supplies, etc.).
- Explain any unusual expenses.



STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FROM SUPERVISOR

- Ensure your proposed supervisor knows a **LOT** about you.
 - Provide a resume, transcript, tell them about yourself, your experiences, your aspirations.
- They should fill the space provided and comment on the process of preparing the URA application



PROCESS: COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION

There are 3 required signatures: yours, the supervisor, and the Department Head.

- Complete and submit Form A (*with all attachments*) to your supervisor **at least one week before** the deadline.
- The supervisor will complete Form B and submit the complete application to the Department Head before the deadline.
 - Departmental deadlines are sometimes 2 days earlier than the final deadline
- The full application is due to the Dean's Office - ASC 413 (Reception) - by **4:00 pm on January 28, 2021.**



PROCESS: EVALUATION

After you submit your application:

- URA Coordinators, Jody Ainley (FASS) or Julie Martin (FoS), ensure it is complete (*signatures and transcripts*)
- Applications are distributed to Selection Committee members; they read, score and rank applications, and submit scores to the URA Coordinator.
- Selection Committee meets to discuss and rank applications.
- A ranked list is sent to the Dean for consideration.
- Students are informed of the decision in **March.**



CRITERIA CONSIDERED EQUALLY (*FROM GUIDELINES P. 5*)

1. Quality of proposed Research

- Merit of research and potential impact on the field
- Strength of research design and overall feasibility of proposed research
- Interdisciplinary elements (not mandatory, but encouraged)
- Clarity, presentation, and logic of proposal, in language accessible by multidisciplinary audience.

2. Researcher's abilities, qualifications, and potential for growth

- Personal initiative
- Ability to think critically and analytically
- Ability to apply skills and knowledge
- Determination and ability to complete projects in a timely fashion
- Communication skills and ability
- Past academic achievement
- Relevant academic training and experience
- Other relevant experiences and accomplishments



GENERAL TIPS: WRITING PROCESS

Follow a strong writing process:

- Outline (consultation with supervisor),
- Draft (consultation with supervisor),
- Revise (consultation with supervisor),
- Proofread carefully – *avoid errors when applying for \$.*

Work closely with your supervisor at every step.



GENERAL TIPS: UNDERSTAND AUDIENCE & GET FEEDBACK

Ask trustworthy people **from outside of your discipline** to be critical when reading your proposal.

- *If they understand what you propose, then members of the Selection Committee will understand.*
- Use specific and clear language.
- Define terms and procedures in ways that the layperson can understand (*avoid jargon and acronyms when possible*).

Show that you can clearly communicate your ideas to a broader audience.



FINAL TIPS

- Every sentence should be directly relevant to the proposed research.
- Be clear about the goals and scope of the research.
 - Don't exaggerate expected outcomes.
- Write in complete sentences! (*you can use bullets for lists*)
- Complete all sections. Use the space provided.



Julie Martin/Jody Ainley can access UBCO transcripts.

Dean's Office can access these directly on behalf of the student.

QUESTIONS?

Questions about the application process, please contact

julie.martin@ubc.ca (FoS)

jody.ainley@ubc.ca (FASS)

To make an appointment for help with writing your URA application, email

csc.ok@ubc.ca



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appointments:

<https://library.ok.ubc.ca/research/csc>

