

# **Interdisciplinary Research Teams Proposal Guidelines**

Program Deadlines: <https://www.calit2.uci.edu/interdisciplinary-research-teams-irt-program/>

The Interdisciplinary Research Teams (IRT) program allows graduate students to mentor undergraduate students in a project setting. Students are encouraged to work collaboratively bringing their interests and experience from multiple disciplines to be applied to solve problems.

UROP has partnered with [Calit2](#) (the California Institute for Telecommunications and Information Technology) to provide funding of up to \$3,000 for interdisciplinary team projects that are led by one graduate student and two to four undergraduates. Undergraduate students on a team should come from at least two different schools, or two different departments within a school. Awards will provide research-related supplies to teams during the academic year.

Note that graduate student leads will need to submit purchase orders for supplies to Calit2, who will make all purchases.

Eligibility Requirements	Application Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Must be part of a graduate and undergraduate student team working on a project that is interdisciplinary in nature</li><li>● Must be a current UCI student through at least spring quarter 2025</li><li>● Graduate students must have UCI Faculty Advisor and departmental approval</li><li>● Undergraduate students must be from at least two different schools, or two different departments within a school. Preference is given to teams with students from different schools.</li><li>● Maximum of one award per team and student.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Online application form</li><li>● Research Proposal</li><li>● Personal Statement</li><li>● Graduate Student Mentor Agreement Form</li><li>● Projects involving human and/or animal subjects must adhere to UCI's research conduct rules, and may require additional steps in collaboration with a Faculty Advisor</li></ul>

## **Need Help?**

There are several resources to help you prepare your proposal for submission:

- Review past proposals on the [UROP website](#) as examples of successful past submissions.
- Peer tutors at the [UCI Writing Center](#) offer drop-in sessions and scheduled appointments to help you with your proposals and personal statements.

- UROP’s Proposal Writing & Submission information session covers the proposal process in detail. Check the [UROP Calendar](#) on our website for dates or view the recording on the UROP website.
- If you need further help, you can [Contact UROP](#) for assistance.

## **Submission Instructions**

### Required Documents

You must prepare and upload three documents as part of your application. Each is described later in this document:

- Proposal
- Personal Statement
- Graduate Student Mentor Agreement Form

Your Faculty Advisor and program Director or Associate Dean must sign the Graduate Student Mentor Agreement Form before the submission deadline, so notify them well in advance.

### Start the Application

To open the Interdisciplinary Research Teams submission form:

1. Go to the [UROP Opportunities](#) page of the UROP website.
2. Under Interdisciplinary Research Teams, click Steps 1–3 to read more information.
3. Click “Start Your Application Here” to open the application form.

### Submit the Application

You may save a Draft of your application as many times as needed before it is complete and return to finish it later.

**Important!** Do NOT click “Submit” until you are sure your submission is 100% complete. You CANNOT modify your application after it has been submitted.

### Application Checklist

Complete the following before you click “Submit”:

- ☐ Prepare the Proposal document and review it with your faculty mentor.
- ☐ Complete the Graduate Student Mentor Agreement form and have it signed by the program Director or Associate Dean.
- ☐ Prepare a personal statement for each applicant.
- ☐ In the submission form, include email addresses for each undergraduate student and your Faculty Advisor in the “Additional Email Addresses for Notifications” field so they will receive future updates about your submission.

## **The Proposal** (up to 5 pages)

Your proposal should convince the reviewers of the significance of the project and need for funding, if requested. It should follow these formatting guidelines:

- **Page size:** 8.5" x 11"
- **Font size:** 11-point type or larger
- **Font:** Times New Roman or equivalent standard text font

- **Page margins:** 1"
- **File Format:** MS Word or pdf
- **Heading:** Include the names of all Graduate Student Mentors, undergraduate researchers and faculty advisors at the top
- **Length:** From three to five pages (3 pages proposal, 1-2 pages reference, tables and/or graphics). Being concise and brief are key.

Proposals should answer these questions:

- Why are we doing this project and its benefits?
- What are our project goals? How will we get there with the resources requested? How much funding is requested and its justification.
- What is the interdisciplinary nature of our project?

**Important!** While the Graduate Student Mentor submits the application, all applicants should work together to prepare a single proposal document.

The following sections describe the information you should include in your proposal.

### Thesis, Purpose, Objective, & Approach

For many research projects, you should describe your purpose with a clear research question. Thoroughly discuss the significance of your project, how it advances knowledge, and its potential impact on society. Describe work you have already completed, what you plan to accomplish, and your intended outcome.

If you are working on a creative activity, describe what led you to conduct the activity, and possibly what question(s) you want to answer or challenges you want to overcome. As in the previous example, you should discuss the significance of your project and its potential impact on society. Describe work you have already completed, what you plan to accomplish, and your intended outcome.

### Responsibility

Discuss the specific duties of each team member for the project.

### Timeline

Include a schedule—by week, month or quarter—of project tasks and deadlines. Discuss the progress you have made so far, where you are in your project, and expectations that you can complete the work within this time.

### References

List books, articles, and any other outside sources you used in preparing your proposal or that have contributed to your project. Use a reference format that is appropriate for your field of study.

## Itemized Budget

As part of an Interdisciplinary Research Team, students can apply for funding to support their project. You can request up to \$3,000 for your project, and all funding must be expended by the end of May 2024. Instructions will be provided to awarded graduate student leads on how to submit purchase orders for supplies to Calit2, who will make all purchases.

Please include an itemized list of projected expenses for the length of your project.

Use the format in the sample below for your budget. Clearly explain any expenses that could be seen as unusual. Include the total cost of your project and specify the amount you are requesting from Calit2. List all additional sources of funding you may have.

Sample UROP Proposal Budget		
Item	Budgeted Amount	Explanation and Justification for Expense
512GB Solid State Drives	\$100	Storage of experimental data
Software	\$100	License for software to conduct analysis
Website builder software	\$300	Includes domain and hosting costs for at least three years
Organic solvents for reaction and chromatography	\$150	Supplies needed for experiments to gain results
Clean room fees	\$200	Needed for fabrication
Proper Waste Disposal	\$200	Responsible disposal in compliance with UCI policy and procedures
Poster for UROP Symposium	\$120	Year-end required presentation
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$1,170</b>	
<b>Total Requested from Calit2</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	<b>This amount should be inclusive of taxes, shipping and other fees that may apply</b>

The table below lists some of the items and types of expenses that can and cannot be covered by this program. Note that many books, software packages and other resources are freely accessible to you through the university as a UCI student. The UCI [OIT website](#) contains information on available software, and please check the [UCI Libraries website](#) for books and other reference materials that may be available for free. ***All purchases must adhere to university policy whereby certain equipment such as laptops and others remain the ownership of Calit2/UCI.***

<b>CAN be covered</b>	<b>NOT covered</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Chemicals</li> <li>● Supplies</li> <li>● Reference materials not available for free</li> <li>● Animals</li> <li>● Copying/printing</li> <li>● Research poster for presentations</li> <li>● Mailing/postage</li> <li>● Mileage</li> <li>● Software</li> <li>● Presentation materials, such as a Symposium poster</li> <li>● Facilities rental</li> <li>● Other critical related costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Travel (UROP Travel Awards can provide limited funding for qualified expenses; see the UROP website for information)</li> <li>● Major hardware purchases</li> <li>● Standard laboratory expenses</li> <li>● Salaries, honoraria and stipends to compensate for project-related work</li> <li>● Benefits for project participants</li> <li>● Gift cards/gift incentives, cash or otherwise</li> <li>● Items that can be borrowed for free or rented at a much lower cost</li> <li>● Membership fees</li> <li>● Conference registration fees</li> <li>● <b>NO CASH or CASH EQUIVALENT PAYMENTS to benefit participants, researchers, &amp; others from the project</b></li> </ul>

### **Personal Statement** (up to 2 pages)

The Graduate Student Mentor and each undergraduate researcher must prepare a personal statement, which describes their relationship to the project.

The personal statement should discuss the following:

- Why you want to pursue this project
- How this project will help you move toward your academic, career and/or personal goals
- Your relevant background, including prior accomplishments in your field
- Why this project matters to you

Use the same format you used for the proposal:

- **Page size:** 8.5" x 11"
- **Font size:** 11-point type or larger
- **Font:** Times New Roman or equivalent standard text font
- **Page margins:** 1"
- **File Format:** MS Word or pdf
- **Heading:** Include the names of all Graduate Student Mentors, undergraduate researchers and faculty advisors at the top
- **Length:** Typically, one or two double-spaced pages, but should be complete and concise
- Include your name at the top

**Important!** Submit a single document that contains the personal statements for each applicant, beginning with the Graduate Student Mentor. Include each student's name at the beginning of their statement.

## **Graduate Student Mentor Agreement Form**

The Graduate Student Mentor must complete the [Graduate Student Mentor Agreement Form](#) and have it signed by their program Director or Associate Dean before including it as part of the final submission. Complete this form as soon as possible, so that you can get the required signatures before the submission deadline.

## **Research Conduct Rules**

Projects involving human and/or animal subjects must adhere to UCI's Research Protections standards. Consult with your Faculty Advisor to determine if [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee \(IACUC\)](#) or [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#) approval is needed.

- Review the [UROP Research Protections Instructions](#) for detailed guidelines, including instructions on how to complete the IRB Exempt Self Determination Tool for projects involving human subjects.
- Contact UROP if you and your Faculty Advisor have questions about this process.