



**University Research Committee (URC)
Request for Proposals (RFP)
2025-2026 Cycle
(All Categories)**

With support from the Office of the Provost, the Office of the Senior Vice President for Research (SVPR), and in collaboration with the Halle Institute for Global Research and the Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry, the University Research Committee (URC) announces the annual Request for Proposals (RFP) for funding to be used during the 2025-2026 cycle.

History of the URC Funding Program

In 1944, the McCandless family designated a gift to support research at Emory University. The URC was formed shortly after to oversee the distribution of the funding. Since its inception, the URC has functioned under the auspices of the Faculty Council as a standing committee. Today, the URC seeks to nurture and recognize the entire spectrum of research disciplines.

Purpose

The URC promotes rigorous and innovative scholarship in all academic disciplines to benefit the Emory community and beyond. The URC supports:

- Early career faculty on their path toward research independence
- More advanced faculty who wish to engage novel questions that enhance their expertise
- Teams of faculty who seek to transcend the boundaries of their respective disciplines and undertake transformative research

Proposals for the following six (6) URC categories are sought:

1. Arts: Visual and Performing
2. Biological and Health Sciences
3. Humanities
4. Interdisciplinary
5. Mathematics and Natural Sciences
6. Social Sciences

The Halle Institute for Global Research contributes meaningful funds to the URC to support international research projects. At the discretion of the Halle Institute, grantees in any URC category whose proposal includes a significant international component may receive the extra designation of being a URC - Halle Institute Global Research Award.

The Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry in collaboration with the URC will support up to two eligible URC awardees to be designated Fox Center Fellows. They will join a cohort of researchers in residence including graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and tenured faculty. To be eligible, awardees must be assistant professors and their proposal must align with the Fox Center's 2025-26 research theme, [Life/Story](#).



By supporting promising faculty research, the URC at Emory University seeks to contribute to the cultivation of intellectual resources for a better future.

Eligibility

Regular, continuing full-time faculty of Emory University are eligible to apply. URC eligibility follows criteria for “full-time faculty” as defined within each school. Postdocs, fellows, adjuncts, and part-time faculty are not eligible to apply for URC funding. For full-time faculty in Emory College of Arts and Sciences (ECAS), more information regarding eligibility requirements can be found under "Leave Policies and Course Release" on the [ECAS Office of Faculty website](#).

Submission Limitations: Each applicant may submit one proposal as PI, Co-PI, or investigator. Past URC awardees must (1) have completed the required URC project progress reports and (2) wait three full URC funding cycles after their previous award's completion date to apply for new URC funding. Your award's completion date includes any approved no-cost extensions (NCEs).

Budget and Project Duration

Period of Performance: The project period is one year. The project start date will be June 1, 2025. The project end date will be May 31, 2026.

Number of Awards: Typically, 30-38 awards are made across all six (6) URC categories. The proportion of awards by category varies year to year.

Award Amounts & Budget Details: URC awards are capped at the amount specified in each category. All fees and expenses should fall within the total dollar amount awarded. No exemptions or exceptions to award maximums will be made.

With the exception of the Interdisciplinary category, award maximums are \$30,000, and most URC proposals will have only one principal investigator (PI). Interdisciplinary proposals with two or more PIs may request up to \$40,000 per award.

Budget is not a criterion for assessing the scholarly merits of a proposal; however, reviewers may comment on the appropriateness of specific funding requests. Please ensure that all requested funding is appropriate for and aligned with the proposed needs.

Use of Funds:

Allowable expenses:

- Course Release(s) - Individuals requesting course releases should include a maximum of \$12,500 per course within the proposed URC budget; up two course releases may be requested with a maximum of \$25,000 in course release funding per proposal submission.



- The proposal must include a formal, school-generated document designating approval for course release. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain formal approval for course release from their Dean, and, as appropriate, through their unit head (e.g., Department Chair).
- Proposals that include a request for course release funds but that lack formal, school-issued approval will not be considered.
- If the budgeted amount in the proposal is not sufficient to support the school's expectation for funding the requested course release(s), the applicant and the applicant's Chair, in consultation with their Dean, are responsible for finding other (non-URC) funds to fill the gap. The format for documenting Dean (and Chair) approval is left to each of the participating schools.
- Direct expenses for the currently awarded project.
- Subcontracts (with justification) are accepted only with the following Emory-affiliated entities:
 - Children's Healthcare of Atlanta (CHOA)
 - Georgia Tech Department of Biomedical Engineering
- Student Assistance: URC applicants may request funding for coworker assistance, including undergraduates, graduate students, and postdocs. If you are including coworker support within your budget, please ensure that additional funding sources are available to cover coworker compensation beyond the 1-year period of URC funding (as needed).
- Note: All policies apply to current URC applications and are not retroactive to currently funded URC awards.

Non-allowable expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Purchase of equipment that supports standard day-to-day operations (e.g., computers, standard laboratory equipment in the field)
- Purchase of books, computer software, and/or subscriptions to professional journals
- Publishing costs of any kind
- Costs for conference attendance
- First / business class airfare
- Future expenses or commitments beyond the award's period of performance
- Faculty salary support or benefits
- All other regular operating expenses not listed herein

Timeline

10/11/24 – RFP released

11/06/24 – Information Session

01/17/25 – Proposals due by 11:59 p.m.

04/20/25 – Award notification (estimated)

06/01/25 – Project start date

03/31/26 – Final day to request a project extension (NCE) with strong justification

05/31/26 – Project end date



Submission Instructions

Instructions for Submittal: To apply to this research seed grant program, proposals must be submitted within InfoReady, Emory University's internal competition software. The submission deadline for all URC categories is 11:59 p.m. on January 17, 2025.

NOTE: Each URC category has a dedicated application space within Emory's InfoReady program. Please select the proper funding category for which you wish to submit your proposal. Links to each application space are provided below.

| Category | Link |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Arts: Visual & Performing Arts | https://emory.infoready4.com/#freeformCompetitionDetail/1956239 |
| Biological & Health Sciences | https://emory.infoready4.com/#freeformCompetitionDetail/1956217 |
| Humanities | https://emory.infoready4.com/#freeformCompetitionDetail/1956242 |
| Interdisciplinary | https://emory.infoready4.com/#freeformCompetitionDetail/1956246 |
| Mathematics & Natural Sciences | https://emory.infoready4.com/#freeformCompetitionDetail/1956247 |
| Social Sciences | https://emory.infoready4.com/#freeformCompetitionDetail/1956245 |

If you have any questions about the submission process or the URC program, please contact URC Administrative Support at urcappl@emory.edu.

Format: Single-spaced, 11-point font Arial with one-inch margins. Smaller text in figures, graphs, diagrams, and charts is acceptable. All text must be legible.

Submission will include the following components:

- 1. Online Submission Form.** This information is entered directly into Emory's InfoReady portal and includes:
 - a. General information. Includes contact info, primary appointment, etc. for all applicants
 - b. URC Application Certification. All proposers (i.e., all PIs, co-investigators, and co-applicants) must acknowledge (1) all terms and conditions of the URC award as set forth in the Policies and Guidelines of the URC; (2) that their respective Department Head(s) / Chair(s) have been informed of the intent to submit to the URC program; and (3) that Department Head / Chair contact information is provided in the submission, as required.
 - c. Abstract. Brief layperson's abstract (250-word limit). This is a rich text entry field in InfoReady.



2. **Resubmission Statement**, if applicable. If resubmitting an unawarded URC proposal from a prior year, proposers must include a statement that outlines the revisions made in the current proposal submission. This document has a 1-page limit.
3. **Research Plan**. (6-page limit). Proposers should include the following headings and address the criteria outlined below (as is applicable to their proposed work). Note that references are required and should be included within the Research Plan, but they are not counted toward the 6-page limit.
 - a. **Introduction**: Describe the area of research, scholarship, or creative activity. Include the current state of knowledge in the literature. State the overall objective of the research.
 - b. **Project Goals and Objectives**: Define the long-term goals of the proposed project and what you hope to achieve. If relevant, identify subsequent external recognitions, honorifics, products, and/or external funding to which the proposed project may lead. Describe the objectives and/or milestones that will contribute to achieving the long-term goals.
 - c. **Significance and Impact**: State the importance and relevance of the proposed work within the represented fields. Discuss any novel ideas or contributions that each project offers.
 - d. **Design and Methods**: Describe the overall design of the proposed project, conceptual or clinical framework, and methods, procedures, and/or activities that will be used to accomplish the objectives of the project. Describe any new methodology and its advantage over existing methodologies. Describe any novel concepts, approaches, tools, or technologies that will be used. Describe the approach to be used for data analyses and interpretation, if applicable.
 - e. **Team Leadership and Collaboration** (if applicable): Describe the team's collaboration and/or leadership plan. If the project involves collaboration with an international partner, include a statement describing the collaboration and an indication of how the research will be shared with international partners.
 - f. **Alignment with URC Purpose**: Describe how the proposed project will advance the purpose of the URC program by supporting: an early career faculty member on their path toward research independence, more advanced faculty who wish to engage novel questions that enhance their expertise, and/or a team of faculty members who seek to transcend the boundaries of their respective disciplines and undertake transformative research.
 - g. **References / Bibliography / Works Cited**. Required but not included within the six (6) page limit.
4. **Attachments**:
 - a. Budget Request (Excel). Proposers must use the provided Excel template.
 - b. Budget Justification (Word/pdf). Proposers should use the provided Word template as a guide.
 - c. Current and Pending Support. All proposers (i.e., all PIs, co-investigators, and co-applicants) must provide abstracts of their currently funded grants. Applicants must



clearly indicate any scientific or academic overlap with the submitted URC proposal.

- d. Biosketch(es). All proposers (i.e., all PIs, co-investigators, and co-applicants) must provide a biosketch. A standard NIH or NSF style biosketch is acceptable; however, a two-page limit applies for all other formats.
- e. Course Release Approval. Proposers who wish to request financial support for course release(s), must first obtain formal school and department level approval. This approval must be included with the proposal and uploaded where indicated. Only school-generated course release approvals will be accepted. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain formal approval for course release from their Dean, and, as appropriate, through their unit head (e.g., Department Chair).
- f. Letter of commitment (optional). Proposers may include an optional letter of commitment or invitation from partnering institutions such as universities, research centers, archives, libraries, laboratories and/or government agencies.

Review Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed by established URC subcommittees. The subcommittees will provide a recommendation of funding to the final selection committee, led by the URC Co-Directors, who will determine the awardees. Reviews will consist of an overall rating reflecting the review criteria detailed below.

Proposals will be scored against the three criteria outlined below. All three criteria will be equally weighted in review:

1. Alignment with URC Purpose
 - Does the proposed project clearly align with the stated purpose of the URC funding program?
2. Intellectual Merit
 - Will the proposed activity
 - Address an important question or problem?
 - Advance knowledge and understanding? (Potential advances will be assessed with respect to the proposal's ability to specify the current state-of-the-art.)
 - Benefit society or advance desired societal outcomes?
 - Advance the field's creative contributions by exploring original or potentially transformative concepts?
3. Implementation Plan
 - Are the details for carrying out the proposed activities
 - Well-reasoned and based on a sound rationale?
 - Will the PIs have access to the resources (e.g., expertise, tools, equipment) needed to conduct the proposed activities? Resources will be assessed with respect to the proposal's ability to specify the resources needed, already possessed, and ultimately required.

Scoring Scale



1. Excellent: An outstanding proposal in all respects; deserves the highest priority for support.
2. Very Good: a high-quality proposal in nearly all respects; should be supported if possible.
3. Good: A quality proposal worthy of support
4. Fair: A proposal lacking in one or more critical aspects; key issues need to be addressed.
5. Poor: A proposal has serious deficiencies.

Progress Tracking and Reporting

Submission of the End-of Award (EOA) report is required within 30 days following the end date of the URC grant. Non-compliant award recipients will be ineligible to apply for another URC grant until the EOA report is submitted and accepted by the URC.

Awardees are required to submit brief annual progress reports for three years following completion of the funded award to capture the impact of the project. Compliance with this request will provide data to support future allocations of institutional funds to the URC.

Abstracts, publications, presentations, creative works, and similar products arising from the work funded by the URC program should cite the appropriate funding source: **Emory URC Research Award** or the **Emory URC - Halle Institute Global Research Award**.

No Cost Extensions (NCE)

URC awards are non-renewable grants, designed to be completed within one 12-month time period, beginning to end. While it is not routine practice for the URC to grant NCEs, on occasion, additional time is needed due to extenuating circumstances that may have hindered the completion of the project within the standard 12-month time period. Upon approval by the URC faculty co-directors, one NCE is permitted for a project after the original 12-month award cycle. Details on NCEs will be provided upon award.

Financial Management

The URC will establish URC awards/projects within Emory's financial management systems, with the exception of course releases. URC awards are managed by the awardee's departmental administrative financial support staff. The awardee's financial department is responsible for monitoring and managing all expenses for the URC award and for providing the required project financial report to the faculty member when the URC project is completed. The URC will be responsible for closing/inactivating the award project, Funding for any approved course release(s) will be transferred from URC directly to awardee's school to accommodate the expense of the awardee's course release.

Any portion of awarded funds not utilized by the end of the 12-month award cycle will be transferred by the URC coordinator back to the University Research Committee within three months of the project end date.