



College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences

2020-21 Undergraduate Research Funding (URF)

University travel remains restricted at present by COVID-19 mitigation measures. For the time being, URF funds therefore will not be granted for support of student travel for any purpose. However, reimbursement is available to offset the cost of virtual conference registration where one is presenting original research or creative work. (The URF does not provide funding for professional development or networking purposes.) During this restricted period, the URF may also offset fees necessary to access site-specific, digital archives or materials that do not involve travel and otherwise conform to URF guidelines.

Students may apply for reimbursement of virtual conference registration costs before submitting to or being accepted by a particular conference. This pre-approval process allows a student to determine if the conference would be affordable with or without URF Funding. Please note that payment/reimbursement will not occur until the expenses are incurred (see guidelines).

The guidelines below address typical circumstances. As students prepare an application and speak or correspond with their faculty sponsor, the current restrictions above must be understood to modify the guidelines. Undergraduate students with questions about their eligibility or application for URF support during COVID-19 restrictions are encouraged to contact [Erica Godfrey](#) in the LAS dean's office.

Purpose

The Undergraduate Research Funding (URF) supports DePaul undergraduate students in their pursuit of research and scholarship. The program allows undergraduate students to receive funding for planning, implementation, and dissemination of research and scholarship at locations beyond DePaul. Providing financial assistance for conducting and presenting research at professional and academic conferences enhances the learning experiences of our students. This funding contributes to students' overall academic experience, and more effectively meets the needs of undergraduate education.

Students may apply for funding to attend an academic conference before submitting to or being accepted by a particular conference. This pre-approval process allows a student to determine if a given trip would be feasible with or without URF Funding. (See the [FAQs](#) for more information about reimbursement policy and procedures.)

Eligibility

The URF is available to students whose primary major is in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences. (For a complete list of LAS majors, see [here](#).) Applicants must also be full-time students in good academic standing with an overall GPA of 3.00 or higher. Students may receive more than one award per year, but preference is given to applicants applying for the first time within the academic year. Previous awardees are eligible to reapply in subsequent years. The URF supports students who are sole or main authors and are identified as presenters in the conference program or in a letter of acceptance from the conference organizers (proof of acceptance is required as part of the application).

Available Funding

There is no specific cap on the amount of money available to travel under the URF. However, the process is competitive, and the use of funds closely regulated, as described below. Applicants are advised to make plans with the understanding that not every request can be fully funded. *Funds are obtained via reimbursement, following submission of original or scanned/emailed receipts. Applicants should anticipate paying first and being reimbursed after their trip.* **Other options for payment may be available to students with financial hardship who are unable to prepay expenses.** (See the [FAQs](#) for more information about reimbursement policy and procedures.)

Application

Applications are reviewed and decisions are made on a rolling basis throughout the academic year until funds are depleted. Applications may be submitted online as soon as you have received confirmation of your acceptance in the event's program. In that application, you are required to provide the name of a faculty member who has agreed to endorse your application. You are

encouraged to apply as soon as you have all information necessary to complete the application, which must be received no later than 30 days prior to your departure. *As of September 24, 2019, students must apply prior to departure. Applications submitted after-the-fact will not be funded.*

Criteria for Approval

The Executive Associate Dean in LAS will approve applications. Criteria include:

- A clear and complete project description outlining the applicant's project as it will be presented. This will typically be the conference "abstract" or "proposal" rewritten for a non-specialist audience.
- A brief but full statement of the relationship of the opportunity to the applicant's professional development and undergraduate-level learning.
- Proof of Selection: Verified acceptance to present at an academic conference. A clear and complete budget form and budget narrative in the format specified (see [FAQs](#) for more information). **If a budget and budget narrative are not submitted, the application will be denied.**
- The endorsement of a full-time faculty member familiar with the student's ongoing academic work
- Equitable distribution of available funding, to include special consideration of first-time applicants

IRB and Human Subjects

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) must first review projects that involve human research subjects before URF funding will be disbursed. Your faculty sponsor may be of assistance in this matter. You should prepare your description of the proposed project in accordance with the guidelines of the [Institutional Review Board](#) for the Protection of Human Subjects.

Supported Activities

This program is intended to provide undergraduate students with financial support to travel outside the city of Chicago to present original research/scholarship at regional, national, or international academic conferences.

Allowable Expenses Related to Supported Activities

The College reserves the right to disallow requests for reimbursement based on university policy and DePaul Business purpose. However, the following expenses are usually allowable; however, you're strongly encouraged to review the [FAQ on allowable and unallowable expenses](#):

- Conference registration fees
- Airfare/Train fare—from the applicant's location at the start of the approved travel period only (see FAQs for more information)
- Automobile rental expenses. The College will reimburse the least expensive method of travel or route for any given business trip regardless of the method or route used. Given a substantial discrepancy in the cost based on the mode of travel, LAS will reimburse the lesser amount unless extenuating circumstances necessitate the more expensive mode. (see [FAQs](#) for more information). When renting a car, gas and tolls may be reimbursed by receipt.
- Mileage for travel by personal vehicle **Mileage includes gas and tolls.** (see [FAQs](#) for more information)
- Lodging costs (strictly limited to the duration of the conference or research activity; see [FAQs](#) for more information).
- Ground transportation to/from the airport and lodging or conference location
- In the case of approved activities in the city of Chicago and suburbs, conference registration fees only

Unsupported Activities and Expenses

- Coursework provided by another institution.
- Tuition
- Attendance at a conference where one is not presenting original research or creative work. **(The URF does not provide funding for professional development or networking purposes.)**
- Food, drink, or incidentals
- Books, copy fees, or technology purchases
- Ground transportation within the city of Chicago. (Exceptions may be made in the case of safety or mobility concerns) Please note any such request for an exception in your application.)
- Lodging or other expenses incurred more than one day before or one day after the published start/end dates of a conference, not to exceed five days total. As of September 23, 2019, any expenses, other than conference registration, that are incurred prior to the submission or review of an URF application

Guidelines Governing Reimbursement

Before applying to the URF, please be sure that you are aware of these additional guidelines governing reimbursement:

- Reimbursement requests submitted more than 60 days after the last date of travel will not be reimbursed under any circumstances by university policy.
- Reimbursement requires itemized receipts, not confirmations. The receipts may be submitted in hard copy or via email. They must be submitted as one request and not piecemeal.
- Reimbursement will be made only to the individual who incurs an expense. If a charge is made in the name of someone other than the applicant, that person will be reimbursed directly and must provide a DePaul ID or SSN, and a mailing address, when receipts are submitted for reimbursement.

Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to review the application portal and FAQs for a full understanding of URF policies and application procedures, and to raise any questions prior to application. Inquiries may be directed to Erica Godfrey (egodfre1@depaul.edu) in the LAS Dean's Office.

**To apply to the Undergraduate Research Fund, follow the link below.
For assistance completing the application, see the FAQs that follow.**

<https://las.depaul.edu/student-resources/undergraduate-research/Pages/default.aspx>

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is the procedure for reimbursement?

All expenses must abide by DePaul and LAS policy and procedure. The College reserves the right to deny any expenses, even after submitted, if they do not adhere to requirements explained in this document.

1. Expenses must be submitted for reimbursement within **60 days** of the last date of travel. Please plan accordingly when deciding upon the appropriate application cycle.
2. Funds are usually obtained via reimbursement with original or scanned/mailed receipts. Students should anticipate paying first and being reimbursed after their trip. Further information on the process may be provided with the award letter.
3. Upon submission for reimbursement, the student must provide receipts and not confirmations. For example, a hotel confirmation indicating the price is not an acceptable reimbursement document. The student must submit the receipt provided upon checkout that indicates a zero balance.
4. The reimbursement must be made to the person that incurred the charge. If a person, other than the student, pays the expense, that person will be reimbursed directly. Please provide their DePaul ID or SSN and mailing address. For example, if a student's partner or parent purchases a ticket on their credit card, we will reimburse the partner or parent. We can manage multiple reimbursement requests if needed.
5. Convert all receipts into US dollars prior to submission for reimbursement. Please use <https://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/>. If your receipt is in foreign currency, please write the USD amount on the receipt. With your reimbursement submission, include a

printed copy of a one-to-one conversion. For example, documentation showing one GBP to one USD on the date of travel.

What if I experience financial hardship and cannot pay for the expense up-front? In the case of financial difficulty and inability to pre-pay expenses, please notify Erica Godfrey (egodfre1@depaul.edu) PRIOR to submitting an application.

Is the budget narrative required?

A budget and budget narrative are required. Without both pieces of information, your application will be denied with no option to resubmit. Your narrative should explain why you made your selections. For example, did you select the hotel because it was attached to the conference location? If you are renting a car, why must you do so? It must also capture any extenuating circumstances. For example, if your flights span dates outside the conference because you decide to stay longer, you should include the reason why that is the case and the research you did to ensure there was no large difference in pricing. Are you sharing a room with a fellow student or splitting other costs? Are you starting your trip from another location and why (home for the summer, year abroad, etc.)?

What are allowable and unallowable expenses?

The URF usually pays for the following expenses:

Airfare to/from the current location of the student to the location of the conference

- The airfare must be from the current home base of the student. For example, if the student is home from the summer and flying from New York, we will only pay to/from NY. If the student is studying abroad for the year in Rome, and the conference is in Germany, we will only pay for the ticket to/from Rome to Germany. We will not pay for the international ticket taking the student to Rome.
- Any tickets that do not originate/end in Chicago should have **full and complete** explanation in the budget narrative, or they will be denied. We reserve the right to alter the amount based on university policies.

Lodging

- The URF will fund lodging one night prior and one night after academic conferences, not exceeding five nights. If there are extenuating circumstances (long international travel, longer conference, limited flights, etc.), you may ask for more time, but must capture it in the budget narrative for the committee to consider.
- Academic conferences typically make arrangements with hotels, which offer lodging at a reduced rate. If a student chooses to stay elsewhere—or arranges lodging after the conference hotel/s are full—we **will not reimburse in excess of the conference hotel cost**. We will also not reimburse for travel between the conference site and the alternate lodging site if it dramatically increases the cost of alternate lodging. **Any planned lodging other than the use of conference-affiliated hotel charges must be fully explained in the Budget Narrative.**

Registration fees (this includes conferences held in Chicagoland)

Ground transportation (not authorized for Chicagoland area unless safety or mobility are of concern)

- To/from local airport
- To/from lodging
- If a student is traveling by rental car, car rental and receipts for tolls and gas are allowable expenses.
- For short trips outside the city, an applicant may choose to drive their own vehicle. In such cases, one is reimbursed according to the standard University mileage allowance (57.5 cents per mile in 2020); **this per-mile allowance covers all car-related expenses, including gas and tolls.** If the student is using their own car, mileage can be reimbursed by providing a map with directions and miles (Google maps) as documentation. No other car-travel receipts are necessary. Please note: car travel is reimbursable, in general, only when it is the lowest-cost option. If an applicant wishes to drive their own car, reimbursement will be limited to the cost of an airline ticket to/from the same location. **The need to use a personal vehicle must be fully explained in the budget narrative, which should include the verifiable cost of an airline ticket quoted by an online travel reservation service.**

The URF does not pay for the following:

- Travel or lodging to/from locations in the Chicagoland area*
- Attendance at a conference at which the student is not presenting
- Books
- Meals and incidentals
- Technology purchases
- Purchases made with points, mileage or rewards

**Students attending a conference or conducting research within the City of Chicago and surrounding area may request payment for conference registration or research fees. Local travel costs are not reimbursed. Exceptions will be made in the case of safety or mobility concerns in which students may consider taking a taxi or ride-share for safety purposes. Please note this exception on the receipt or in the budget narrative within the application.*

4/26/21