

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOLAR AWARD (URSA)

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Eligibility Requirements

- At the time of application and through the project period, applicants must be matriculated students, in good academic standing, and in pursuit of their first bachelor's degree at Rider University.
- Applicants must have completed at least 24 Rider credits by the time the project is begun.
- Applicant's faculty sponsor(s) must verify the applicant's eligibility with the appropriate Dean's Office.

Responsibilities of Selected Scholars

- Scholars must work under the supervision of a sponsoring faculty member(s). Students typically enroll in XXX-490 with their project advisor fall and spring semesters. These classes carry 3 credits and appear as "Independent Study" on the student's transcript.
- Selected scholars must remain full-time students and maintain good academic standing during the scholarship year.
- Scholars are expected to make at least two campus presentations about their work, one brief introduction at the Undergraduate Research Scholarship Award (URSA) Day or Night of the application year and one longer presentation at the same event (URSA Day or Night) the following year summarizing the completed research and its significance. URSA Day or Night is held during spring semester finals or very close to that time frame. **Your advisor is expected to introduce you at both events.**
- Students and mentors will be asked to check in with the URSA committee to confirm their participation.
- An interim report detailing work done on the project during the fall semester must be submitted to the URSA Chair by the last day of finals. Guidelines are posted on the URSA website (<http://www.rider.edu/ursa>).
- The project should be completed in full by the last day of finals for spring semester and submitted to the URSA Chair.
- Scholars are strongly encouraged to present their work at local, regional and national meetings, conferences or venues; to submit their work for relevant prizes and awards; and to publish their work in an appropriate academic forum when possible.

The Selection Process

Awards will be distributed based, primarily, on the merit of the proposals and efforts will be made to distribute awards across a wide range of disciplines as well as across different colleges (College of Arts & Sciences, College of Education & Human Services, and the Norm Brodsky College of Business). The committee will normally support no more than one project in an academic department and no more than two projects in a given college. The location in a given department, program, or college is defined by the academic discipline of the project, not the student's major or college of registration.

The committee judges the applications on the following criteria:

- Quality, clarity, and completeness of project description.
- Significance and originality of project, with respect to both the discipline and the student.
- Appropriateness of approach and/or method.
- Feasibility of project completion and specificity of timeline.
- Clarity and specificity of expected outcomes.
- Adherence to the format requirements detailed below.
- Faculty recommendation.

Application

The **APPLICATION DEADLINE for the 2024-2025 academic year is Monday, April 14, 2025, at 5 pm**. To conserve resources submissions will be accepted electronically through email only. Students may email their complete applications to Dr. Kathy Price (kprice@rider.edu). An email will confirm that the application was received and submitted to the committee for review.

A complete application consists of the following sections submitted as a SINGLE electronic file (PDF or Word document) in the order indicated, and **must not exceed five pages in length**, excluding cover sheet and recommendation letter.

1. Proposal Cover Sheet: (Include the following information on one page)

Project Title

Applicant's Name

Major(s) and Minor(s)

College (Norm Brodsky College of Business, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, College of Education and Human Services, or Westminster College of the Arts)

Name(s) and Department(s) of Faculty Mentor(s)

Graduation (expected month/year)

Contact information

Date

Abstract: (a **100-word or less** summary of your project)

2. Project Description: A more detailed explanation of your project emphasizing the following criteria—research question or problem; purpose, significance, and originality of project; approach and/or method; and expected outcomes, including discipline-specific format (e.g., paper, poster, presentation). This should be written clearly and concisely with a minimum of technical jargon, and accessible to a multidisciplinary review committee.

3. Project Timeline: Timeline for project completion, including major steps in the research process, plans for presentations, and submission of interim report and final project. The timeline should not exceed one page.

4. Project Bibliography: References to the most important literature on the topic should be presented in a format appropriate for the discipline (e.g., MLA, APA, Chicagostyle).

5. Letter of Recommendation from Faculty Advisor: Letter may be submitted with the application as a single word file or pdf, or separately by the faculty mentor, by the deadline. This letter should be written in non-technical language accessible to a multidisciplinary faculty committee and should emphasize:

- the student's qualifications and preparation for the project
- the project's significance, both to the discipline and to the student's learning
- mentor plan, including support activities such as regular meetings and assessment of progress, and the probability of completion in the proposed time
- expected outcomes, including discipline-specific format (e.g., paper, poster, presentation)
- previous experience as a mentor for undergraduate research