

ICTAS Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) Grants Program: 2018-19

The objective of this program is to provide seed funding to faculty teams to engage undergraduates, preferably from underrepresented groups including women, into interdisciplinary research during the academic year. Faculty teams representing multiple disciplines/departments/colleges are preferred. This program is intended to increase VT's proposals to the NSF's Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) Site and International Research Experiences for Students (IRES) programs. Awardees are expected to apply for one of these two NSF programs in 2019. Since it is expected to have a well-defined common focus in the REU Site or IRES proposals, faculty teams will be expected to propose research opportunities with a coherent intellectual theme. A workshop will be organized at ICTAS on April 19, 2019 (9-noon) to: (i) showcase research work of undergraduate students in a poster session, (ii) bring PIs/co-PIs with experiences in running successful REU sites/IRES programs to share their experiences with the participants, and (iii) invite prior year awardees to share their experiences. Each team is expected to engage at least 3 undergraduate researchers. The ICTAS will make up to 5 awards of \$10k each during the fiscal year 2019.

Budget Guidelines: 1. At least 60% of funds must be spent on undergraduate students' wages. 2. If you plan to purchase equipment for supporting the research project/s, it must be briefly documented in the proposal and equipment budget can't exceed 15% of total funds. 3. Graduate students who will be engaged in the mentorship of undergraduate students can be paid through the project with an upper limit of 15% of total funds. 4. Project related travel is allowed and should not exceed 10% of the total funds. 5. Faculty and staff salaries are not allowed.

In order to request funding, please submit a proposal (max. 3 pages, pdf). Please follow below guidelines strictly:

1. Faculty members: Names, Departments, Colleges: (Page 1) (clearly indicate PI's name, email and contact #)
2. Title of the Proposal: (Page 1)
3. Coherent intellectual theme: (Page 1)
4. Number of undergraduate researchers: (Page 1)

5. Number of undergraduate researchers from underrepresented groups: (Page 1)
6. Brief description of proposed research and mentorship plan: (Page 2)
7. A commitment statement to participate in the April 2019 workshop and submit a proposal (REU Site or IRES programs) to NSF in 2019. (Page 3)
8. A short paragraph to describe the outcome/s of the ICTAS REU award/s received in prior years, if applicable. (Page 3)

The deadline to receive applications is
September 3, 2018 (Monday; 5:00 p.m.).

Awards will be made by October 1, 2018. Research work is suggested to take place between October 2018 through May 2019.

Please submit your proposal to Vinod Lohani (vlohani@vt.edu), ICTAS' Director for Education and Global Initiatives. If you have questions, please feel free to ask Vinod.

Note: Investigators are encouraged to review RFPs of the NSF/REU Site and IRES programs.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) – ICTAS REU Grants

1.Can I submit a single PI proposal?

Answer: Yes, you can. However, as indicated in the RFP, submission by a team of faculty members representing a variety of disciplines is preferred since the goal of the program is to engage undergraduates into interdisciplinary research.

2.Can the research period go beyond April 2018?

Answer: Yes, if your students are available, they can be paid (on wages) until the end of May 2018.

3.Is my team required to submit a proposal to the NSF's REU site or IRES program in 2019?

Answer: Yes, as long as these programs are supported by the NSF.

4.Can I get copies of successful proposals for the REU site and IRES programs?

Answer: Yes, this is one of the things that will be discussed at the April 2019 workshop.

5. Will funds be transferred to my department or ICTAS staff will handle all funds related issues?

Answer: Yes, funds will be transferred to your department if you receive an award. Your team will be expected to follow the budget guidelines as stipulated in the RFP.

6. Can I include a non-VT person on my team?

Answer: Yes, you can and please make sure role of this person is clearly defined.

7. Can I recruit a non-VT student for research?

Answer: The funds are generally to be used for engaging VT students into research activities. You are encouraged to discuss your ideas w/ Dr. Lohani if your team plans to engage non-VT students.

8. Can I charge staff salary to this fund?

Answer: No

9. What's the agenda of the April 2019 workshop?

Answer: We invite PIs who have implemented successful REU site and IRES programs. Copies of successful proposals are also shared. All undergraduates are invited to present posters on their research. We also plan to invite faculty w/ a significant experience in mentoring undergraduate students for sharing their experiences.

10. I received this award in prior years. Can I apply again?

Answer: Yes, it will be helpful to clearly articulate how the new award (if you are successful) helps your team in securing external funding.

11. Can we award scholarships to undergraduate students using these funds?

Answer: No. We suggest you use wage funding positions.