## Request for Proposals (RFP) for the UNC Undergraduate Research Program Award

### Introduction

The UNC Undergraduate Research Program Award is a grant mechanism to provide funding to universities or consortia of universities within the UNC system to support and enhance undergraduate research (UR) in the UNC system. Undergraduate research, defined by the Council on Undergraduate Research as "an inquiry or investigation conducted by an undergraduate student that makes an original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline," is recognized as a high-impact practice.[1] Therefore, UR promotes the UNC system's mission to "impart the skills necessary for individuals to lead responsible, productive, and personally satisfying lives." Specifically, undergraduate research supports UNC's teaching mission of applying multiple approaches to student learning while allowing students and faculty to pursue scholarly activities of the highest intellectual caliber.

### RFP Focus and Scope

The UNC System's Undergraduate Research Directors Council (URDC) has identified three areas of focus for this RFP: Assessment, Course-based Undergraduate Research Experiences (CUREs), and Diversity/Inclusion. The areas are broadly defined, and the URDC welcomes proposals related to the scope of these three areas, either separately or in combination. Suggested topics include one or more of the following:

> **Assessment:** Development or expansion of novel or innovative methods to assess UR outcomes.

> **CUREs:** Development or expansion of novel or innovative curricula that substantively include UR, recognizing that the goal of CUREs is to enhance research skills development toward the expansion of access to UR opportunities.

> **Diversity/Inclusion:** Development or expansion of novel or innovative strategies or methods to expand access to UR opportunities to all students, especially students from underrepresented groups.

Each proposal must include a thorough assessment/evaluation plan, for which part of the budget can be used. Collaboration among UNC institutions will be a priority for funding. The URDC will accept budgets up to $40,000 but reserves the right to trim budgets as needed. State fund regulations apply, and funds must be expended by June 30, 2018. (Campus spending policies may dictate an earlier deadline.)

### Award Information

For FY 2017-18, a total of $75,000 has been budgeted to fund this initiative. Awarded amounts may range from $10,000 to $40,000, and funds must be expended by June 30, 2018. This is a single year award; a new solicitation for future awards will likely be released for FY18-19, provided that there is sufficient institutional interest and that the proposed projects are of high quality.

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[1] Kuh, G. and O'Donnell (2013) *Ensuring Quality & Taking High-Impact Practices to Scale*, AAC&U: Washington, DC.

**Guidelines for Proposal Submission**

Proposals will be accepted from any institution in the 17-campus UNC system. Although inter-institutional collaboration is not a requirement, proposals that significantly involve two or more UNC institutions are encouraged and have the potential for a higher overall score and priority funding. There is no limit to the number of proposals per institution.

All proposals must be submitted by the UR Coordinator of the lead institution. Proposals are due by 5 pm on May 16, 2017; UR Coordinators may wish to set an earlier institution-level deadline to ensure sufficient time to submit all proposals. Proposal writers should contact their respective UR Coordinators early in the process so that Coordinators can make arrangements to be available to submit the proposal(s). Proposals must be submitted using the web form at this link: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form?EQBCT=a563a4873bca4551882ef446823adc83

Funds will be available near the beginning of the 2017-2018 fiscal year and must be expended by the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 2018).

Institutions receiving awards must provide a final report with the following elements: 1) detailed final expended budget; 2) a narrative that highlights major project activities; and 3) a summary of how well the project met its stated goals, along with supporting data or other supporting information as appropriate. The final report is due July 31, 2018.

Applications must be submitted as a **single pdf file**. Please use margins no smaller than one inch and font size no smaller than 11. The application must include the following:

- **Front matter** (1 page) including project title; institution name; principal investigator name, title, and contact information; unit/department; names of collaborating institutions; primary focus area (assessment, CUREs, or diversity/inclusion); name and contact information for co-PI(s) if applicable; names and contact information for key personnel; and amount requested.
- **Project description** including a detailed description of the proposed project (no longer than 1500 words); expected outcomes and assessment methods for the project; and timeline for project activities.
- **Letter of support** from the Chief Research Officer of the lead institution. Additional letters of support are allowed but not required.
- **Budget** with accompanying justification (up to 600 words) specifically describing how the funds will be used. Please include any matching funds.

**Timeline**

May 16th at 5 pm: Proposals due

Jun. 30, 2018: Deadline for expending all funds (institutional deadline may be sooner)

July 31, 2018: Final progress report due. Awardees will be contacted with progress report submission instructions.

**Proposal Review and Evaluation**

Proposals will be reviewed by a panel of UNC GA staff, university representatives, and possibly external reviewers. Proposals will be scored using six criteria:

- **Project goals**: Goals for the project are clearly described and thoroughly documented; proposal supports the RFP goals and objectives.
- **Project design**: Strong and innovative project design with procedures and activities that are well defined, fully explained, and clearly aligned to project and RFP goals.
- **Sustainability**: Project identifies clear plans to continue after grant period expires.
- **Plans for Project Evaluation**: Proposal includes a variety of reasonable and realistic methods to evaluate the project.
- **Budget**: Budget is complete and contains all required information. Budget is cost effective and linked to activities and outcomes.
- **Scalability**: Project identifies clear plans to scale program to expand reach and effectiveness.
- **Collaboration** (if applicable): Proposal includes a well-defined plan identifying appropriate collaborative partners, each of which adds value to the program.

If a proposal is a collaborative effort between two or more institutions, the additional criterion of Collaboration will be used (see above). Each category offers a maximum of 3 points for a total of 18 points, or 21 points for collaborative proposals. Proposals will be ranked by score, and awards will be made according to scores and available funds.

**Inquiries**
Questions regarding this solicitation may be directed to Lee Phillips, Mary Farwell, or Erin Hopper:

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