# Iowa State University Undergraduate Research Assistantship

Guidelines and Procedures 2025-2026

# Guidelines

Iowa State University’s Undergraduate Research Assistantship (URA) Program encourages outstanding juniors and seniors to pursue graduate study by offering them hands-on experience in a formal research environment. Participation in the URA Program assists students in making career decisions and in attaining information about graduate education and fellowships. Faculty and staff members of Iowa State also benefit from working closely with talented undergraduates. The research roles assigned to the students are expected to develop technical and specialized skills as well as foster originality, imagination, judgment, and patience -- the traits of an independent scholar.

# To qualify for the Undergraduate Research Assistantship Program, students must:

* Be classified as juniors or seniors by the beginning of Fall 2025 or semester employed as a URA
* Demonstrate sufficient financial need by filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
* Maintain an ISU cumulative grade point average of at least 3.25

# First Year URA Students

First year URA students can earn a maximum of $4,300 for the nine-month academic period beginning on August 16, 2025 and ending May 15, 2026. The faculty sponsor pays 40% of the wages, while the work-study program funds the remaining 60%. The minimum pay rate for first year URA students is $12.00 per hour.

# Renewal URA Students

Renewal URA students continuing work with the same faculty member can earn a maximum of $5,000 for the nine-month academic period beginning on August 16, 2025 and ending May 15, 2026. The faculty sponsor pays 40% of the wages, while the work- study program funds the remaining 60%. The minimum pay rate for renewal URA students is $14.00 per hour.

# Important dates and documents due:

* Student and Faculty/Staff URA applications or Renewal applications for 2024-25 have a **soft deadline of March 28, 2025 for Spring interviews. Applications will be accepted after this date, but may have a delay in matching.** <https://studentjobs.iastate.edu/types-of-employment/ura/>
* Completed Letter of Intent signed by all parties

URA Program / Student Employment Center Submit forms by mail to: Office of Student Financial Aid

Room 0210 Beardshear Hall; Ames IA 50011-2020 Drop off forms in person at: Room 0640 Beardshear Hall

For further info contact: Julie Arnold at 294-0103 or [jaarnol@iastate.edu](mailto:jaarnol@iastate.edu)

# Procedures

1. Faculty/staff interested in participating in the Undergraduate Research Assistantship (URA) Program should seek departmental approval and complete and return the faculty/staff application form by **March 28, 2025 (soft deadline for Spring interviews). Applications will be accepted after this date, but may have a delay in matching.**
2. Students meeting eligibility requirements will be contacted by the Office of Student Financial Aid to seek their participation in the program.
3. Faculty/staff and qualified students interested in working together are encouraged to contact one another immediately. If a faculty/staff member and student agree to work together prior to the interviewing phase (considered to be “pre-matched”), this can increase the likelihood of securing an Undergraduate Research Assistantship. This agreement should be indicated in the “pre-match” section on **both** applications. Submitting an application does not guarantee a URA.
4. Qualifying students selected for the program who are not pre-matched will be provided names of faculty/staff members with interests in the same general research area as the student. Students then schedule interviews to secure a faculty/staff “match.”
5. Students and faculty/staff should contact the URA coordinator once interviews are completed. If a work agreement is not reached, additional candidates may be requested for interviews.
6. Each student will complete a Letter of Intent Form with the faculty/staff employer. Faculty/staff sponsors are to outline duties and make students' responsibilities clear. Specific working hours should be determined before students return to classes in the fall.
7. **URA positions will be finalized when financial need has been verified prior to fall semester 2025 or semester employed as a URA. Changes in the student's eligibility for work-study may reduce or eliminate eligibility for the URA program for the academic year.** Students will be notified if a change should occur in their financial aid eligibility.
8. URA commitments may encompass both Fall and Spring semesters. If this agreement is made for one semester only and an additional semester is desired with a different partnership, contact the URA coordinator as soon as possible. **Due to limited work-study funding, prior arrangements for the Spring 2026 semester may be necessary to guarantee an undergraduate research assistantship.**
9. Students are expected to work an average of 10-14 hours per week for 32 weeks while classes are in session. Students may work up to 20 hours per week while classes are in session and up to 40 hours per week during breaks. Students will be paid bimonthly.
10. In order for student employees to be paid under the work-study program, the department must select the work-study student worker job profile in Workday, and the costing allocations need to be set up properly so that the work-study split occurs correctly. **Failure to follow the correct procedures may result in the department being assessed 100% of the employee’s wages.**