

Application instructions for: Undergraduate Research Fellows Program (URFP), Mellon Mays Research Fellows (MMUF), and McNair Research Scholars Program

All applications are accessed through MyUCLA Surveys (under the Campus Life section). If a scholarship program is offered through both Undergraduate Research Centers (the Undergraduate Research Center—Sciences and the Undergraduate Research Center—Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences), two surveys will be available—one for each center. Be sure to apply with the correct survey, based on your discipline. Contact us if you have questions.

This application is required for all applicants to the [Undergraduate Research Fellows Program \(URFP\)](#), the [Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship \(MMUF\)](#), or the [McNair Research Scholars Program](#).

You may apply to more than one program through this application by checking the appropriate program boxes. Information on the specific requirements of these programs is found on the website links above.

The application has multiple parts that depend on the program(s) to which you are applying:

1. Project proposal (8000 characters limit including spaces; approximately 1000 words)
2. Personal statement (4100 characters limit including spaces; approximately 500 words)
3. For Mellon-Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program applicants: See additional prompt.
4. For Mellon-Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program applicants: Recommendation letter from your faculty mentor (see instructions below).
5. For McNair Research Scholars Program applicants: Two letters of recommendation and an additional application form are required (see [McNair Research Scholars Program](#)).

1. Project Proposal Instructions

The project proposal must be at least 100, but no more than 8000 characters (approximately 1000 words).

The proposal introduces the reader to the nature, context, and scope of your research or creative project. Proposals are informative and persuasive writing because they attempt to both educate the reader and convince the reader to do something (in this case, offer you a scholarship). Keep in mind that your proposal will be read by an interdisciplinary committee and your goals should be clear to a non-expert.

Your application will be judged on your ability to demonstrate the feasibility and significance of your project. The selection committee will be looking for an indication that your project will contribute a new perspective to scholarship in your field or topic.

We recommend that you develop this document in consultation with your faculty mentor and that you discuss with your faculty mentor the specific conventions of your field. The guidelines below are intended to help you organize your proposal and present your information in a way that meets the requirements of grant-giving agencies, including the Undergraduate Research Centers at UCLA.

a) Research projects:

A research proposal should address the following topics:

i. Research Question and Significance:

Describe the context and scope of your proposed research project. You should provide sufficient background information so the reader can situate your topic in larger themes and trends. Frame the research question you want to explore for a broad audience and discuss why this is an interesting and important question. Consider the following questions:

- What is new about what you are proposing?
- How will it advance or contribute to the field?
- If you are working on a larger project in a team, what is your individual contribution to this project?
- In more colloquial terms, why should we care?

In this section, also provide a **brief literature review** or discussion of how your project fits within existing scholarship. This section should demonstrate your knowledge of how other scholars have approached the topic, and the significance of your project in relation to these works.

ii. Project Design and Feasibility:

In this section, describe how you will be approaching data/sources and what type of texts or materials you will use in your project. It is appropriate to use your discipline-specific language to provide detail about how your project will unfold. Consider the following questions:

- What methods will you use to explore your research questions?
- Are these methods in keeping with traditional approaches in this research area?
- What is your expected timetable for carrying out the research?
- If this is a group project with fewer than five people, what are the responsibilities of each team member?

You should also provide a **projected timetable of your research tasks and faculty feedback** during the scholarship period. Note which research steps will be completed in each month and be sure to include time to review your data and/or write your analysis. Indicate who will be

providing feedback and evaluating your project, and according to what schedule and criteria. Be sure to discuss how often you will be meeting with your faculty mentor in advance.

iii. Anticipated Results:

In this section, you will briefly discuss the **expected results** of your research. For some projects, this may be predicted outcomes based on your hypothesis and experimental methods. For others, this may be potential arguments based on your analysis and sources.

b) Creative arts proposals:

Students are welcome to propose projects culminating in the production of original artwork, a performance, exhibition, documentary, etc. These may be supplemental to a research proposal or be the central focus of the project. Students in the arts and music should specify in their proposal:

i. Vision and context:

What is your vision for the work? What kind of reaction is expected from the audience? How does the work fit into the contemporary and historical landscape of your field? What sources of inspiration are you drawing on? Does this project relate to other works you have produced?

ii. Implementation:

What materials, tools, or techniques will be used in carrying out the project? Why are they important to the work? Provide an estimated timeline for carrying out the project and how you will work with your faculty mentor.

2. Personal Statement Instructions

You are required to submit a personal statement of at least 100, but no more than 4100 characters (approximately 500 words). This statement is an important part of your application package. It will allow the faculty committee to get a feel for you as a person as well as a student. This essay is meant to place your academic record into the context of your opportunities and obstacles.

Your personal statement should briefly describe how you think receiving the scholarship will impact your short- and long-term goals. Please also describe your long-term goals. If there are any special circumstances (i.e. personal, academic, financial hardships) that you feel are relevant to your application, please let us know.

3. Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship applicants

If you are applying to the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF) Program, you will also respond to the following prompt: the fundamental objective of the MMUF is to diversify the professoriate by increasing the number of faculty from underrepresented groups and also of those with a demonstrated commitment to eradicating racial disparities in higher education. MMUF is a two-year program designed for outstanding students in select humanities and social science fields (see the MMUF website for eligible fields) who intend to pursue a PhD and a career in the academy. Please discuss how and why you have decided to pursue the PhD degree, and please address how you have demonstrated a “commitment to eradicating racial disparities.” Your response must be at least 100 characters, but no more than 1500 (approximately 200 words).

4. Faculty Mentor Letter of Recommendation (for Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program applicants ONLY):

You will find the form to give your faculty mentor [here](#). The letter of recommendation should be from the faculty mentor with whom you plan to work as part of the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship program. **Be sure to give your mentor this form early, in order to allow him/her to submit the letter by November 15.**

The deadline for receipt of the MMUF letter of recommendation is November 15. If you are also applying to the McNair Research Scholars Program, your faculty mentor may use the same McNair letter of recommendation for the Mellon-Mays recommendation.

Helpful Hints:

- Please compose your documents in advance on a word-processor, then cut and paste them into the appropriate text box in the survey/application.
- The online form does not support italics, bold, special characters, or Greek symbols. You cannot submit any figures or other files. TEXT ONLY.
- The system will time out after one hour of inactivity. To save any partially completed work, press “Continue” (at the bottom of the page)
- Make sure your application is complete before you press “Submit,” as you will not be able to access the application once it has been submitted.
- It takes a few seconds to load the page where you will be inputting your Research Proposal and Personal Statement. Please be patient.

Questions?

Please consult the program coordinators (found on the links above) with any questions. You can also review our [Scholarship Program FAQ page](#).

The Undergraduate Research Center for the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences also hosts informational workshops on the URFP, MMUF, and McNair programs. Click [here](#) and select “Scholarship Workshops” for a list of scheduled workshops. Our office in Murphy A334 also provides sample applications for review and can schedule students for one-on-one appointments with Graduate Research Mentors.

If you have further questions or problems submitting this application, please contact:

Undergraduate Research Center – Humanities, Arts & Social Sciences
A334 Murphy Hall
310.825.2935
urhass@college.ucla.edu
[Monday-Friday: 8:30am-4:30pm](#)