

BirdFEEDER Grants:

Funds for Experimentation, Enquiry, and DEvelopment of Student Research.

Purpose

The BirdFEEDER program provides small grants (up to \$500) for student research projects. Projects must be outside-of-the-classroom, independent student research projects developed in consultation with a faculty mentor. Funding can be used for research supplies or research-related expenses/materials.

Eligibility

All currently enrolled ISU undergraduate and graduate students in good academic standing are eligible to apply for BirdFEEDER funds. Students should request the minimum amount needed to conduct the research.

Amount of Funding and Allowable Expenses

The BirdFEEDER grant provides up to \$500 in research expenses. Allowed expenditures include:

- Consumables necessary to conduct the research/inquiry (such as art supplies, reagents, disposables, parts for constructing a device)
- Incentives for research subjects (following ISU IRB requirements)
- Travel to conduct research
- Research equipment and software: Note that all durable equipment or software purchased with OSR funds is University Property and must be returned to the University at the end of the grant program.

All requests for equipment/software must be accompanied a section in the Faculty Mentor's Letter of Support that confirms that the 1) equipment is not already available on campus, 2) provides a rationale for the purchase, and 3) plans for future use of the software/equipment. See the notes in the Budget Template and Justification below.

Once equipment is purchased it must be tagged as university property and the student must fill out a loan agreement.

Funds may NOT be used for:

- Costs associated with class projects, class assignments, or any activities that are associated with a traditional campus "in the classroom" course.
- Supplemental funding for study abroad trips, student teaching, training, or internships.
- Food and beverage expenses.

- Student wages.
- Faculty expenses.
- Costs that could otherwise be covered through faculty research grants.
- Travel to present research/ participate in juried exhibits (See Pinion Grant Program).

Students may combine this grant with the Graduate School's Symposium Project /Presentation Assistance or other grant program as long as the expenses covered by each grant are different and fully explained and justified in the budget.

Budget and Justification Template

Students must use one of the budget forms provided on the InfoReady site. They are available in MSWord and Excel formats). See example below.

For each research expense, list the cost of the item to the nearest whole dollar and provide a justification for the item.

FEEDER Budget Form

Instructions: Fill out sections in orange by typing directly into the table or into the Formula Bar at the top of the worksheet. See Sample Budget below.			
STUDENT NAME:			
	Item/Description	Amt Requested	Notes/Justification
Supplies/Equipment		\$	Provide total amount. Add detailed list under Notes, if applicable.
Travel*		\$	Provide total amount. Add detailed list under Notes, if applicable.
Research Incentives (Gift Cards)**		\$	
Total Requested		\$ -	Grant Max \$500
NOTES:			

*See Travel [guidelines](https://travel.illinoisstate.edu/reimbursements/) and Reimbursements. See <https://travel.illinoisstate.edu/reimbursements/> Mileage rates may change. The rate is \$.70 /mile as of 1/1/25

**Students who are awarded funds for research incentives (i.e. gift cards for research participants) will need to provide an approved Institutional Review Board protocol number and follow instructions found on Illinois State's Research Incentive's [webpage:https://research.illinoisstate.edu/ethics/human-subjects/payments/university/](https://research.illinoisstate.edu/ethics/human-subjects/payments/university/). The TruCentive form must be submitted to Barb Rexroat at bjrexro@ilstu.edu before incentives can be issued.

- **Travel:** Travel to conduct research only. See Travel Reimbursements at

<https://travel.illinoisstate.edu/reimbursements/> Note that mileage rates may change. The rate is \$.70 /mile as of 1/1/25.

- **Research Incentives.** Students who are awarded funds for research incentives (i.e. gift cards for research participants) will need to provide an approved Institutional Review Board protocol number and follow instructions found on [Illinois State's Research Incentive's webpage](#). The TruCenive form must be submitted to Barb Rexroat at bjrexro@ilstu.edu before incentives can be issued.
- **If equipment or software is requested,** the faculty mentor must include the following in their letter of support:
 - Confirmation that the requested equipment and software is not already available via [The Help Center Service Catalog](#), [Milner Library's Technology Loan Service](#), the Graduate School, [The Digital Innovation, Graphics, and Gaming Studio \(DIGGS\)](#), or other campus office.
 - Purchase justification and plan for long-term use of the equipment/software: An explanation of why the equipment/software be purchased, whether other students will be able to use it, and if so, where the equipment/software be located so that it is accessible to those students. The letter must also address who will be responsible for maintenance/updates and who will be responsible for managing borrowing/use privileges?

Deadlines

Application Requirements

Applicants must submit the following:

1. **Completed application** form in InfoReady: <https://ilstu.infoready4.com/#>
2. **Proposal.** The proposal must provide the following information (1000-word limit, inclusive of references).
 - Student Name/Email/Major
 - Faculty Mentor Name/Email/Department or School
 - Project Title
 - Project Description.
 - The project description should be written for a non-specialist audience and must describe:
 - The goal of the project,
 - The research question or hypothesis,
 - The methods will the student use to investigate this issue, and
 - The anticipated outcomes of the project.
3. **Budget Form.** Students must use on the budget forms provided on the InfoReady site (they are available in MSWord and Excel formats). See example above.
4. **A Letter of Support** from the applicant's faculty mentor is also required. Once students submit their proposals, an automated request for a Letter of Support will be sent to their faculty mentor.

NOTE: Applications that do not conform to these guidelines will not be considered.

Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following questions:

- Does the project have a clearly formulated scholarly question or research hypothesis?
- Is the project described adequately in terms of what the student will be doing and how?
- Are the anticipated outcomes of the project adequately described?
- Is the project well-written?
- Does the budget align with project's goals?
- Does the student have the faculty mentor's letter of support.

Post-Award Requirements

Students and faculty mentors will receive a request to submit a progress report. The report will ask for the total amount of funding spent and amount of remaining funds (if any) that need to be returned to OSR. The report should list of citations for project outcomes including manuscripts in progress, presentations, exhibits, or grant applications. Reports are due in August for Summer grants, December for Fall grants, and May for Spring grants.

Submission of the report is required to maintain eligibility for this, and other programs sponsored by OSR.