



OFFICE OF STUDENT RESEARCH

Illinois State University

BirdFEEDER Program **Fund for Experimentation, Enquiry, and DEvelopment of Student Research**

Purpose

The purpose of the BirdFEEDER program is to fund costs (up to \$500) associated with 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 FEEDER funds. Students should request the minimum amount needed to conduct the research.

Amount of Funding and Allowable Expenses

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 by a letter from the faculty mentor 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 the OSR Travel 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.

Deadlines

For Spring semester funding: Last Friday in February

For Summer funding: First Friday in May

For Fall semester funding: Last Friday in September

Application Requirements

- I. Completed application form in InfoReady: <https://ilstu.infoready4.com/#>
- II. Proposal. **Must follow the outline below** (1000 word limit, inclusive of references.)
Proposals that do not conform with the following outline will not be considered.
 - A. Student Name/Email/Major
 - B. Faculty Mentor Name/Email/Department or School
 - C. Project Title
 - D. Project Description. The project description should be written for a non-specialist audience and must include the following sections:
 1. What is the goal of the project (background, objectives, and significance)?
 2. What is your research question or hypothesis?
 3. What methods will the student use to investigate this issue?
 4. What are the anticipated outcomes of the project?
 5. What is the significance of the project?
 6. What is the schedule for the project and use of funds (they should be used within the term)?
 7. References Cited.
- III. Budget itemization and justification. Use budget form provided (Below)
- IV. Faculty mentor statement of support. All proposals must have the support and supervision of a faculty mentor. Once the student submits items I-III in the Infoready platform, an automatically generated message will go to the faculty mentor requesting that the mentor "review" the application. The Review will prompt the faculty to provide their statement of support or upload their letter of reference.

Budget and Justification Template

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

	Item	Cost	Justification
		\$	
		\$	
		\$	
Total Cost		\$	
Amount Requested*		\$	

*Maximum FEEDER award amount is \$500.

Please list other funding requested and received for this project:

Amount Requested	Amount Received	Comments/Notes
\$	\$	
\$	\$	

NOTES:

1. Student who requests funds for research incentives (i.e. gift cards for research participants) must also include a completed **Incentive Card Request Form (see attached)**. More information can be found on the [Research Incentives](#) webpage. The Incentive request form must be submitted via email to Barb at bjrexro@ilstu.edu. IRB approval is required before incentives will be released.
2. If equipment or software is requested, please attach a letter from the faculty mentor that includes:
 - a. 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.
 - b. Purchase justification and plan for long-term use of the equipment/software:
 - i. Why should this equipment/software be purchased?
 - ii. Would other students find it useful? And if so, where would the equipment/software be most accessible to those students?

- iii. Who will be responsible for maintenance/updates?
- iv. Who will be responsible for managing borrowing/use privileges?

Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following questions:

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

Post-Award Requirements

Students and faculty mentors must submit a financial expenditure report and list of any project outcomes (papers, presentations, exhibits, grant applications). A link to the reporting document will be sent to grant recipients and will be due by January 15th for Fall/Summer grants, and May 15th for Spring grants. Unused funds must be returned to OSR.

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