

Faculty Research Assistant Grant Application Guide 2026-27

The SOURCE has made updates to the Faculty Research Assistant Grant, effective Fall 2026. Review those changes [here](#).

Description: Faculty-led research projects that allow undergraduate students to develop key research skills within their discipline through paid research assistant positions. Mentors may apply for 1-3 student RAs. Mentors may have students in mind, or advertise on the SOURCE website. With an open search, mentors tend to have the best results when they also recruit actively among related majors and departments.

Prior Recipients of SOURCE funding: Prior recipients are welcome to apply for additional funding, but the SOURCE prioritizes first time applicants. Returning applicants must have completed all SOURCE requirements for their previous award, if not, SOURCE reserves the right to rescind newly awarded grants.

Student and Mentor Eligibility: First, second, and third-year students not currently on another SOURCE award. Faculty Mentors must have full-time, tenured or tenure-track appointments; faculty with other full-time appointments may be eligible with department chair approval. Priority is given to first-time applicants, new faculty, and faculty in priority areas (described in 'Award Goals')

Award Goals: Introduce early-stage students to research and build their research skills by working as a research assistant with a faculty mentor, with particular focus on humanities, social sciences, arts, communications, journalism, or management fields. Students will engage in meaningful work and learn about research methodologies and design in the discipline; faculty mentors will advance their research agenda.

Application Cycles/Grant Period: Faculty mentors apply in September, February, or July; students apply for open RA positions in November, April, or August. Due dates for the 26-27 academic year are:

- Spring 2027 & Summer 2027 funding: Thursday, September 24th
- Summer 2027 & Fall 2027 funding: Thursday, February 12th
- Fall 2027 & Spring 2028 funding: Thursday, June 10th

Funding Amount: \$17/hour on payroll for undergraduate RAs; faculty mentors may apply for 1-3 RAs for work in up to 2 semesters

Application Requirements: Short answer essay responses; CV

Questions? Email ugresearch@syr.edu or call 315-443-2091

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Application Overview

The SOURCE Faculty RA grant application consists of basic information questions as well as several short answer essays. This application guide focuses primarily on the short answer questions.

Possible award amounts:

Mentors may select up to three semesters to work with students between Summer 2026 and Summer 2027 and build a timeline best suited to the project. Alternate configurations may be proposed, with a maximum award of 180 hours for one semester or 360 hours for two semesters..

Working with students for up to three semesters:

- 1 student for 60 or 90 hours each, for each semester
- 2 students for 60 or 90 hours each, for each semester
- 3 students for 60 hours each, for each semester

Proposed Plan:

These sections should clearly describe the proposed project(s) that the student research assistants will support and articulate how the RA work will contribute to the project. Provide details about the plan for training the RAs and their responsibilities, including any final deliverables or inclusion in possible research dissemination. The number of students and hours requested should be justified here.

- **Project Description (250 words maximum)**
 - Please share a short summary of the goals of the research. How will the work of the research assistants benefit the overall research agenda? Please include a rationale for the number of hours requested per student, per semester, with a plan for the time needed for training, meetings, and RA tasks.

- **Proposed Timeline (250 words maximum)**
 - Describe your timeline in brief (when the work will be completed, i.e. throughout the semester, or during a shorter period)
- **Recruitment Strategy**
 - If you have students already identified you do not need to complete this section, but if you will be searching for students please describe how you will recruit students in addition to SOURCE outreach, this can include department listservs or course outreach.

Student Research Experience:

In these sections, demonstrate how the student RAs will participate in meaningful work, building valuable skills and learning about research methods and design in the discipline. Ideally, the research assistant experience will prepare the student to move to more independent research or creative work. Describe your approach to working with students in this capacity, maintaining strong communication, and helping them grow academically and professionally.

- **Summary of Student Work (250 words maximum)**
 - What responsibilities will students have during this position? Include a description of the desired final deliverables from the students. If students will work in a team, outline the individual responsibilities on the project. Is this a project in initial stages or might it include research dissemination?
- **Student Learning Outcomes (250 words maximum)**
 - Description of skills that the students will develop as part of this work. How will this experience potentially help prepare the student to do an independent project in the future?
- **Student Description (250 word maximum)**
 - Discuss the skills and other characteristics that you wish the students to bring to the project, including any required coursework. What level of student is desired (1st year, 2nd year, junior)?
- **Mentoring Statement (250 words maximum)**
 - How do you view your role as mentor? What steps do you take to create a positive mentoring environment? How do you plan to maintain communication? Include detail about any others that might be involved in supervising the students' work (other faculty members, graduate students, others) and their roles.
- Please provide any examples of past publications, presentations, exhibitions, or other research dissemination that undergraduate student researchers have co-authored, co-presented, or co-created with you.

Additional Application Components:

- CV
- List any co-mentors
- If you have previously received SOURCE funding for a research assistant, comment briefly on the experience for you and the student(s).