

Undergraduate Scholars Grant FAQ

Updated Fall 2025

What is the Undergraduate Scholars Grant (USG)?

The purpose of the Undergraduate Scholars Grant (USG) is to facilitate research and creative activities at UCM through compensation of related expenses.

Who is eligible for funding?

All undergraduate students in good academic standing are eligible for up to \$800 in funding (one grant per academic year). If more than two students are working on the same or closely-related project or if more than two students are making a group presentation at a conference, a maximum of \$2000 total can be awarded for the research or travel, regardless of the total number of students participating. This amount is contingent on university budget allocations and is subject to change.

When do I make a request for funding?

Given that applications are approved on a rolling basis and we have limited funds (we very often run out of monies by March, if not earlier), the sooner you submit a proposal the better. We receive our new budget on July 1st and begin accepting USGs then. However, funds must be spent 30 days after receiving the grant for supplies or 10 days after return from travel. No reimbursement will be granted after the end of the fiscal year (June 30th).

What are the criteria for receiving funding?

Funding requests are evaluated based on three criteria: (1) academic/creative quality of work, (2) contribution to the field of study, and if applicable, (3) level of participation at conference, event, or experience. In certain cases, and based on the student's ability to demonstrate these criteria or the amount of funds available, only partial funding will be awarded. The Director of Undergraduate Research is responsible for final funding determinations.

What kinds of items are appropriate for a USG request?

A broad array of items can be requested depending on the discipline and project. These items include, but are not limited to, materials, equipment, software, and travel for conferences, workshops, or fieldwork. In general, funding may not be used for tuition, course fees, speaker fees, or personal items that could not readily be used by another student (i.e. lab coat).

Are there any nuances with funding certain items?

Yes. Software, subscriptions, automatic payment renewals, and gift cards (or some other form of participant incentive), must be purchased by either the student or faculty mentor and then reimbursed. For the latter, all incentive recipients must fill out a university [gift tax form](#) and a [W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification](#). Students are also encouraged to review [UCM's travel policy](#).

Are there any requirements associated with a USG request?

Yes. All applications are required to have:

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- An [IRB/IACUC](#) protocol number or a [Determination of Research](#) letter from the [Office of Sponsored Programs and Research Integrity](#) indicating their project does not require review.
- A budget worksheet, available for download on our [website](#).

All USG recipients are also required to present at the annual [Scholars Symposium and Creative Achievement Day](#) in the same academic year they receive the grant; abstracts are automatically considered for presentation.

Can students complete a USG in conjunction with a study abroad program?

Yes, if the study abroad program is academically relevant and serves as a core element of a student's research and/or creative work. Please note, however, that any USG-related expenses incurred in conjunction with a study abroad program must exceed and be separate from any required costs associated with participation in the study abroad experience. As noted above, we cannot reimburse tuition or course fees. If you are considering bundling your USG with a study abroad program, please be sure to discuss your plans with the Director of Undergraduate Research.

How and when will I learn the results of my budget request?

Students are notified via email generally within 1-2 weeks of their submission regarding the approval or denial of their request.

How do I receive my funding?

Once approved, you will coordinate the disbursement of your funds with your faculty advisor/mentor and/or the department office professional. Typically, the grant works as a reimbursement - this means your department will make the initial payment and, upon submitting receipts to the Office of Undergraduate Research, will receive a transfer to their account.

What documentation is needed for reimbursements of supplies?

Original receipts (both itemized and payment) for all purchases must be submitted with your first and last name and 700# written on them.

What documentation is needed for travel reimbursements?

All original receipts as previously noted, as well as:

- Copy of conference program cover and agenda
- If applicable, the page listing your presentation

Additionally, you must submit all applicable items listed below:

- Event registration, which must list: (a) your name as a registrant, (b) event title, and (c) billing information.
- Airfare receipts are required to show: (a) your name for each leg of the trip, (b) the travel dates (flight itinerary), (c) the ticket price (cost and billing summary), and (d) proof of payment for the ticket (billing information).

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- Lodging receipts are required to show: (a) your name as a guest in the room, (b) dates of stay, (c) per guest room charge totals (if more than one guest in room), (d) proof of payment.
- Meal receipts must provide both the itemized and proof of payment receipts and fall within UCM's meal policy limits and procedures.
- Mileage reimbursement must provide a mileage log with the following: (a) dates of each trip, (b) beginning and ending odometer readings for each trip, (c) total miles driven per trip, (d) overall total miles driven.

What happens if I purchase items or travel before the approval of my USG grant?

Expenses that have not been pre-approved cannot be reimbursed.

What happens to the items purchased when I am finished with my project?

Durable items purchased that do not become integrated into your project (e.g., a laboratory microscope, technological device, etc.), remain the property of the University of Central Missouri. Items that become part of or integrated into the research or creative project (e.g., construction materials, paint, etc.) remain with the project.

I still have questions. Who should I contact?

The Coordinator of Undergraduate Research, Dr. Tom Goldstein: undergradresearch@ucmo.edu.