

Office of Undergraduate Research

STARBURST Application Faculty Workshop



Tuesday, February 4, 2025

12:15 - 1:30 pm

Learning Commons 101

STARBURST Program

Two Summer Research Opportunities: One for students new to research (BURST) and one for experienced students (STAR)

Program Details

- 10 weeks during the summer (full-time)
- \$6,000 stipend
- \$500 supplies
- 50% discount for on-campus summer housing (double occupancy)
- Professional development and community building activities

Eligibility

- Open to all undergraduate disciplines and year levels
 - Not eligible if graduating in Spring 2025
- USD Faculty Mentor for application
- Ability to participate in full-time, on campus research experience for 10 weeks during the summer

Application opens on January 3, 2025

Application deadline on February 21, 2025 at 11:59 pm PST



STARBURST Program

- Application will be submitted to one of five disciplinary areas:
 - Creative Works
 - Engineering, Mathematics, Computer Science
 - Humanities
 - Life and Physical Sciences
 - Social Sciences

Five different committees.

- BURST guidelines are same for all disciplines
- STAR research statements have guidelines and rubrics specific to the discipline



Is STAR or BURST Better?

BURST (Beginning Undergraduate Research Summer Training)

- Limited or no research experience in the field to which student is applying (< 200 hours)
 - Experiences prior to undergraduate does not disqualify them from BURST
 - Experience at USD usually will disqualify them, unless it is a very different discipline.
 - For example, prior experience in psychology does not help them in a history research project
 - Students instructed to discuss with mentor. Please bring OUR into loop

STAR (Summer Training in Advanced Research)

- Significant undergraduate research/creative works experience in the field to which they are applying
 - Previously a BURST scholar
- Generally, recommended for Creative Works



STAR and BURST Program

USD provides opportunities for undergraduate students to participate in research or creative work with a faculty mentor. An undergraduate research project involves a systematic study on a topic to develop new knowledge in the field, such as a new conceptual approach in politics, a new type of material for solar cells, a theory on how neurons function in the eye, etc. A creative works project might be the design and production of a sculpture, a song, or a play, etc. Students work closely with a faculty mentor to learn the tools needed in that field, the background needed for their particular project, and how to interpret new data or concepts within the field.

The University of San Diego provides funding for USD undergraduate students to do full-time summer research or creative works with a USD faculty mentor. There are two funding mechanisms that are managed by OUR (several other research opportunities are available at USD): one for students who are relatively new to research or creative works (Beginning Undergraduate Research Student Training-BURST) and those students who have had extensive research experience (Summer Training in Advanced Research-STAR). See "STAR or BURST" below to determine which program is best for you. Regardless of the funding mechanism, awards are given to a student/faculty pair. Students interested in applying for one of these programs must first contact a USD faculty member who agrees to serve as their mentor, if awarded. Students should contact faculty mentors well in advance of the deadline. We suggest at least 2 months. We are happy to help you identify a mentor and suggest you start by joining the [OUR-SEARCH](#) database.

BROWSE RELATED PAGES

[STAR and BURST Program](#)

[BURST Scholars](#)

[STAR Scholars](#)

[Travel Awards](#)

[Summer Research Scholars](#)

[Creative Collaborations](#)

[Fall Colloquium](#)

[Presentation Resources](#)

[Off-Campus Opportunities](#)

[McNair Scholars](#) [↗]

Update 10/16/2024

**THE STAR AND BURST APPLICATION WILL OPEN ON JANUARY 3, 2025.
THE DEADLINE TO APPLY IS ON FEBRUARY 21, 2025 AT 11:59 PM PST.**

BURST Application



- **Student:** Statement of interest (2000 characters) describing why they want to participate in BURST.
 - **Mentor:** Project description and mentoring plan (2 pages)
 - **Both:** Timeline
-

What makes a successful BURST Application?



- Meeting with the student to discuss the project together
 - Understand student educational and career goals
 - How does project fit?
 - Develop a project timeline
 - Mentors component critical
 - Need to know their goals, strengths, and experience for a successful application
 - Review [sample BURST applications](#) from your discipline
 - Review [BURST rubric](#) in making mentoring plan
-

BURST Project Summary and Mentoring Statement



- Review the BURST Project Summary and Mentoring Statement [Guidelines](#)
 - Review [BURST rubric](#) in making mentoring plan
-

Responsibilities of a Mentor

- Hold mentee to high expectations and keep them on track
- Provide open, honest, and tactful feedback
- Provide suggestions and advice on goals, activities, and progress
- Foster personal and professional growth of the mentee
- Encourage mentee to take on more responsibility
- Provide career advising and strategies to navigate opportunities
- Help mentee build network of professional relationships
- Make yourself available and approachable
- Keep discussions confidential when personal
- Use a mentoring tool to track mentee's progress

Key Competencies for Mentors

- Maintain Effective Communication
 - Graciously provide constructive feedback
 - Communicate across diverse perspectives
- Foster Independence
 - Define independence for an undergraduate in your field
 - Be intentional about building their confidence
 - Articulate the benefits/challenges of developing independence
- Promote Professional Development
 - Develop written strategy for professional development
 - Schedule regular conversations on professional and career goals
 - Encourage open dialogue about balance and competing demands
- Align Expectations

Mentoring Plan

Concepts from the IDP that can guide an Individual Mentoring Plan

- Assess professional and technical skills
Give fair assessment of strengths and weaknesses
- Make plan to strengthen professional and technical skills
Identify activities and opportunities to grow skills
- Track accomplishments
Set a regular schedule to reassess progress
- Develop and prioritize goals
Set targets and deadlines for research goals
- Explore Career Options
Set times to discuss career/educational goals and options Outline the steps needed to attain those goals

Questions about BURST?

STAR Application



- **Student:** Project statement (2 pages)
 - [Guidelines and rubrics available for each discipline here](#)
 - **Mentor:** Recommendation and mentoring plan
 - **Both:** Timeline
-

STAR Project Statement



- Developed by the STAR student applicant
 - Determine project with mentor
 - Read background literature
 - Understand goals and objectives of project
 - Write project statement that captures background and research plan for a broad audience
 - Follow discipline-specific guidelines and rubrics
 - **Mentor provides input, but should not directly edit/write any portion**
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What makes a successful STAR Application?



- Provide robust description of project
 - Provide important literature background
 - Set deadlines for drafts
 - Review early drafts and provide direction on clarity, content, and format
 - Review guidelines, rubrics, and sample STAR applications from your discipline
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Mentoring Plan

- Shortened version of BURST Mentoring Plan
 - < 1200 characters
 - No project description
 - No need to describe why project is appropriate for new student

Focus on your approach to mentoring and a specific plan tailored to this student.

Questions about STAR?

Interdisciplinary Projects

- Additional guidelines for Interdisciplinary and Group Projects
- Interdisciplinary projects are encouraged
 - Project that requires two mentors (different disciplines or same discipline where the mentors split summer)
 - Split stipend if one student
- Interdisciplinary **group projects** can have applications reviewed in different disciplinary groups

Group Projects

- Group Project is a project that requires more than 1 STARBURST student to be funded to achieve goals
 - Requires additional form [Group Project Supplement Form](#)
 - Mentor states how many students are required to do the project
 - If less than that minimum are not ranked high enough, no students from group will be funded
 - All students ranked high enough in group will be funded
 - Can state specific student(s) needed based on background of student
 - Limited to 4 students in a group

Recommended Timeline

Identify a research student – Suggest before end of the Fall semester

Work with the student to refine the research project – Now through Intersession

Write project summary and mentoring plan (BURST)/Work with student on research statement (STAR) – Intersession to February

Work on Timeline with student (BURST and STAR)

- Remind your student about their statement of interest (BURST)
- Remind your student about the submission deadline (STAR)

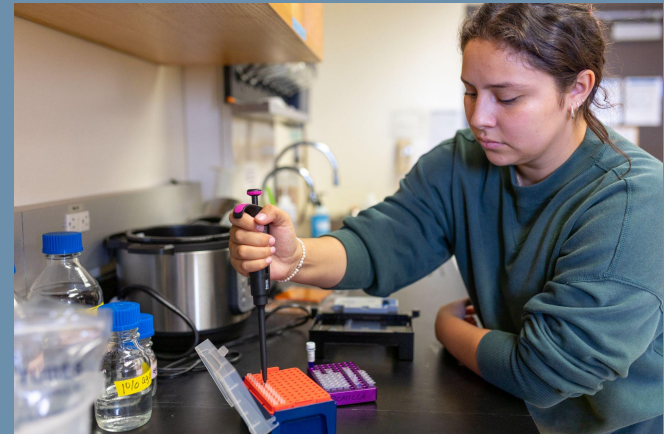
Submit your STARBURST application (student AND faculty portions) – by February 21, 2025 at 11:59 pm PST (no late materials will be accepted)

What happens after I submit my application?

Discipline committees review and rank applications – February 24, 2025 to March 19, 2025

OUR notifies applicants of funding results – March 21, 2025 to March 28, 2025

- If awarded, student and mentor must accept within 10 days of notification
- If not awarded, may be on wait list
- Students should apply for [other funding sources](#)
 - McNair Scholars Program
 - Career Development Center Summer Internship Award
 - ASG Research Grant



What to expect for your STARBURST scholar

- Register with OUR as a Summer Research Scholar
 - Ethics training, insurance, emergency contact
 - Allows them to apply for summer housing at discounted rate
- Meet with your research student at least once a week (in person)
 - Work closely with your student to advance the project
- Attend at least 3 OUR summer programming events
- Engage in the summer research community
- Present their research at the Fall Colloquium
 - Mid-September



USD Summer Experience

What does Summer research look like?

- 250+ students
- Social events
 - Kick-off, Closing, Bocce tournament
- Networking events
- Professional development workshops
 - National Scholarships/Fellowships
 - Graduate School
 - Incorporating Research Into your CV/Resume
 - Elevator Pitches



Have your student submit an Intent to Apply form

They can scan the QR code below to let us know that they plan to apply to STARBURST for this upcoming application cycle. We will send them reminders and updates about the STARBURST application.





OFFICE HOURS

Spring 2025

The Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) is holding Office Hours for **students and faculty** to drop in for snacks, refreshments, and to chat with OUR staff about getting started with research, funding opportunities (STAR, BURST, Beckman), Creative Collaborations Showcase, etc.

Monday - Thursday

1:30 - 3:00 pm

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No appointment necessary.
We hope to see you there!

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