

Quick Tip Sheet

Finding a Research Opportunity

Why Research? Research looks to explain the world around us or develop solutions to problems, and can be applied to all majors. Undergraduate research may involve supporting elements of conducting research such as collecting data, analyzing data, running experiments, reporting findings, and sorting through previous research. This is valuable experience on a resume, can help prepare you for a job search, and is sometimes required for students to continue on to graduate school or other education programs. What many value most, is the experience of diving into a topic, and the practical skills developed from the process.

Am I Qualified? There are various opportunities for students as early as first years to engage in research. Different opportunities require different skills needed; from someone who is curious about a topic, to a person with a large technical skill set.

Research with Professors URI professors conduct research and often seek undergraduate students to assist them with their research. You can connect with your professors, as well as other professors at URI.

How do I do it? Ways to initiate a conversation on research with a professor:

- When a professor shares that they or a colleague need assistance with research, ask them more about the opportunity after class.
- Learn about your different professors and their research: Go to your major department's website, click on the "Faculty/Staff" tab, and read their biographies.
- Schedule a time with a professor to discuss their research, and ways to build your own experience.

Sample Email Requesting for Meeting to Discuss Research: It is helpful to keep your email brief, sharing a little about your interest and skills, and showing that you are curious about the work they are doing.

Dear Dr. _____,

My name is Ali Garcia and I am currently a sophomore biology student here at URI. I have interests in plant biology and genetics. I found on the URI website that you are involved with research in these areas and that your program focuses on understanding molecular genetic mechanisms within plants, which is an area of research that I am interested in.

I have recently completed BIO 102 and will be taking genetics next semester which together provide me with a foundational knowledge within plant biology and genetics. Both of these classes have lab components that allowed me to develop my skills working in a laboratory environment, utilizing various lab equipment, and aseptic techniques. In addition, I enjoy gardening and have been teaching myself different types of plants.

I would like to schedule a time to learn more about your research and see if I would be able to assist you with your research. Thank you for taking the time to read this email. I look forward to hearing back from you.

Ali Garcia

Participating in Research at URI

There are numerous opportunities for students to get involved in research right here at URI. In addition to reaching out to professors directly, below are some of the structured research programs at URI as well as additional methods for getting involved with research at URI:

Arts and Science Fellows Program - <https://web.uri.edu/artsci/fellows-program/>
College of Environment and Life Sciences Research Hub - <https://web.uri.edu/cels/research/>
College of Health Sciences Centers and Research: <https://web.uri.edu/chs/centers-and-labs/>
Department of Psychology research opportunities: <https://web.uri.edu/psychology/research/>
Science and Engineering Fellows Program:
<https://web.uri.edu/cels/student-resources/science-and-engineering-fellows-program/>
CELS Diversity Undergraduate Research Opportunities:
<https://web.uri.edu/cels/diversity-and-inclusion/diversity-undergraduate-opportunities/>
Coastal and Environmental Fellowship Program: <https://web.uri.edu/coastalfellows/>
Energy Fellowship Program: <https://web.uri.edu/coopext/energy-fellows-program/>
(URI)2 Undergraduate Research Grants – <https://web.uri.edu/undergraduate-research/funding/>
Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship in Oceanography (SURFO) -
<https://web.uri.edu/gso/academics/surfo/>
Idea Network of Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE) - <https://web.uri.edu/inbre/>
Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) - <https://web.uri.edu/rinsfepscor/surf/>
URI Honors Program Independent Projects: <https://web.uri.edu/honors/the-program/honors-project/>

Research Opportunities Outside of URI

Many other colleges and universities have their own research programs that are open to all students. These opportunities are more commonly referred to as *Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REUs)*. REUs are structured research opportunities at institutions that are often paid and made available all throughout the academic year but are more popular during the summer. Explore the links below for more information regarding REUs and other resources.

Fulbright for global research opportunities - <https://web.uri.edu/fulbright/applicants/students-recent-alumni/>
National Science Foundation REUs Master List - https://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/reu_search.jsp
REUs in Ecology, Plant Biology, and Animal & Marine Sciences -
<https://people.rit.edu/~gtfsbi/Symp/ecology.htm>
Pathways to Science REU Search Engine - <https://www.pathwaystoscience.org/undergrads.aspx>
National Institutes of Health (NIH) Summer Programs -
https://www.training.nih.gov/other_summer_programs_at_the_nih
NOAA's Coastal Management Fellowship Opportunities -
https://coast.noaa.gov/fellowship/undgrad_opportunities.html
URI Office of National Fellowships & Academic Opportunities -
<https://web.uri.edu/fellowships/fellowship-finder/>



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401-874-2311
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