

# Internal Education Foundation Guidelines

## Category B: Undergraduate Student Research

The Internal Education Fund was established to promote educational innovation and to help enrich the College's educational programs. The primary objectives of the fund are to encourage intellectual curiosity, to provide opportunities in which intellectual abilities are exercised, and to enable students, faculty, and administrators to engage in curriculum revisions and reforms which are educationally innovative and which initially cannot be funded within the general College budget. The guidelines below pertain to *Category B\* student research proposals only*. For Categories A and C see the information in the Academic Affairs section of the College website.

\* **Category B** – This category is reserved for proposals which respond to specific calls initiated by the Research & Grants Committee of the Academic Affairs Council. At present, **student initiated research projects** are the only proposals the Subcouncil has solicited.

### Guidelines for Category B IEF Proposals:

- 1) **Proposals must be written in the format presented in these guidelines. The Committee will not review proposals that are incomplete or are not in this format.**
- 2) Category B (student research) IEF grants are administered by the Director of Undergraduate Research. Decisions on grant proposals are made by the Student IEF Committee, which is chaired by the Director of Undergraduate Research and includes one faculty representative from each division (appointed by the Director of Undergraduate Research) and a student representative (appointed by the Student Forum).
- 3) Proposals will be accepted and reviewed three times a year, once during each term. They shall be due electronically to Barbara Tricozzi (tricozzb@union.edu) on the date indicated in the Undergraduate Research Deadlines PDF file on the Undergraduate Research website ([http://www.union.edu/Resources/Academic/undergrad\\_research/](http://www.union.edu/Resources/Academic/undergrad_research/)). The Committee will consider proposals that are submitted at other times in two situations:
  - a. If the grant is being requested for conference travel ONLY. In this case the request must be submitted a minimum of one month before travel is to occur.
  - b. If a faculty member requests review of the student's proposal outside the normal process, and if the situation is such that immediate action seems necessary. (It is not appropriate for students to submit via the normal process, in the expectation that their requests will be correctly identified by the Director of Undergraduate Research and/or the Student IEF Committee as requiring exceptions.)

### *Category B IEF Guidelines*

- 4) Each Category B IEF proposal must be sponsored by a faculty member, who agrees to monitor the student's progress. **A student's proposal will not be considered if there is no supporting letter from the Faculty Advisor.**
- 5) IEF funds only those student research projects associated with a research or project course for which the student will receive academic credit. This includes senior theses / projects, sophomore Scholars projects, and some independent studies. IEF funding cannot be used for participation in terms abroad, for a major assignment (such as a term paper) in a course, or for a research project to be undertaken independently (i.e. not for Union College course credit).
- 6) The maximum amount of IEF funding awarded to any student in a given academic year is \$1000; however, very few students are funded at the maximum level. A realistic target amount for many student projects is in the \$300-500 range. Any proposal requesting funds greater than \$500 must clearly justify the reason why a larger than normal grant is justified in both the student proposal and faculty letter.
- 7) For a proposal to be funded, it must be well written and have a budget that indicates that the student has thoroughly thought through his / her proposal. Each item in the budget must be clearly justified.
- 8) A complete Category B IEF proposal includes:
  - a. A filled out IEF form (see Undergraduate Research website).
  - b. A proposal that is 1-3 pages in length and clearly written.
  - c. A detailed budget (see budget information, below) with all items clearly justified.
  - d. A letter of support from the Faculty Advisor.**Incomplete proposals will not be considered for funding.**

### **GENERAL BUDGET INFORMATION Category B (Student Research) IEF Grants**

**Student out-of-pocket expenses:** the IEF committee expects that students will incur some expenses associated with their research projects (charges for small amounts of photocopying, phone calls, travel costs, art supplies, books, notebooks, tape recorders, subject fees, software, etc.), just as they would when taking a more "traditional" course (books, notebooks, calculators, stationery supplies, software, lab goggles, etc.).

**Student travel:** travel for students may be funded if a clearly defined need is shown and the faculty advisor certifies that travel is a necessary part of the proposal. All requests must be fully documented. It should be clear why travel is absolutely necessary, why students cannot use the telephone, e-mail, or mail to communicate or gather information. Student applicants should be aware that the policy of the IEF Committee is to fund travel abroad competitively. It must be demonstrated that such travel is critical to the success of the research project. Proposals requesting travel abroad should have strong endorsements from the faculty advisor and demonstrate that

## *Category B IEF Guidelines*

the proposed project is feasible and reasonable alternatives for research have been explored and found unsatisfactory for specified reasons. It is expected that applicants will make every effort to obtain the least expensive airfares. Note that any student traveling abroad for a Union-College-related reason must complete some paperwork (legal release form, etc.) in the International Programs office (Humanities 211) prior to departure. Union College does not give academic credit or funding, from any College-related source, for work that involves travel to any country for which the US State Department has issued a Travel Warning.

**Timeline of funding:** there are three rounds of IEF proposals in each fiscal year, with applications submitted in the middle of the Spring, Fall and Winter terms and decisions made by the end of each term. Funds for grants awarded in the Spring-term round of proposals will be available from July 1 (the start of Union's fiscal year) until mid-May. Funds for grants awarded in the Fall-term round of proposals will be available from the end of the Fall term (mid-November) until mid-May. Funds for grants awarded in the Winter-term round of proposals will be available from the end of the Winter term (mid-March) until mid-May. If your application is not funded in one round, you may reapply in the next. Grant applications, however, will not automatically be carried over into the next period.

### **Detailed funding rules:**

1. All students are required to pay 20% of travel costs (airfare, train or bus tickets, car mileage). For travel by car, reimbursement is \$0.505/mile plus any tolls, less 20%. Please note the travel policy on the previous page.
2. IEF does not fund any local travel.
3. IEF adheres strictly to the stated "per diem" guidelines for lodging and meal costs during travel: \$100/day for up to 3 days, then \$50/day for up to 4 more days, with a maximum of 7 days (\$500) per diem total. (This means that you should not detail anticipated hotel and meal expenses separately in your budget request.)
4. IEF will pay for conference registration fees, but does not pay for tuition, workshop, or seminar fees. IEF will not fund multiple students to give a single presentation at a conference.
5. IEF funding cannot be used to pay professionals (laboratory assistants, translators, musicians, web designers, etc.).
6. IEF will contribute a maximum of \$100 toward postcards and/or food for a student's senior show.
7. Normally, IEF does not fund the purchase of major pieces of equipment.

### *Category B IEF Guidelines*

8. If the budget includes minor equipment that can be used by other students and faculty in the department (for research or course work), then the department must contribute 50% of the cost of the equipment. If the equipment is reusable by the research advisor and his/her research students (but not by the department as a whole), then the advisor must contribute 1/3 of the cost of equipment. In either case, the budget page must include details of the matching funds and be clearly documented in the supporting faculty letter.
9. IEF pays \$0.04 per page for large amounts of photocopying (>\$50) of surveys, mailings, etc. IEF does not pay for photocopying of articles used for research or other small amounts of copying.
10. IEF expects that all non-expendable items purchased or constructed with IEF funds will become the property of the College upon the completion of the project. This includes tools, frames (incl. plexiglas), excess reagents and lab supplies, models, equipment constructed and/or purchased, costumes, scenery, etc.
10. IEF does not pay for cameras, tape recorders, or other personal electronic devices.
11. IEF does not normally pay for books or software. If books and/or software are included in a student IEF proposal request, there should be very clear justification provided in both the proposal and the faculty letter of support. Any books or software purchased through an IEF grant become the property of the College upon the completion of the project.
12. Any study that involves the use of human subjects must have the **PRIOR** approval of the human subjects committee. See their website at <http://www.union.edu/Resources/Academic/hsrc/> for information. Include the approval number from the committee in your IEF proposal. The costs of medical tests performed on human subjects will not be funded by IEF. IEF does not fund the costs of travel associated with bringing subjects to the study location.

*August 2010*