

Staff Guidance

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What is UROS?

The Undergraduate Research Opportunities Scheme (UROS) is a competitive bursary scheme designed to provide exciting opportunities for undergraduate students to gain real research experience working in collaboration with an academic member of staff on projects covering all disciplines across the University. UROS embodies the principle of 'Student as Producer', which underpins the Lincoln approach to teaching, learning and student engagement.

Student bursaries available

There are two tiers of student bursaries available for students undertaking a UROS Project. These are dependent on the project scope and time commitment involved in the research project.

1. Tier 1 UROS Project

- Project Scope should be 30 – 55 over a 4 – 10-week period.
- Should be an achievable workload to undertake alongside studies.
- £500 student bursary available to contribute to living costs while students undertake the research project.

2. Tier 2 UROS Project

- Project Scope should be 60+ hours over a 6 – 12-week period.
- Due to the time commitment required we encourage students to under-take a Tier 2 project over the summer-period so that the workload does not impact on studies.
- £1000 student bursary available to contribute to cost of living while students undertake the research project.

The bursary awarded through UROS is intended for the student researcher/s. The awarded student bursary is a tax-free fixed amount paid directly to the student researcher(s) as a contribution to cost of living while undertaking the project.

Costs for materials etc. should not be deducted from the bursary, they should be provided by the sponsoring school. If the project requires specific resources which are not readily available within your School/Department additional funding of up to £150 can be requested for as part of your application to cover, or contribute towards, costs. This should be detailed in the breakdown of associated cost section of the application.

What is involved

A UROS research project should be undertaken by a Student Researcher in collaboration with an Academic Supervisor.

As an Academic Supervisor your role is to mentor and guide the Student Researcher through the process from application to result dissemination. You must ensure that the student researcher receives an induction, supervision and regular progress review meetings, training and assisting with the written reports and dissemination on research and keep the LALT Engagement Team updated with project progress.

Supporting a UROS project could enable you to run a pilot project for a research grant application, enhance the knowledge and/or awareness of the School/Department, or support a discrete section of an existing project for which you are Principal Investigator.

By supervising a UROS project you will be providing students with the opportunity to develop their research skills and academic knowledge. All students need to have an academic member of staff in the role of research supervisor.

Once the project and student have been identified you should complete the application form with the student applicant, it will need to be signed by the students, lead academic supervisor and relevant Head of School.

What is expected of staff as academic supervisors?

Research supervisors will need to ensure:

- Professional working practice
- A structured induction in the first week of the placement.
- A proper risk assessment (the first induction session must include a health and safety briefing).
- Student supervision through regular (at least weekly) meetings with progress reviews and feedback to the student on the quality of their work.
- Keep students informed about what is happening and ensure that they are feel part of the research team.
- Provision of necessary training in research skills and methods.
- Provision of necessary resources, including suitable working space.
- Assisting in the production of posters showing the completed research.
- Approving written reports of the project.
- Participation in future UROS events.

Staff applying to be a lead Principal Investigator (PI) on a UROS project should be a permanent staff member or a member of staff on a fixed term contract that runs until after the end of the project. PhD students may co-supervise projects only.

Expected UROS project outcomes

Students participating in the scheme will be expected to disseminate their projects and research findings in a variety of ways, including a published report 2000-word report and through a poster presentation at the annual UROS Exhibition Showcase (held in October/November). As academic supervisor you will be expected to support and review the paper and poster before submission and attend the UROS Exhibition Showcase.

Why take part in UROS?

As a member of staff, UROS enables you to work with a student researcher to investigate specific interest areas, funded by LALT. It is a great way for new staff to develop their skills in research supervision without a long-term commitment, as we provide a choice of different project lengths to fit around staff and student schedules. Becoming a UROS supervisor is a great away to provide students with the opportunity to develop their research skills and academic knowledge.

Eligibility

Staff applying to be a lead Principal Investigator (PI) on a UROS project should be a permanent staff member or a member of staff on a fixed term contract that runs until after the end of the project. PhD students may co-supervise projects only.

How to get started

Academics who are interested in becoming supervisors can identify and design projects, or alternatively, students may approach you with their own research ideas expressing an interest in becoming involved.

All proposed research projects should proceed within the principles of good practice.

Decide how much time you can commit to the project and when you are intending to conduct the research (during term-time or over the summer period). This will help you decide which tier of UROS Project to apply for.

The research project can be a stand-alone project or can contribute to part of an already existing research project.

You can conduct a UROS Project in collaboration with other staff, which may provide more support for the project and students, however one member of staff should be nominated as the Project Lead Academic Supervisor.

There can be more than one student researcher involved in the project – but please bear in mind that the student bursary will need to be split between all student researchers involved in the project.

How to apply for a UROS bursary

Once you have an Academic Supervisor agreed you can start the application process.

Before you start your application, you should have had an initial meeting to discuss the proposed research project and have the following prepared:

- Names and emails of all student researchers involved with the project
- Name and emails of all the Academic Supervisors involved with the project
- Project Title
- Project Statement (outline of the proposed research project)
- Impact Statement (impact of the research and dissemination plans)
- Student Statement (why you want to take part and what you will bring to the project)
- Academic Supervisor Statement (why you want to take part and what support you will give to the student)
- Which Project Tier you are applying for
- Project Plan (outline of the plan including a Gantt chart timeline)
- Project costs (if applicable)

Please ensure that you read the [UROS application guidance](#) before making your application. This document guides applications through each section on the application form.

The completed application form should be submitted using the online application form by the stated application deadline.

The link to the online application form can be found on the [UROS website](#)

If you are unable to access the online form a downloadable form can be requested by emailing uros@lincoln.ac.uk

Applying for ethical approval

A requirement of taking part in the UROS scheme is that you adhere to the University's ethical guidelines and procedures, therefore all UROS application form must be accompanied with a Lincoln Ethics Application System (LEAS) [ethics application](#) reference number.

At this stage the ethics application should be initiated as a draft but NOT SUBMITTED until your bursary award has been confirmed. By doing this the LEAS system will generate a reference number which can be provided in the application.

If the project is to be part of a larger project which already has ethics approval, please use the approved project ethics reference.

If your UROS application is successful, you will then need to submit your LEAS application. Ethical approval is needed before the research starts, and the student bursary can be paid. Delays with ethical approval may result in the withdrawal of the bursary funding for the research project.

More information can be found in the [Understanding UROS ethics process guide](#)

Funding

Successful UROS projects are awarded funding intended as a bursary for the student researcher/s. The awarded student bursary is a tax-free fixed amount paid directly to the student researcher(s) as a contribution to cost of living while undertaking the project. The bursary will be paid in two equal instalments: the first at the start of the project, the second on receipt of the mid-project report.

When planning your project proposal, it is expected that the scope of the proposed UROS projects will take into account equipment, materials, software and resources which are readily available within school(s) hosting the academic supervisors(s).

In the application you will need to provide details of any associated costs project costs required to undertake research, and how this will be funded e.g. available within the school, will need to be met by the student.

If your project requires specific resources which are not readily available within your School/Department additional funding of up to £150 can be bid for as part of your application to cover, or contribute towards costs. This should be detailed and requested in the breakdown of associated costs section of the application.

If a school needs to contribute to the project's costs (e.g. for specific materials) written approval from the relevant Head of School should be obtained prior to submitting the application.

Review Process

As a competitive programme all applications will be assessed by two reviewers. Decisions about awards will be made by a panel which includes the Dean of Lincoln Academy of Learning and Teaching and at least 2 representatives of the University's research community.

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their applications once this process is complete. If your application is unsuccessful, you can request feedback to support future applications.

Selection Criteria

As a competitive programme, all applications will be scored by reviewers against the following key criteria:

- **Eligibility:** The student applicant is a current University of Lincoln undergraduate or graduate enrolled in a full-time/part-time higher degree and will still have student status when the UROS project is undertaken.
- **Ethical Considerations:** LEAS ethics reference provided with application.
- **Research Proposal:** The project proposal is thorough and well defined with clear objectives and contributes to the research work of the University.
- **Research Impact & Output:** Project outputs are high-quality with a clearly defined dissemination plan.
- **Student Engagement:** The application clearly sets out the student's role, the support they will receive, and shows evidence to support the value of their contribution to the project and demonstrates how their skills/knowledge will be developed through this collaboration.
- **Project Plan:** Clear timescales and responsibilities are set out within a detailed project plan. The project scope meets the requirements of the UROS Project Tier applied for and is both feasible and achievable and there are no obvious or substantial risks identified as regards delivery.

The most important aspect is the quality of the research experience you will gain for participating with the project. The following have been identified as characteristics of successful applications:

- The research project is a genuine collaboration between you and your student researcher.
- You have input on all stages of research including project design, data collection, analysis, reporting and dissemination.

Projects should enable students to

- Develop and apply research skills to deliver a worthwhile outcome
- Develop the ability to work effectively with others
- Organise and present research outcomes to a high standard
- Make a valuable contribution to the research work of the university.

Timeline

This year we have introduced two application windows for UROS applications as set out below:

Application Window A

- 01 October 2023: Open for applications
- 15 December 2023: Deadline for applications
- February 2023: Outcomes announced

Application Window B

- 08 January: Opens for applications
- 22 March 2023: Deadline for applications
- May 2023: Outcomes announced

Starting your project

Successful applicants can initiate their research project as soon as ethical approval is received. You should conduct your research as set out in the project plan submitted with your application, providing updates to the LALT Engagement Team if there are any significant changes.

A mid-project report should be submitted to the LALT Engagement Team to provide evidence that the project is meeting the planned project milestones.

All research projects including methodology, analysis, findings and results must be concluded in an IMPact Journal article and a UROS poster by the deadline date.

Support sessions

We understand that taking part in a UROS project may be an undergraduate students first experience of undertaking research and therefore provide a range of support to student researchers.

The Lincoln Academy of Learning and Teaching Engagement Team will provide a range of support throughout the UROS programme, including Presentation Skills, IMPact Journal Writing, and Poster Design workshops specifically designed to support the students during the research project.

We strongly recommend that students take advantage of these workshops, not only will these sessions help to support students through each stage of the process but will hopefully give them the opportunity to meet and network with fellow students to share ideas and practices.

Full Information on the support and workshops available can be found in the [UROS support guide](#)

Sharing your research

A UROS showcase exhibition is held to give UROS participants the chance to share their research and learning journey with other students and staff at the University of Lincoln.

The Student Researchers IMPact article will be submitted for publishing in the UROS edition on IMPact. If specific research findings can't be shared externally at this stage an alternative section focussing on the students UROS experience can replace this section of the article.

A summary of the project and links to your poster and published IMPact journal article will be published on the LALT blog site, where they can be shared with the wider community both internally and externally.

We encourage all UROS participants to attend research events to share their research experience as widely as possible and many participants go on to attend external conferences and contribute to published papers.

To find out more about UROS please contact uros@lincoln.ac.uk to discuss your proposal or for any further information about the bursary scheme, or visit lcn.ac.uk/UROS.

Frequently Asked Questions

I'm interested in getting involved. Where do I begin?

Academics who are interested in becoming supervisors can identify and design projects which should proceed within the principles of good academic practice. Alternatively, students may approach an academic expressing an interest in becoming involved. Once the project and student have been identified, the application form should be filled in and signed by the supervisor, student, and relevant Head of School.

Who is on the application review panel?

The panel will include the Dean of Learning and Teaching, and at least 2 representatives of the University's research community.

What kind of work can I give to a student researcher?

The student should be given a brief that provides a genuine and valuable learning opportunity in terms of the development of research skills and awareness, employability, and transferable skills.

Do projects have to be directly curriculum orientated?

Projects should be extra curricula and not part of a student's assessed course work. Students should not rewrite a UROS report and present it as a dissertation. The main reason for this is that UROS is an opportunity to contribute to the research work of the university, and needs to be seen as quite separate from the taught curriculum. For reasons of fairness, it would not be right if students were perceived as being funded to do work which was part of their assessed programme of study.

However, it is reasonable for a student to build upon the UROS experience and expand on the topic for their dissertation. One of the identified benefits from UROS is that students become involved in a particular area of research and see their dissertation as an opportunity to expand this and take it further. However, in all cases the dissertation must represent a genuine extension of the project, with a revised focus of inquiry and further data collection and analysis.

Ultimately, the responsibility lies with the department and the dissertation supervisor to determine what constitutes a significant extension of the project.

Does it matter which application window I apply in?

No. You can apply in either window, however we recommend that those who wish to undertake a Tier 1 project alongside their studies apply during Window A as outcomes are announced in early February so that you can conduct your research during Semester B.

How often should I see my student researcher?

For some students this may be their first real experience of research and professional work and they may require support - particularly at the start of the project. A well-structured placement is likely to be a steep learning curve for a student and it is advisable for the supervisor to be easily contactable and provide a detailed, planned induction. Once the research project is running, meetings should be held at least weekly at which feedback is given.

What if I am on holiday or travelling during the research?

We recommend that Supervisors are not absent for more than 2 weeks of the research at most and supervisory presence is crucial for the first and last week. Arranging to have a second supervisor is highly recommended to ensure that the student researcher(s) always has available support when needed, and to ensure that the student researcher(s) gain the experiences of working in a team. A PhD student may be a second supervisor and this provides useful supervision experience.

Do I need to acknowledge my student's work?

Yes. Where students make a significant contribution to an area of a study (data collection, analysis etc), they should be offered authorship or acknowledgements (as appropriate) on any resulting publications.

Can I select an international student?

UROS bursaries are not classed as 'employment', so any student may apply even if they do not currently have a legal 'right to work' in the United Kingdom.

Can I select more than one student?

Yes. It is quite acceptable to divide the bursary between 2 or more students. However, there can only be one student bursary awarded per project, so this would need to be split between the students.

Do I need to have an identified a student to make an application?

While the application is intended to be completed jointly by the staff and student, it is recognised that this is not always possible. Some departments prefer to advertise the position once funding has been awarded. The precise mechanism for selecting students is left to the discretion of the department or school.

What happens after the research is completed?

All UROS students are expected to write an IMPact Journal article and produce a research poster.

The article will be peer reviewed and published in the UROS edition of the IMPact Journal.

The research will be exhibited in a research dissemination event where students and their supervisors will be offered the opportunity to take part in a poster display and present the findings of their research.

Participants are encouraged to submit research findings to external publications and conferences for example the British Conference of Undergraduate Research BCUR. See <http://www.bcur.org> for further details.

What if the results are sensitive and can't be published externally?

If you are unable to publish your results as they need to remain confidential at this stage, perhaps as they are part of a larger research project, your journal article and poster can replace the full results

section with a reflection the student researchers UROS experience. Full guidance is provided to support this.

Does it matter which application window I apply in?

No. You can apply in either window, however we recommend that those who wish to undertake a Tier 1 project alongside their studies apply during Window A as outcomes are announced in early February so that you can conduct your research during Semester B.

Undergraduate Research Opportunities Scheme (UROS) Terms and Conditions

1. Students can only apply for one project/bursary per year.
2. Only current University of Lincoln students are eligible to apply for the scheme and must still be a current student while undertaking the research project.
3. Only first and second year students are eligible to apply for summer research projects as part of the scheme. Final year students would not normally be eligible because they will have become graduates at the point when the UROS project starts, however, exceptions may be made in special circumstances e.g. where the final year student intend to pursue a higher degree when they graduate.
4. All projects will require an academic member of staff in the role of research project supervisor.
5. Projects should be extra curricula and not part of a student's assessed course work.
6. Students should not rewrite a UROS report and present it as a dissertation. The main reason for this is that UROS is an opportunity to contribute to the research work of the university and needs to be seen as separate from the taught curriculum.
7. The application form must be jointly completed by both the supervising academic and the participating student researcher(s) and have the approval of the Head of School.
8. Project supervisors must ensure that student researcher receives an induction, supervision and regular progress review meetings, training and assisting with the written reports and dissemination on research
9. Project supervisors and student researchers need to keep the LALT Engagement Team update with project progress and provide a mid-project report.
10. The research proposal must contribute to the research work of the University – where outputs are high-quality and clearly defined, aligning with current College priorities.
11. Project delivery is both feasible and achievable, with clear timescales and responsibilities set out within the project plan.
12. All student researcher(s) are expected to write and submit an IMPact journal paper, a 150-word synopsis for the blog, and produce a research poster by the deadline date. The research poster will be exhibited in the annual UROS Exhibition Showcase Event, where students and their supervisors will be offered the opportunity to take part in a poster display and present the findings of their research.
13. The LALT Engagement Team is responsible for identifying potential bursary recipients on the basis of the criteria, as such, the LALT Engagement Team cannot be responsible for any errors or omissions in the information supplied to it and where eligibility decisions are based. The LALT Engagement Team's decision on the interpretation of eligibility criteria is final and there is no right of appeal.
14. UROS funding is discretionary. This means even if you meet all the criteria you are not automatically guaranteed a bursary. LALT will select applications that are deemed to be the most deserving in its sole discretion.
15. All applications are assessed and reviewed twice, by a member of academic staff and a member of professional services staff.
16. All unsuccessful applicants are given the opportunity to gain feedback on their application and where applicable this also include signposting to other funding opportunities.
17. Participants are reminded that by accepting the bursary payment you are agreeing to complete the research activities as outlined in the project plan. Failure to adhere to these terms will result in the amendment or withdrawal of full or part funding.
18. Ethical approval must be in place and confirmed before the release of any bursary payment.

19. All UROS participants must declare any conflict of interest