



Call for Proposals (2026)

MAA National Research Experiences for Undergraduates Program

The Mathematical Association of America (MAA) invites proposals for the National Research Experiences for Undergraduates Program (NREUP), supported by the National Science Foundation. MAA is seeking funding proposals from mathematical sciences faculty at accredited U.S. colleges and universities for projects that offer research-based summer experiences for undergraduate mathematics students. This grant initiative supports faculty-led research programs that strengthen pathways for students, including those from groups who have historically been underrepresented in the mathematical sciences, into graduate study and mathematical careers, while fostering a supportive community of inquiry, collaboration, and professional growth. NREUP aims to expand access to high-quality undergraduate research experiences in mathematics and to support institutions in creating inclusive, well-structured learning environments for all eligible students.

Guidelines for Project Design

Funded projects are expected to engage students in substantial mathematical research, foster sustained mentoring relationships, and include formative evaluation components to assess student learning and program outcomes. Activities may consist of intensive introductory sessions, faculty-guided research, professional development, and opportunities for students to present their work at professional conferences or MAA meetings.

Each selected site may receive up to **\$35,000** for a summer program lasting at least seven weeks, covering faculty and student stipends, housing, and related research expenses. **All awards are contingent upon NSF funding.**

Funding Details

- **Number and Duration of Awards:** MAA anticipates making 5-6 awards for Summer 2026. Each award will support activities conducted during the summer program and have reporting requirements through September 2026. All awards are contingent upon NSF funding.
- **Award Amounts:** Each NREUP site may request up to \$35,000 to support a minimum 7-week summer research program for at least 4 undergraduate student participants. Awards may include up to a total of \$5,500 in stipends for faculty researchers or other project leads. Student support should include a minimum stipend of \$4,500 per student, unless students are supported with another funding source, which must be noted in your proposal. It may also include up to \$2,000 per student for room and board and funding for travel to present their work at MAA MathFest or other relevant conferences. A rationale for participation in conferences other than MAA MathFest should be provided in the proposal and/or budget justification.
- **Eligibility:** This funding opportunity is open to mathematical sciences faculty at accredited U.S. colleges and universities, including U.S. territories, or nonprofits with 501(c)(3) status. Students are not eligible to apply directly; instead, they should be identified as intended participants within the proposal. Institutions currently hosting NSF-funded REU sites in the Division of Mathematical Sciences are not eligible for NREUP support. Each institution is allowed to submit only one application.

Recruitment and selection for NREUP programs must comply with NSF PAPPG XI.A and all applicable federal nondiscrimination laws. Programs may not restrict eligibility based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age. Sites must describe how they will ensure accessible program environments and provide reasonable accommodations as required by federal civil-rights laws.

- **Indirect Costs:** Indirect (F&A) costs are allowable in accordance with the institution's federally negotiated rate agreement (NICRA). Indirect costs cannot be applied to participant support costs. Institutions that do not have a federally negotiated rate may use a de minimis rate of up to 15% of modified total direct costs. The maximum award, including both direct and indirect costs, may not exceed \$35,000.

Funding for this program is limited, and the MAA will make every attempt to support a broad range of projects. If any department, district, or nonprofit organization is interested in submitting more than one proposal, the proposals must support different programs and must have different personnel.

Timeline

The MAA National Research Experiences for Undergraduates Program (NREUP) will follow the approximate timeline below.

Application and Review Period

November 20, 2025: Call for Proposals released and application period opens

December 17, 2025: [Informational webinar](#), 1:00pm - 2:00pm EST

February 04, 2026 (11:59 PM ET): Proposal submission deadline

March 2026: Notification of awards (pending renewal of NSF funding)

Program Implementation

May–August 2026: NREUP summer research program period (minimum seven weeks)

September 2026: Final program and financial reports due

Characteristics of Effective Programs

While individual NREUP sites will vary in focus and design, successful projects consistently share the following characteristics:

- **Innovative and engaging:** Offer distinct research experiences that expose students to mathematical inquiry beyond the standard curriculum.
- **Inclusive recruitment:** Demonstrate firm plans to recruit and support students from all backgrounds, including groups historically underrepresented in mathematics.
- **Clear goals and measurable outcomes:** Present a well-defined research focus, objectives, and methods for assessing success.
- **Strong mathematics and mentorship:** Combine rigorous mathematical content with structured, evidence-based faculty mentorship and professional development.
- **Qualified leadership:** Led by experienced, committed faculty with demonstrated mentoring success.
- **Evidence-based design:** Program design is grounded in evidence-based effective practices for undergraduate research and mentoring.
- **Institutional support:** Support from the host institution and relevant department(s) that ensures access to all necessary resources.
- **Sustained impact:** Potential to strengthen student pathways into graduate study and careers in the mathematical sciences.

How to Apply

All application materials must be submitted as **one single PDF package** by **February 4, 2026 at 11:59pm EST**. Incomplete or late submissions will not be reviewed. If you need guidance on how to combine multiple files into a single PDF, you can follow [this short tutorial](#).

Step 1. Review this Call for Proposals

Before starting your application, carefully review this Call for Proposals to ensure you meet the eligibility criteria, understand the funding guidelines, and are aware of allowable costs and review criteria. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the **Application Materials** section (below) for a complete list of required documents and formatting details before submission.

Step 2. Complete the Required Forms

Download and complete both required forms:

- [MAA NREUP Application Form \(fillable PDF\)](#) – captures institutional, personnel, and project details, including required signatures from the Project Director and Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR).
- [MAA NREUP Budget and Justification Template \(fillable Excel\)](#) – provides standardized budget categories and auto-calculations for totals and indirect costs. Brief explanations for each budget line should be included in the **budget justification** (see *Application Materials* section).

Step 3. Prepare the Proposal Narrative and Attachments

Follow the content and formatting guidance outlined under *Application Materials*. Ensure that your narrative clearly describes the project's purpose, objectives, participant population, proposed activities, evaluation plan, and anticipated outcomes. Include any required attachments (e.g., CVs, Letters of Collaboration) as a single PDF file combined with your application materials.

Step 4. Assemble and Submit

Combine all required components, listed in the *Application Materials* section, into a single PDF file in the specified order.

Submit your completed application by using the MAA Outreach Grant Application Submission Form on the [MAA website](#) to upload a single PDF using the following naming convention.

"MAA–NREUP Application – [Institution Name]"

A confirmation email will be sent upon receipt.

Step 5. Optional: Attend the Informational Webinar

An optional informational webinar will be held on December 17, 2025 (1:00 – 2:00 PM ET) to review program expectations and answer applicant questions. Register for the webinar [here](#).

Application Materials

Required Organizational Cover Letter

A **Cover Letter signed by an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)** is required and must follow the template provided in **Appendix A**.

The AOR is the person in your organization who has the authority to commit your institution to the terms of the grant. This is often someone such as a **principal, dean, president, or executive director**—not the Project Director or Principal Investigator. Every organization is structured a little differently, so we trust you to determine who this person is within your institution.

Proposals submitted without a signed cover letter from the AOR will **not be reviewed**.

Application Form

Please complete all required fields in the application form as indicated.

- **Proposal Title:** Provide a clear, descriptive title that reflects your project's focus.
- **Institution Information:** Enter the name, address, and contact information for the lead school or organization applying for the grant.
- **Project Personnel Information:** List the prominent individuals responsible for leading and implementing the project.
- **Project Director Information:** Provide contact details for the person who will manage the project and serve as MAA's primary contact.
- **Project Co-Director(s) Information:** Include names and contact details for up to three Co-Directors. If you have more, list them in your proposal narrative.
- **Administrative Contact:** Enter the contact for the person who will assist with communication, reporting, and general administration.
- **Financial Contact:** Provide the contact for the person who will manage the project's budget, invoicing, or payments.

Project Director and Co-Directors

Please enter contact information for the Project Director and up to three Co-Directors. If your team includes more than four Co-Directors, include their details in the proposal narrative.

Provide a brief resume or CV for each Project Director and Co-Director, highlighting relevant experience and qualifications for the project, limited to two pages for each.

Proposal Narrative

The MAA will select the best proposal from competing submissions, with guidance from an external review panel. The NREUP approach to undergraduate research training has been refined over the past 21 years. To advance the project goals, the MAA outlines the following program structure at each NREUP site, which has been well-tested and proven effective. Address the following guidelines in the order listed, using 11- or 12-point font, and **limit the narrative to no more than five pages**.

- **Orientation and ramp-up**

Each student will generally begin the program by spending the first two to three weeks in an intensive introduction to a research topic that is not a standard part of the undergraduate curriculum but is accessible to students who have had some exposure to proof-based mathematics beyond calculus. You should also include a weekly schedule of student activities here. Additionally, you should describe any student prerequisites and other relevant information that will explain the level and nature of work expected of the students.

- **Research Program**

For the remaining weeks during the summer program, each student will work on an open-ended research project designed by the faculty researcher. Proposals should contain a clear description of the research topic and include details on two or more projects. Descriptions should include an introduction to the field of research, two or more well-defined research problems or questions, and the resources students will use during the research phase.

- **Mentoring**

Student participants will work on their research projects under the close supervision of the faculty researcher. Faculty on the project will supervise and mentor one or more students working in similar areas, providing guidance and encouragement. Ultimately, this research experience should provide student participants with training and mentoring that would lead to a carefully written technical report or a publication, a successful experience in presenting their research, and timely professional development activities aimed at meeting the academic or career goals of the student participants.

- **Research and career seminars**

Where funds permit, PIs may invite local/regional mathematicians to give seminar talks on subjects accessible to the students or to discuss options for careers in mathematics. Virtual visits are recommended for visitors outside the NREUP site region.

- **Presenting results**

Where funds permit, student participants should attend one professional conference during the regular academic year, presenting the results of their research. It may be possible for some individual researchers to allocate funds for additional conference presentations while still meeting the other budget constraints. There are several opportunities for undergraduate presentations through events organized by the National Association of Mathematicians, the American Indian Science and Engineering Society, the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science, and the MAA. The MAA hosts student paper and poster sessions at both national and regional conferences, and a significant portion of its MathFest conference each summer is devoted to student presentations and activities.

- **Project Assessment**

Expected outcomes and how you will assess the effectiveness of the research and mentoring program should also be included in the project description. PIs should describe the plans to measure the success of the proposed program in achieving its goals, particularly the degree to which students have learned skills and mathematical content, and how their perspectives on the mathematical sciences have been expanded. Assessments may include pre-program and post-program instruments that provide information on the degree of learning achieved by students.

Budget

Applicants will complete a fillable budget form that includes both detailed line items and a corresponding budget justification. The form provides separate fields for each budget category listed below.

Each budget item must be accompanied by a **brief and clear justification that explains** its purpose and necessity for the project. The budget justification form can be found in the second tab of the budget template. For example:

Supplies – We are requesting \$X to purchase materials, including pens, pencils, markers, and notebooks, for participants to use during project activities.

Institutions must submit a copy of their NICRA with their application.

Proposals without adequate budget justification will be deemed incomplete and will **not be reviewed**.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Description / Examples</u>
Personnel / Project Leadership	Salaries, stipends, or release time for project directors, co-directors, or other lead personnel.
Consultants / Professional Services	Fees for external experts, guest speakers, evaluation partners, or content specialists.
Participant Support Costs	Stipends, materials, meals, or travel directly supporting project participants (e.g., students).
Supplies & Materials	Instructional supplies, printed materials, manipulatives, or technology directly used in the project.
Travel	Local or domestic travel for project staff, speakers, or participants (e.g., mileage, airfare, lodging).
Other Direct Costs	Venue rental, catering for participants, communications, small printing, or outreach costs.
Indirect Costs (Administrative Allowance)	Institutions may charge indirect costs if they have a federally negotiated rate agreement (NICRA). Indirect costs cannot be charged on participant support costs. Institutions that do not have a NICRA may use a de minimis rate of up to 15% of total direct costs.

The budget form will automatically calculate totals. **Budgets must not exceed the allowable amount of \$35,000, including indirect costs.**

Proposal Review Criteria

A review panel will assess all proposals submitted in accordance with the above requirements using the following criteria:

1. **Feasibility and clarity:** The research plan is well-structured, feasible, and achievable within the proposed timeframe and resources.
2. **Mentoring quality and learning environment:** The project provides a supportive, inclusive mentoring structure that promotes student growth, confidence, and engagement in mathematics.

3. **Intentional recruitment and mentoring:** Thoughtful, evidence-based strategies are outlined for recruiting and supporting all students, including those from groups historically underrepresented in the mathematical sciences. Sites are encouraged to use recruitment strategies that broaden participation and expand access for students who may not have had prior research opportunities.
4. **Mathematical and research quality:** The proposed research topic is rigorous, appropriate for undergraduates, and designed to build mathematical understanding and research skills.
5. **Evaluation and impact:** Clear methods are provided for assessing student learning, program effectiveness, and broader impacts on participants' academic or professional pathways.
6. **Institutional support and sustainability:** The proposal demonstrates departmental and institutional commitment, access to necessary resources, and potential for lasting impact on mentoring capacity and student success.

Appendix A: Institutional Cover Letter Template (Required) - Signed by an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)

[Institution Letterhead]

[Date]

To:

Grants Program Office
Mathematical Association of America (MAA)
1529 18th Street NW
Washington, DC 20036

Subject: Institutional Cover Letter – [Project Title]

Dear Review Committee,

On behalf of **[Institution Name]**, I am pleased to submit the attached proposal titled “**[Project Title]**” for consideration under the **MAA–National Research Experiences for Undergraduates Program (NREUP)**.

This submission has been reviewed and approved by the appropriate institutional officials. The institution fully supports the proposed activities and certifies that, if funded, it will comply with all applicable terms and conditions established by the Mathematical Association of America and the National Science Foundation.

[Principal Investigator Name] and the project team are authorized to carry out the activities as described in the proposal, and all necessary resources and administrative support will be provided to ensure the project’s success.

We appreciate the opportunity to partner with MAA in advancing mathematics education and outreach.

Sincerely,

[Typed Name]

[Title, e.g., Authorized Organizational Representative / Dean / Chief Financial Officer / Principal]

[Institution Name]

[Email Address]

[Phone Number]