

The American Society of Plant Biologists (ASPB)



Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships (SURF)

SURF fellowships are designed to assist promising undergraduate students in conducting meaningful research in plant biology early in their college careers. Ideally, students should conduct their SURF-funded research the summer following their second year. Exceptionally well-prepared first-year students and third-year students who provide evidence of a strong commitment to plant biology will also be considered. Students must work with a mentor who is an ASPB member. All students (including any following non-traditional calendars or in the Southern Hemisphere) will complete their SURF research for presentation at Plant Biology July 30-August 5, 2010 in Montréal, Canada.

Funding - Each fellowship provides a \$3,000 student stipend; \$500 for mentor's lab supplies; a one year student membership in ASPB; and a \$500 travel allowance to attend the ASPB national meeting. The student must be a co-author of an abstract registered at the conference to qualify for the travel money. Students traveling overseas or who have very limited travel resources may contact Katie Engen (katie@aspb.org) to initiate a case for additional travel funds.

Eligible Students - Application is open to all undergraduate students who are enrolled full-time and seeking a degree. International students or students following non-traditional academic calendars will have the opportunity to define their status on the application. Applicants must propose a research project to be pursued in the laboratory of a faculty mentor. Applicants may not receive other direct financial support for their research (Institutional stipend, Sigma Xi Grants-in-Aid of Research, Council on Undergraduate Research Fellowship, etc.).

Selection Criteria - Competitive student applicants should have high academic achievement; strong motivation for research; skills for conducting the research; and career objectives relevant to the aims of the fellowship program.

Faculty Mentors - Students cannot apply without first securing a mentor. A mentor must be a member of ASPB and have an ongoing research program. Mentors should demonstrate a commitment to undergraduate education and research and be conducting a research program that is of high scientific merit. Mentors will actively guide the student's proposal writing and so must be secured at the onset of the project.

Need a Mentor? Students without plant biology faculty at their home institution may apply to SURF by collaborating with a mentor at another institution. Such students are encouraged to seek a mentor by checking ASPB's Diversity Bank at <http://www.aspb.org/committees/minorityaffairs/DiversityBank/> or reviewing the list of institutions with plant biology programs at <http://www.aspb.org/resourcelinks/scripts/cats2.cfm?cat=34>.

Further assistance for finding a mentor can be initiated by contacting Katie Engen (katie@aspb.org). Contact Katie very early in the process (prior to writing the proposal). A mentor cannot be found at the deadline.

Proposal Evaluation - The proposed SURF project should clearly support and enhance the goals of the mentor's ongoing research program; be appropriately targeted for undergraduate work; and guarantee the student regular access to appropriate research facilities. Preference is given to proposals that demonstrate the mentor's close supervision along with the institution's financial commitment to the work.

ASPB supports undergraduates at all types of institutions. Therefore, the proposals are grouped according to the applicant's institution type within the Carnegie classification scheme. Group A is for research and doctoral universities. Group B is for all other colleges and universities. The number of proposals awarded funding in each group will be weighted according to the number of proposals received. The Carnegie Foundation has updated their system to include more classification factors. Applicants who cannot designate Group A or B can find their school's category at <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/classifications/index.asp?key=807> or select a category from the list of institutional descriptions at <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/classifications/sub.asp?key=786>.

Applications - Students and their mentors can apply on-line at www.aspb.org/education/summerundergrad.cfm.

SURF 2009 applications will be accepted December 12, 2008 –February 27, 2009.

Questions? Contact Katie Engen at katie@aspb.org, 301-251-0560 x116.