



Monday **MARCH 23, 2026** 9:00 AM – 2 PM
📍 **Bell Works** Holmdel, New Jersey

The Independent Colleges and Universities of New Jersey Undergraduate Research Symposium promotes student participation in research early in their higher education experience to combat one of the reasons cited for students leaving a STEM major “desire for increased time spent in well-resourced labs.”

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The **educational and professional development of students in STEM majors to support the science, technology, engineering and math talent pipeline** is a primary goal of the ICUNJ Undergraduate Research Symposium. As part of the research process, students will develop a budget, plan and execute an independent research project, evaluate results and draw conclusions to share through a poster presentation. Each research opportunity promotes collaboration, enhances communications skills, and offers access to peer networks and engagement with industry professionals -- factors identified as positive contributors to student retention in STEM majors. Applications are accepted from undergraduate participants seeking new research opportunities that connect classroom learning to real world applications.

Complimentary to the individual student research experience is the benefit to classroom participation. With new insights and skills sets, classroom discussions are elevated, the transfer of technical knowledge is reinforced and enthusiasm is generated among peers that increases interest for STEM majors in other students.

By expanding access to quality STEM learning opportunities, we are helping students see STEM disciplines as catalysts for their careers. “All young people should be prepared to think well so that they have the chance to become the innovators, educators, researchers, and leaders who can solve the most pressing challenges facing our nation and world, both today and tomorrow.”



PARTICIPANT OVERVIEW

Students from ICUNJ’s 13 member colleges and universities are eligible to apply to participate in the Symposium. Priority is given to students in STEM majors, but any student may submit an application for consideration.

By applying, students agree to conduct their outlined research over the course of several months – often spanning two semesters, submit an interim progress report between semesters, prepare a single page abstract for publication in the ICUNJ Undergraduate Symposium Program Book. Application submission also confirms the student’s commitment to participate in the one-day symposium offered on Monday, March 23, 2026. Students should include transportation expenses in the project budget. Acknowledgement of these criteria is confirmed by the student, supervising faculty and academic dean signing of the application forms. *(Failure to comply with any one of these elements will result in the need to reimbursement some or all of the grant or scholarship funds to ICUNJ.)*

Successful candidates will receive up to \$1,000 to offset research expenses including research stipends. Funding for the Symposium is provided by corporate and foundation partners who share in our commitment to increase the number of students who enroll at one of New Jersey’s private colleges to pursue a STEM discipline and to making an investment that raises the retention rate of students enrolled in STEM programs. As available, poster presentation spots may be offered to applicants who are scholarship recipients and to applicants who did not receive funding. Invitations are made at the discretion of the URS selection committee. These spots are limited.

Participants in the ICUNJ Undergraduate Research Symposium have an opportunity to interact with industry professionals, member institution faculty, and business professionals in a judged competition designed to build workforce skills. The results of the judging are compiled and provided to students to help identify areas for improvement prior to interviewing for job or advanced degree opportunities. ICUNJ staff are available to discuss feedback and establish a professional development plan.

AWARDS

ICUNJ will provide **research awards for up to \$1,000 per project** according to the Participant Guidelines. Participation in the Undergraduate Research Symposium is based on a competitive application process open only to New Jersey independent college students as outlined in the eligibility criteria. The actual number of awards will depend on the quantity and quality of applications received. Students may also be considered for scholarship support as a way to meet project expenses. ICUNJ administered scholarships address costs of attendance which may include expenses associated with the research projects and the Symposium.

ICUNJ may opt to limit the total number of participants in any given year based on facility limitations to allow the best experiences for all participants. Students who did not receive funding may be eligible for participation at the discretion of ICUNJ. ICUNJ also reserves the right to conduct the event virtually should external circumstances require for the safety of all participants.

GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION

The Participant Guidelines and the application forms have been included with this email (please note there are multiple forms within the application packet). The information packet is provided for distribution to students through Department Deans and Faculty members who engage with students interested in conducting independent research.

To allow students an opportunity to conduct research through the fall semester and winter break, ICUNJ has established an **application deadline of September 30th** with funding decision announced no later than October 15th. Additional applications will not be accepted after that date. Please note the full timetable for participants below.



Scan me!

SEND COMPLETED APPLICATIONS:

ICUNJ
URS Review Committee
154 West State Street
Trenton, NJ 08608
Email: scholarships@njcolleges.org

ASK QUESTIONS:

MaryAlice Breuninger
Vice President
Phone: 609-218-5026 ext. 2208
Fax: 609-498-0055
Email: mabreuninger@njcolleges.org

PROJECT TIMELINE

August 20, 2025	Call issued for Research Proposals from Students
September 30, 2025	Deadline for All Proposal Submissions
October 15, 2025	Project Funding Decisions Announced. <i>(All applications will receive a response regarding funding.)</i>
January 16, 2026	Interim Progress Report Due <i>(Supervising faculty signature required.)</i>
February 20, 2026	Conclude Research
March 6, 2026	Abstract of research findings/results due to ICUNJ for inclusion in event publication.
March 23, 2026	ICUNJ Undergraduate Research Symposium – All funded applicants are required to attend. Symposium will be held at Bell Works in Holmdel, New Jersey.