



COAST Undergraduate Student Research Awards

AY 2024-25

Application Priority Deadline: Friday, November 15, 5:00 p.m. PDT

[Submission Link](#)

The CSU Council on Ocean Affairs, Science and Technology (COAST) is the CSU system-wide affinity group for marine and coastal related activities. COAST integrates system-wide resources and promotes interdisciplinary multi-campus collaborations to advance our knowledge of California's natural coastal and marine resources and the processes that affect them. The scope of COAST includes the ocean, coast and coastal watersheds. COAST's goals are to:

- Advance our knowledge of natural coastal and marine resources and the processes that affect them
- Support research related to marine, estuarine, and coastal regions.
- Develop innovative solutions to the economic, sociological, ecological and technological challenges that our coastal zone faces
- Promote environmental literacy to foster stewardship and sustainable use of our coast

COAST aims to increase CSU student participation in faculty-mentored marine and coastal research throughout the CSU. Through funding from the Chancellor's Office and the campuses, COAST provides support to CSU undergraduate students (total program amount per CSU campus is \$3,000) to work with faculty members on their campuses on an independent research project. These awards will support students interested in pursuing marine-related careers and provide them with the opportunity to obtain the skills necessary to join a highly skilled, technologically advanced workforce while promoting and supporting CSU faculty research.

Key Dates & Information

This program is administered by Cal Maritime's Research and Innovation Office (RIO).

Application Priority Deadline: November 15, 2024, 1700 PDT

Earliest Award Notification: November 22, 2024

Maximum Award Amount: \$2000, but typically \$500 to \$1000 per project.

Anticipated Project Start Date: November 22, 2024, funds must be encumbered by June 30, 2025

Project Completion Date: August 31, 2025

Questions or additional information: Contact Christopher Brown (cwbrown@csum.edu)



Only one student may request funds on a single project. Projects designed between a collaborative team must be documented with separate proposal submissions. Students may submit only one application in response to this announcement. Faculty members may sponsor more than one student.

Application Materials and Instructions

COAST Undergraduate Research Awards are open to ALL academically eligible Cal Maritime undergraduate students. Students must identify and work closely with a research advisor to develop and submit their project proposal. While the COAST Undergraduate Research Award is made to students, the program is intended to increase faculty - student collaboration and scholarship on campus and faculty advisors should be prepared to make a substantial contribution of time in support of research projects.

The project description must clearly describe the research project to be conducted, including its significance, novelty and application. Primary literature must be referenced. The project description must include research design, including a clear statement of hypotheses, objectives, methodology, and analysis. If your project is part of a larger project, the description must also clearly define how your work contributes to the overall project. The project description is limited to 1500 words; references are submitted in a separate section and do not count towards the total word count. The quality of writing will be judged.

The relation to COAST's goals section must clearly articulate how your general interest in marine/coastal science and your proposed project relate to one or more of the goals of COAST, as listed on page 1 of this announcement. Explain how the proposed research is related to your career goals. Priority will be given to projects that also are applicable to the needs of California.

The budget must explain how this award will help further and support your specific research experience and overall undergraduate education. Students may request up to \$350 as a stipend. Funds to support student or faculty travel to present project findings should not be included in the budget; separate funds have been earmarked for this purpose. Include a timeline detailing how you will use this award and include your anticipated graduation date.

Letter of Recommendation

The faculty mentor must provide a letter of recommendation. Letters must detail the faculty member's familiarity with the student, the value of the student's proposed

research and must comment on the student's ability to successfully conduct and complete the proposed project. Letters must verify that the student has a major GPA of 2.5 or better at the time of application. Faculty members must submit their letters as pdf files directly to COAST using the submission link; all letters will remain confidential.

Evaluation Criteria

Submissions will be evaluated based on the quality of the research described, how the proposed research meets one or more of the goals of COAST, and the need for support. The following evaluation criteria will be employed:

- Project description (55 points): Quality of writing (15); clear description of project (15); significance and novelty (5); experimental design and methodology (10); clearly stated hypotheses (5); data analysis plan (5)
- Relation to COAST goals (15 points): General interest in marine/coastal science and career goals (5); relationship of proposed research to marine, estuarine, coastal, or coastal watershed environments, organisms or issues (5); application to California's needs (5)
- Budget and Timeline (10 points): Clear demonstration that the award will support your research goals and contribute to your overall education. Timeline must be included.
- References (10 points): Statements sufficiently referenced (5); use of original, peer-reviewed literature, both foundational and current (5)
- Letter of Recommendation (10 points): Verification that student GPA meets minimum requirement. Faculty member's relationship with student, value of student's research, student's ability to conduct research.

Award Conditions

Awardees are required to

1. Acknowledge COAST in any publications resulting in whole or in part from the Award.
2. Provide COAST with an abstract of their research and a one-page summary of the impact of this award on their undergraduate experience and professional goals within six months of receiving the award.
3. Provide COAST with a final report of research outcomes within roughly one year of the project initiation.



Important Financial Aid and Tax Liability Information

Applicants are *strongly encouraged* to consult with their campus financial aid office *prior to applying* to COAST to determine the potential impact of this award to other forms of compensation provided through their university, including financial aid. All forms of assistance must be coordinated through campus financial aid offices. COAST awards will be processed by the campus *in coordination with* other forms of financial support. Please be advised that receiving and accepting a COAST award could lead to a decrease in other forms of financial assistance. Ordinarily, adjustments (if any) are made to loans first before other grants or scholarships. Award recipients should contact their campus financial aid office to determine how the award may affect their total financial aid package.

Because of Internal Revenue Service and other requirements, campuses may also consult with accounting, human resources and international programs staff to determine appropriate method of payment and any tax withholding requirements. Award recipients should consult with a tax professional regarding tax liability resulting from any award.