

THE RESEARCH REVIEW

A Monthly Newsletter by The Office of Research Administration

NEWS

Pre-Award Services

- The ORA is now on LinkedIn!
- Explore Our New "Directory of Grant-Making Organizations"
- Funding Opportunities

Post-Award Services

- Accessing Your Sponsored Project Financials in Banner Admin
- Summer Extra Compensation Process Begins

Compliance

- Sponsored Project Hiring Compliance – THE WHO, THE WHY, and THE WHEN
- Federal Mentor/Mentee Training Requirements (Selected Federal Awards)
- CITI Training and InfoEd Access: What Users Need to Know

Student Research

- Undergraduate Research
- Culminating Graduate Student Projects Defended in Fall 2025

Programs & More

- Events, workshops, and special program opportunities



MARTIN TANAKA SECURES NCINNOVATION FUNDING FOR NEW MEDICAL DEVICE

Martin Tanaka, a professor of engineering and technology at Western Carolina University, has a knack for creating innovative gadgets as a biomedical engineer. He has two patents for medical devices: one to help with rotator cuff surgery and another for a surgical tool for nasal surgery. [Read More](#)

Research Data Dive

[View the Data of WCU's Research Pursuits](#)



Office of Research
Administration

THE RESEARCH REVIEW

A Monthly Newsletter by The Office of Research Administration

PRE-AWARD SERVICES NEWS

The ORA is now on LinkedIn!

We are excited to share that the Office of Research Administration has launched an official LinkedIn page. Follow us to stay informed about new funding opportunities, important announcements, and the latest updates from our office. Join our growing community and stay connected with everything happening at the ORA.

[Follow the ORA on LinkedIn](#)

Explore Our New “Directory of Grant-Making Organizations”

Our website now features a dedicated resource to help faculty identify potential sponsors for their research and scholarly activities. The Directory of Grant-Making Organizations brings together a curated selection of federal, state, nonprofit, and foundation funders, all organized by field of study. This streamlined layout makes it easier to discover sponsors aligned with your interests, explore organizations known for supporting work across disciplines, and spot upcoming opportunities.

Use this tool to find potential partners and chart new paths to advance your next project.

[View the Directory](#)

Funding Opportunities

- [National Endowment for the Arts](#)

Funding arts projects in the following disciplines: Arts Education, Challenge America, Dance, Design & Our Town, Folk & Traditional Arts, Literary Arts, Local Arts Agencies, Museums, Music, Opera, Presenting & Multidisciplinary Works, Theater & Musical Theater, and Visual & Media Arts.

- [NC Collaboratory](#)

Investigating the prevalence and toxicity of PFAS from the environmental to the biological level.

- [EPA Environmental Education Grant Program](#)

This grant program supports projects that design, demonstrate, and/or disseminate environmental education practices, methods, or techniques that increase public awareness and knowledge about local environmental issues.

[More Funding Opportunities Linked Here](#)

THE RESEARCH REVIEW

A Monthly Newsletter by The Office of Research Administration

POST-AWARD NEWS

Accessing Your Sponsored Project Financials in Banner Admin

Here is a friendly reminder that the ORA Post-Award team sends biweekly fund review emails to Principal Investigators (PIs) around the 1st and 15th of each month.

However, these emails are not the only way PIs can access the financial details of their sponsored projects. During the fund setup process, PIs and their designees are granted access to view their sponsored funds in [Banner Admin](#) at any time.

Key Banner Admin Screens for Fund Visibility

FRIGITD – Displays inception-to-date for 5XXXXX grant funds. Users can adjust the start and end dates as needed.

FGIBDST – Provides fiscal year-to-date reporting for all grant funds, showing one fiscal year at a time.

Additional Banner Support and Training

For hands-on guidance with Banner, **Morgan Burnnett** and **Linda Davis** host Banner Banter, a biweekly informal training session that covers commonly used Banner screens and helpful Microsoft Excel tips.

To join, please reach out to your college's **Budget Officer** or **Executive Assistant** for the calendar invitation.

You can also explore resources on the Banner Banter section of WCU's [myResources](#) page.

As always, the ORA Post-Award team is here to support you. Please reach out to the Post Award Team with any questions about the financial status of your sponsored grant projects.

THE RESEARCH REVIEW

A Monthly Newsletter by The Office of Research Administration

POST-AWARD NEWS

Summer Extra Compensation Process Begins

The Post Award team is beginning the annual process of preparing summer extra compensation for faculty supported by sponsored projects. Our first step is a comprehensive review of all budgets that include summer effort for Summer 2026. During this stage, we verify that each faculty or staff member's budgeted effort is fully captured to prevent discrepancies later in the process. This proactive review helps ensure both compliance and a smooth workflow in the months ahead.

Starting in February, members of the Post Award team will begin emailing Principal Investigators (PIs) to confirm faculty and effort. If you receive an email from a Post Award team member, **please respond promptly**. Timely responses help us keep the process on schedule and avoid delays in compensation.

Once PI confirmations are collected, Post Award will meet with departmental budget officers to ensure all proposed summer salary aligns with WCU's Policy 22. These meetings provide an opportunity to review any adjustments, confirm compliance, and address questions before documents move forward for approval.

After information is gathered from all departments, our office will prepare the necessary Adobe Sign packets to route for approval. These forms are required for payroll processing and serve as the official record of summer compensation.

Throughout the process, the Post Award team will provide reminders, timelines, and updates to keep all parties informed. Our goal is to ensure that Summer 2026 extra compensation is processed efficiently, accurately, and well ahead of payroll deadlines.

Questions?

Contact: [Ben Peters](mailto:bpeters@wcu.edu) (bpeters@wcu.edu) or [Cameron Lopez](mailto:clopez@wcu.edu) (clopez@wcu.edu)

THE RESEARCH REVIEW

A Monthly Newsletter by The Office of Research Administration

COMPLIANCE NEWS

Sponsored Project Hiring Compliance – THE WHO, THE WHY, and THE WHEN

- **WHO** – All faculty, staff, and students supported on sponsored projects
- **WHY** – University Policy 54 and Federal Uniform Guidance requires that all Sponsored Project Hires complete COI attestation and COI Training along with any other additional required training.
- **WHEN** – These requirements, already established in University policy, are now formally integrated into the post-award hiring and onboarding workflow and are required before beginning work on the project.
 - Additional guidance for PIs and project teams on roles, responsibilities, and process steps will be provided as part of the post-award process.
 - Check back next month for additional updates!

For questions, contact:

Mallory Ball mball@wcu.edu

Federal Mentor/Mentee Training Requirements (Selected Federal Awards)

- Certain federal awards (including specific NSF-funded projects) require **structured mentor/mentee training and development** for students and trainees as a condition of the award.
 - This requirement is **separate from and in addition to** standard online Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training and **cannot be satisfied by CITI or other online RCR modules alone.**
- Principal Investigators are responsible for ensuring that required mentor/mentee training plans are:
 - Developed
 - Implemented
 - Documented in accordance with sponsor requirements
- Guidance on mentor/mentee training expectations, documentation, and compliance integration will be provided soon as part of the **compliance and post-award process.**

For questions, contact:

Mallory Ball mball@wcu.edu

THE RESEARCH REVIEW

A Monthly Newsletter by The Office of Research Administration

COMPLIANCE NEWS

CITI Training and InfoEd Access: What Users Need to Know

Please be aware that the **CITI Program and InfoEd are separate systems and do not communicate with one another.**

As a result:

- **CITI requires a separate, independent login** and account setup by each user
- **InfoEd uses University single sign-on (SSO)** for access

Users are responsible for ensuring that required CITI training is completed and properly associated with their university affiliation

Please see our [Human Subjects Research Page](#) for more information about CITI training completion.

For questions, contact:

Mallory Ball mball@wcu.edu

**CHECK OUT OUR
RESEARCH
MAGAZINE!**



THE RESEARCH REVIEW

A Monthly Newsletter by The Office of Research Administration

STUDENT RESEARCH NEWS

Congratulations to Our NCUR Accepted Students!

The following students have been accepted to present at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) to be held in Richmond, VA on April 13-15, 2026.

About NCUR

The National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) is dedicated to promoting undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative activity in all fields of study by sponsoring an annual conference for students. Unlike meetings of academic professional organizations, this gathering of student scholars welcomes presenters from all institutions of higher learning and from all disciplines.

Overall, this conference offers a unique environment for the celebration and promotion of undergraduate student achievement; provides models of exemplary research, scholarship, and creative activity; and offers student career readiness development.

Students accepted to NCUR have the opportunity to present their undergraduate research along with peers from across disciplines. Since 1987, NCUR has been a flagship conference for undergraduate researchers to share, celebrate, and promote their research achievements.

Accepted Presenters

- Biology: Aj Cansler, Samuel Silveus, and Tony Yost
- Chemistry: Brian Duke and Jacob Given
- English Studies: Spencer Davis
- Forensic Science: Sofia Douglas
- History: Samantha Greene and Zechariah Hoppes
- Mathematics and Computer Sciences: Prashreet Poudel
- Philosophy and Religion: Isabel Chapman
- Psychology: Andrew Baker, Gabriella Loredó Marquez, Eden McKinney, and Blake Murdock
- School of Art & Design: Samantha Mack and Avery Pittman
- School of Engineering + Technology: Hamza Boujemaoui, John Crain, Bakang Phutietsile, and Michael Synoracki
- School of Health Sciences: Ali Maynard, Gabby Cox, and Erica Thaggard
- World Languages: Brianna Myles, Crystal Hernandez, and Jaryn Green



Undergraduate
Research

THE RESEARCH REVIEW

A Monthly Newsletter by The Office of Research Administration

STUDENT RESEARCH NEWS

Culminating Graduate Student Projects Defended in Fall 2025

The Graduate School would like to recognize the following students who successfully defended culminating projects for their programs during the Fall 2025 term.

Doctoral Dissertation

Taylor Gamble, Psychology Psy.D.

"Detecting Suicide Risk in Community Mental Health Center Adolescent Sample"

Master's Thesis

Peace Avanrenren, Biology M.S.

"Whole Genome Sequencing and Functional Characterization of Strains of *Proteus vulgaris* Isolated from Freshwater Streams in Western North Carolina"

Heidi Buchanan, History M.A.

"The 'Championettes': Women's Labor at an Appalachian Paper Mill During World War II"

Remon Das, Engineering Technology M.S.E.T.

"Artificial Intelligence Based Fault Detection and Predictive Analysis for Smart Power Systems"

Payne Murray, History M.A.

"EBCI Environmental Sovereignty"

Tyler Shaw, Chemistry M.S.

"The Effects of Microplastic on Hurricane Cyclogenesis Energetics Through Measurement of Evaporation of Sea Water"

Renjie Yuwen, Fine Arts M.F.A.

"Between Permanence and Decay: Material, Memory, and Temporality in Lacquer and Ceramic Installation"

THE RESEARCH REVIEW

A Monthly Newsletter by The Office of Research Administration

PROGRAMS & MORE

ORA Workshop Series

To meet growing interest, the ORA has scheduled more workshop sessions for the spring! Don't miss these opportunities to build your grants knowledge and connect with peers.

- **2/12/2026, 3:30–4:30 pm, Apodaca 115, Grants 101:** designed for the entry-level knowledge-based faculty who want exposure to the world of grants. It covers the who, what, and how...a great place to start!
- **2/19/2026, 3:00–4:00 pm, Apodaca 115, Grant Seeking:** designed to help faculty search and locate funding opportunities using the SPIN database and other grant-seeking resources.
- **3/03/2026, 3:00–4:00 pm, virtually, Financial Management:** designed for our more experienced faculty who want to learn more about shadow budgets, personnel costs, and purchasing rules and guidelines to help manage their grant.
- **3/31/2026, 3:30–4:30 pm, Apodaca 115, Grants 101:** designed for the entry-level knowledge-based faculty who want exposure to the world of grants. It covers the who, what, and how...a great place to start!

Register Now. Seats are limited.

Spring Proposal Opportunities: PSDA & FaRM Programs

The Office of Research Administration (ORA) is accepting proposals this spring for two key funding opportunities: the Provost's Scholarship Development Awards (PSDA) and the Faculty Research Mentoring (FaRM) Program. Proposals will be accepted until **February 9, 2026, 11:59pm.**

Learn more about the [guidelines and application process.](#)

THE RESEARCH REVIEW

A Monthly Newsletter by The Office of Research Administration

PROGRAMS & MORE

RASC

RESEARCH FOR ALL

**Research and Scholarship Conference
(RASC) 2026 - Registration Closes
February 16!**

The Research and Scholarship Conference returns March 25–26, 2026 with in-person showcases of student and faculty research, scholarship, and creative inquiry. Join us for a full day of engagement featuring:

- Oral and Poster Presentations
- Fine Arts Exhibits and Performances
- Keynote Address
- Faculty 3-Minute Research Talk (3MR) Competition
- Celebration Receptions and Awards

New This Year: Faculty are invited to present alongside students on March 25. Plus, we'll feature research related to Hurricane Helene in dedicated sessions.

Important Deadlines:

- **Student & Faculty Presentation + 3MR Competition Registration: Feb. 16, 2026**
- Faculty Scholarship Celebration Submissions: Feb. 1, 2026
- Luncheon RSVP: Mar. 1, 2026

Event Highlights:

- March 25: Full day of presentations, keynote, and reception
- March 26: Faculty Scholarship Celebration & 3MR Finals

Visit research.wcu.edu/rasc for details and registration links or contact Suzanne Melton at scmelton@wcu.edu for more information.