



## Budget Request Form FY2018

*Department should complete one form for each individual request*

**Department:** Graduate and Professional Student Council

**Program, Service, or Operation Requested**

Student Research Week Graduate Assistant Position

SAFAB Use Only	
YES	NO

**General Description:**

Student Research Week (SRW) is a week-long, student-led, university-wide conference showcasing research conducted by both undergraduate and graduate students at Texas A&M University. The Student Research Week Director Position is a Graduate Assistantship designed to educate the student in planning and coordinating the large-scale event including assembling and organizing over 700 student participants, 250 judges, and 250 volunteers to ensure a successful event. Currently, the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (OGAPS) has contributed ½ of the funding of this half-time position (equal to ¼ of a full-time employee), and the secondary half has been solicited externally on an annual basis—and by one-time full funding provided for FY13/FY14 by SSFAB and again in FY15/FY16 by SAFAB. The full one-time funding was split to fund ½ the assistantship in each corresponding fiscal year and matched by the additional ½ funding from OGAPS. As we have had matching funding for the past nine years since the inception of the SRW Director, permanent partial support from UAF would allow us to focus on growing the event.

**Request Type:**     Full     Increase     One-Time     Partial/Matching

**Type of Funds Requested**     UAF     Other

**General Questions:**

***How does this address an important need and positively impact students?***

SRW is an event that gives both undergraduate and graduate students the opportunity to showcase their research at Texas A&M University. This past year we had 740 competitors register, 250 judges, and 250 volunteers. This competition directly benefits every participant. It is a high impact experience and aligns with the mission and goals of the University, as well as, with the expectations of faculty and senior level administrators. The University identifies it as a high impact practice (HIP) and aligns it with undergraduate, Master’s, and Doctoral learning outcomes as outline by the institution. Learning occurs through the practice of

communicating efficiently through the showcasing of subject material in a wide range of contexts, and demonstrates critical thinking through executed research.

This event is fully student run and provides not only graduate students, but also undergraduate students with many learning experiences related to program planning and execution. The huge success of SRW is attributed to the dedication of the SRW Director. For such a significant event, it is essential that a stable source of funding be secured. This can help ensure that appropriate attention is given to SRW in order to sustain and maintain it at the high level of execution institutional leadership and faculty expect to provide this rich learning experience.

***What department/Division Strategic Plan item does this support?***

***What is the impact if not funded?***

SRW supports the Division of Student Affairs Strategic Plan in a variety of ways. First, it aligns with Goals 1 and 3 of enriching the learning experience of students by cultivating an environment of intellectual curiosity and creating an inclusive environment that develops global citizens and leaders who productively engage in a wide spectrum of ideas, perspectives, and cultures. By providing students an opportunity to showcase their research they are not only able to receive feedback from peers and faculty but simultaneously learn from others' wide variety of research topics.

Further, the three tenets of GPSC: advocacy, community, and research are all supported by Student Research Week (SRW). The communal gathering of students and faculty created by SRW advocates to the Texas A&M community critical thinking, and the sharing of the knowledge gained through the universities' many research endeavors undertaken by students and faculty.

The Student Research Week Director is pivotal in the planning, executing, and operating procedures of SRW. Without a director the entire event would not be viable. The responsibilities of the Director are quite substantial and necessitate the position be a Graduate Assistant Position versus a volunteer position. Securing the funding for the director position is key to SRW's continued success.

***Please provide any data, evidence, input (student faculty, staff, other) you gathered to help you determine the need for additional resources.***

Internally, we have discussed securing permanent partially funding for this graduate assistantship with past Directors, our Executive Committee, and entire Council. We have continually come to SAFAB to seek permanent funding and in the last several years have been allocated full one-time funding to cover to years of ½ assistantships. Externally, in the past we have received support from the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies or Offices of the Dean of Student Life and, by securing this partial permanent funding, we may be able to do likewise with OGAPS for a long-standing event. The GA stipend has also been noted by previous Directors in their final reports as a great support system to allow them to focus on serving students as part of Student Research Week without the added burden of needing to become a teaching assistant or seek-out additional personal funding sources.

The continued growth of SRW as event provides further support for the need to secure an assistantship to provide accountability to the quality and timeliness of the work associate with the planning and implementation of the event. The SRW Director is required to attend a number of institutional meetings and external meetings to promote the value and experiences students receive while participating in SRW. This

assistantship frees the student’s time to allow the University administrators to promote the value of the High Impact Practice as needed.

**What actions have you implemented internally to address the identified need?**

Within our limited budget we allocate money to cover the operating costs of SRW related expenses (materials, general operating costs, judge’s refreshments, awards, etc.) As SRW expands and requires more resources due to past success we need additional funding to cover our base costs. We continue to seek outside sources of funding to assist in this increase. Cash awards are offered to first and second place competitors within topical categories and are covered by the generosity of the Vice President for Research, Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (OGAPS), University Honors and Undergraduate Research, and most of the colleges on campus.

We have received an approved funding memo from OGAPS for FY17 and FY18 providing ½ the SRW Director assistantship funding in each of those fiscal at the rate of \$7500.00 per fiscal year.

**Generally, what assessment tools will you use to evaluate this program/service?**

Student Research Week as an event works with Student Life Studies to assess the event. An annual report is written and published, and includes specific areas such as competitors’, volunteers’, and judges’ attendances. Additionally, the director’s position is evaluated throughout the year and a formal graduate assistant performance evaluation is completed at the end of the year.

**How have other sources of funding (fundraising, sponsorship, reserves, etc.) been considered?**

**Please explain.**

We seek ½ the funding for this position from the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies. Additionally, Student Research Week requires a substantial financial outlay to cover the costs of room reservations within the MSC for one full-week, technology rental and purchase of equipment, as well as additional materials to run the event smoothly. GPSC allocates a line item number annually from their budget to cover operating expenses and receive additional operational funding from the Vice President for Research.

All award dollars are support from the academic side of the University and directly benefit student competitors.

			Dollar Amount	Funding Description:  SAFAB Comments/Notes:
<b>Total Estimated Cost</b>			<b>\$15,500.00</b>	
<i>Less Estimated Partial/Matching Funds (if applicable)</i>			<i>\$7,500.00</i>	
<b>TOTAL INCREASE REQUESTED</b>			<b>\$8,000.00</b>	