

Daisy Brand Undergraduate Research Grant
Competitive Program FY2026
Proposal Submission Guidelines

Application Deadline:	January 10, 2026
Start Date of Grant:	June 1, 2026 (summer and combined awards) September 1, 2026 (semester awards)
End Date of Grant:	August 31, 2026 (summer awards) December 31, 2026 (semester and combined awards)

Daisy Brand Undergraduate Research Grant - Purpose

This grant aims to create a dynamic and inclusive learning environment that immerses undergraduate students in experiential learning, fundamental lab skills, critical problem-solving, and innovative research. By fostering curiosity, hands-on learning, and interdisciplinary collaboration, it empowers students to engage in scholarly inquiry, apply knowledge to real-world challenges, and develop as lifelong learners and future leaders in industry, academia, and society.

Daisy Brand Undergraduate Research Grant – Eligibility

- **Student qualification:** Bachelor's students (BS) in science disciplines, such as those in the *Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences* (including Food Science, FNBI, Culinary, and Nutrition) and the *Divisions of Biology, Chemistry, and Biochemistry*, are eligible to apply for this funding.
- **Research topics:** Proposed research topics should align with the field of food science, addressing fundamental, applied, or combined aspects. Example research topics may address food composition, processing, safety, quality, nutrition, flavor, or innovative technologies, with an emphasis on advancing knowledge. Strong preference is giving to projects that foster interdisciplinary collaboration, such as engage BS students and faculty cross different components: *Nutrition and Food Sciences* and *Biology, Chemistry, and Biochemistry*.
- **Faculty mentor requirement:** Students are required to collaborate with a faculty mentor to develop their research proposal, conduct the research, and prepare a final report and final presentation. Faculty from both the *Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences* and the *Divisions of Biology, Chemistry, and Biochemistry* are eligible to serve as mentors for this grant.

Daisy Brand Undergraduate Research Grant – Funding

Grant award may be structured as follows:

- *A summer grant of \$7,995 per application*
- *A semester grant of \$10,422 per application*
- *A combined summer and semester grant of \$15,703 per application*

Detailed itemization of each grant award is provided in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Type of Daisy Brand – undergraduate research grant.

	Summer	Semester	Semester + Summer
Student stipend	3,500	4,500	7,500
Lab supplies	1,500	2,000	2,500
Faculty incentive	1,500	2,000	2,500
Total	6,500	8,500	12,500

Budget use: The awarded funds will be allocated to the following areas for contracted students.

- **Student stipends:** Students will be paid \$19 per hour for approximately 15 hours per week up to the maximum amount shown above for each type of award.
- **Lab supplies:** Faculty mentors will receive funds to cover essential supplies needed for their students' research.
- **Faculty incentives:** Faculty mentors will receive incentives for their support of student research. The amount shown above includes fringes benefits and paid to faculty through the TWU payroll at the completion of the semester. *Note: if a faculty member wants to change a portion of “faculty incentive” to “lab supplies”, it needs be documented in the proposal.*

Grant Application and Submission Instructions

- Detailed instructions for completing the application are located at the end of these program guidelines. The proposal must be submitted to **twuresearch@twu.edu** via email by the deadline of **January 10, 2026**. Once received, the application will be reviewed by a committee.

Grant Review Process

- **Scientific review committee:** A review committee will be formed, consisting of at least two reviewers: one representative from Daisy Brand and one from TWU, with Dr. Xiaofen Du serving for the first year. Additional reviewers may be appointed based on the volume of applications. The committee will be responsible for evaluating all submitted applications.

Expected Outcomes and Reporting Requirements

- **Final report template:** A template for reporting research outcomes will be created to streamline report submissions to the TWU research office and the review committee. Reports will be due 60 days after the end date of the award.
- **End-of-year celebration (presentation/poster session):** Dr. Du will coordinate the end-of-year celebration, hosting a seminar to present the relevant outcomes of the grant. This seminar will take place either at Daisy Brand's facility in Garland, TX, or at TWU Denton campus. If held at TWU, it will be organized in collaboration with the Food Science Club to engage a broad audience of students and faculty.

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Proposal Submission Instructions

Applications will include the elements shown below. Proposals must be submitted to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) by the deadline of January 10, 2026. The proposal may be emailed as a .pdf to **twuresearch@twu.edu**. Each section of the application must adhere to the page limits and other guidelines as detailed below.

Application Contents

1. Cover page

- **Title**
 - Add a title for your research proposal
- **Investigators:**
 - Student name, TWU ID#, email address, major, and department are required.
 - The contact faculty's name, rank, email address, and department are required. All other investigators, collaborators, and consultants should be listed if applicable.
- **Abstract**
 - A layperson's abstract (with language accessible to those outside the discipline) of no more than 200 words is required for proposal submission.
- **Budget**
 - Please select one type from the following list:
 - *A summer grant of \$7,995 per application*
 - *A semester grant of \$10,422 per application*
 - *A combined summer and semester grant of \$15,703 per application*
- **Support**
 - For all investigators on the project, provide information about any Current and Pending Support for this project if applicable.

2. Research Plan / Narrative

- Attach a project narrative of no more than 4 pages (excluding reference list/bibliography). The font should be 11-point or larger although figures, charts, tables, figure legends, and footnotes may be smaller in size. Margins must be at least one-inch, and the application should be single-spaced with page numbers.
- The 4-page research plan should include the following:
 - **Specific Aims** (used interchangeably with hypothesis, research questions, or objectives).
 - **Significance** - explain the importance of the problem, the critical barrier to progress in the field that the proposed project addresses, or how the project will improve scientific knowledge.

- **Innovation** - explain how the application challenges and seeks to shift current research or describe novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies.
- **Approach** - describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project.
- **Timeline** - include a timeline to describe the tasks to be accomplished during the months of the project.
- **Outcomes** – describe potential outcomes from your proposed research.
- **Data Sharing Plan** - include a proposed method of presenting results.
- **Other Project Information:** If the project uses human subjects, animals, recombinant DNA or biohazardous agents, or radiation, it should be disclosed. The compliance approvals for these items are not required at the time of submission but will be required at the time of award.

3. References

- List all relevant literature references. References are required, and there is no page limit for this section.

4. Environment / Resources

- One page that provides information regarding the environment and/or resources. Be specific regarding where research will be conducted and what facilities are available.

5. Support Letter

- A brief letter of recommendation or endorsement from a faculty member.

Submission Instructions

Applications should be emailed as a .pdf to **twuresearch@twu.edu** by the deadline of January 10, 2026. The application must include the required elements:

- Cover page (1 page)
- Research Plan / Narrative (4 pages)
- References (no page limit)
- Environment/Resources (1 page)
- Support letter from faculty (1 page)

After receipt, the application will be routed by ORSP via Adobe Sign to the faculty PI and co-PIs (if applicable), to certify that he/she agrees to accept responsibility for the scientific conduct and/or carrying out of the project and abide by conditions of the grant as outlined in the guidelines. The application will also be routed for approval to the unit administrators and deans of all investigators.

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Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Student and Faculty Contact Investigator: _____

Score each criterion with an overall impact score using a 9 point Likert scale with 1 being exceptional and 9 being poor. The overall impact score for each criterion should reflect the grant purpose as shown in the [Proposal Submission Guidelines](#).

Impact	Score	Descriptor	Additional Guidance on Strengths/Weaknesses
High	1	Exceptional	Exceptionally strong with essentially no weaknesses
	2	Outstanding	Extremely strong with negligible weaknesses
	3	Excellent	Very strong with only some minor weaknesses
Medium	4	Very Good	Strong but with numerous minor weaknesses
	5	Good	Strong but with at least one moderate weakness
	6	Satisfactory	Some strengths but also some moderate weaknesses
Low	7	Fair	Some strengths but with at least one major weakness
	8	Marginal	A few strengths and a few major weaknesses
	9	Poor	Very few strengths and numerous major weaknesses

Criteria	Score (1-9)
Student and faculty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does the research demonstrate interest in interdisciplinary research at the intersection of multiple sciences? ▪ Does student clearly state availability to commit a specified number of hours per week over the project duration? ▪ Is the faculty willing to engage in collaborative, cross-disciplinary work? 	
Specific aim <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does the specific aim clearly outline the main research questions, hypothesis, and overall goals? ▪ Does it clearly state the problem or gap in knowledge that your research aims to address? 	
Significance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does the project address an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field? 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge or technical capability be improved? ▪ How will successful completion of the aims change the concepts, methods, technologies, or services that drive this field? 	
Innovation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does the application challenge and seek to shift current research by utilizing novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, or instrumentation? ▪ Are the concepts, approaches or methodologies, or instrumentation to one field of research or novel in a broad sense? ▪ Is a refinement, improvement, or new application of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, or instrumentation proposed? 	
Approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are all methods clearly documented? ▪ Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? ▪ Are potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success presented? 	
Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do the outcomes clearly address what hope to achieve? ▪ Are the outcomes align with the problem statement? ▪ Are the outcomes realistic given the resources and timeframe? 	
Environment / Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has the location and setting of the study been identified? Is this space adequate for the research study? ▪ Are the equipment and other physical resources needed already in place to the investigators and are they adequate for the project proposed? 	

OVERALL RATING on a scale of 1-9 using the scale below

Highly recommend for funding (1-3)

Recommend for funding (4-6)

Do not recommend funding (7-9)

Evaluator: _____