

# *Primer* Award

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## PROBe program, stage I

### **2021/2022 GUIDEBOOK** **Table of Contents**

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## Overview

The *Primer* Research program was created by the University of South Carolina Aiken INBRE program to enrich the academic experience of USC Aiken undergraduates in biomedical disciplines. It represents stage I of the Passport to Research Opportunities in Biomedicine (PROBe) program. By providing access to faculty mentoring relationships and a professional research experience, PROBe enables students to creatively explore their interests in biomedical research at a more in-depth level than can be attained in the classroom. All students performing biomedical-related research are eligible to apply for funding through the PROBe *Primer* award program, but it is designed to help students in their first year of research.

Each *Primer* Award will be funded for up to \$2000 to fund his or her research project. Competition for this award will be through submission of a research project proposal developed in collaboration with a USC Aiken faculty mentor. Selection is based on the project's educational and intellectual merit, the potential impact of the project, and the student's previous academic success.

The PROBe program is administered through the USC Aiken Center for Research Excellence ([www.usca.edu/center-for-research-excellence](http://www.usca.edu/center-for-research-excellence)).

There will be a call for proposals each fall semester, with applications **DUE 19 November 2021**. Awards will be announced in December and have a start date of January 1. Funds can be spent through the end of August 31.

## Eligibility

Student eligibility:

- Area of interest: Biochemistry, Developmental Biology, Genetics, Immunology, Neuroscience, or other biomedical area with prior approval by PROBe committee
- any academic year (primarily freshman and sophomores)
- undergraduates ONLY
- minimum GPA of 3.0
- good standing with the University (no academic or judicial probation)
- cannot concurrently hold a Magellan or *Extension* award

Mentor requirements:

- USC Aiken faculty member
- The involvement of multiple mentors is encouraged when additional expertise is valuable or appropriate for the project.

Acceptable projects include:

- mentor-designed projects (students can work directly on a mentor's project and do not have to provide a separate question/topic)
- student generated projects or questions
- any combination of the above

## Funds Available

The *Primer* award is \$2000 with a project period of up to 8 months (1 Jan 2022 – 31 Aug 2022).

- *Primer* awards may be used to purchase supplies and student salary for the research project.
- *No cost share or matching funds are required.*
- Materials and supplies purchased through this award remain USCA property (*NOT the student's property*).

- Students may receive credit while receiving a stipend/salary UNLESS this is not allowed by your department
  - check with your department for their policy.
- **Allowable Costs**
  - Undergraduate student salary (including fringe benefits)
  - Project supplies (computer software is permitted but NOT computers or peripherals) – *all purchases remain USC Aiken property*
  - Student travel
- **Unallowable Costs**
  - Faculty or graduate student compensation
  - Tuition for non-research related programs
  - Salary for anyone other than applicant(s)
  - Alcoholic beverages

## Application Process

- Projects can be part of large, on-going research (questions do NOT have to be student generated).
- The student must be the primary author of the proposal but it is expected (and required) to work with his/her mentor during the proposal & budget writing process.
- Proposal or project description
  - Centered at top of first page, include your project title. Under title: student's full name, major, mentor's name, and department.
  - Page Limitations: May not exceed one (1)** single-spaced page. References may be on an additional page and are not included in the page limit.
  - Format:** Use a readable font (Arial, Helvetica, Times New Roman, etc) and a font size of 11 points or larger with 0.5 inch margin (top, bottom, left, and right).
  - A clear, concise description of the proposed project, including the following required sections, section titles required; the following order is suggested but may be altered for narrative flow:
    - Research question or statement
    - Project description
    - Project Impact (including how the project is connected to student's academic, personal, or professional goals)
    - References cited (OR Works cited, Bibliography, etc) (*Not included in page limit; can be an extra page*)
- Budget Form
  - Amount Requested must be \$2000 or less.
- To complete and submit proposal:

NOTE: Do NOT scan your proposal

  - Create **ONE** Word or PDF file named after the student, as follows: "Last Name\_First Initial".
  - Go to <https://www.usca.edu/center-for-research-excellence/research-funding/inbre-probe>
  - Open and complete the application form and upload proposal file.

**ONCE AWARDED:*****Primer Award recipients are required to***

- 1) Present results at USC Aikens's Scholar Showcase (April)
- 2) Attend Summer Scholars Institute weekly meetings (May-July)
- 3) Present results at USC Aiken Summer Scholars Institute Symposium (July)

**FOR MENTORS**

- 1) Please email William Jackson ([billj@usca.edu](mailto:billj@usca.edu)), April DeLaurier ([aprild@usca.edu](mailto:aprild@usca.edu)), or Nathan Hancock ([nathanh@usca.edu](mailto:nathanh@usca.edu)) if you have any questions.
- 2) *Primer* proposals are not submitted or managed through USCeRA
- 3) Awards will be made available to the student through existing departmental/school accounts.
- 4) **Mentors are strongly encouraged to participate in Summer INBRE weekly meetings.** If mentors or mentees do not participate in summer activities that lab may not be eligible for future INBRE funding.

**Faculty Steps for successful submission of the *Primer* proposal:**

- 1) Although your input is expected, please refrain from writing the proposal for the student. It is unfair to those faculty mentors who do require their student to write his/her own proposal.
- 2) Proposal submission will be through the Center for Research Excellence website (see link above). The completed proposal should be attached as a single Word or PDF document.
  - The document should contain:
    - i. Student's project description
    - ii. Budget Form
  - This document should be named: Student last name\_first initial: Doe\_J; for groups: Doe\_Smith\_Jones
  - Please do not scan. Proposals are acceptable in Word.
- 3) Once received, both you and the student will receive a confirming email.

**Projects involving vertebrate animals, human subjects, or biohazards****For research projects involving vertebrate animals:**

- *Primer* proposals may be submitted prior to approval by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC).
- Include a statement within your project description/timeline that you are submitting for IACUC approval and will comply with all rules, regulations, and training requirements.
- NOTE: Projects involving animals must maintain compliance with regulations at all times or funding will be revoked.
- For more information, mentors may contact the Chair of the USC Aiken IACUC: Dr. April DeLaurier ([aprild@usca.edu](mailto:aprild@usca.edu))

**Beginning September 1, 2021, SC INBRE will no longer support research involving human subjects.**

Due to the difficulties in obtaining NIH approval for research involving human subjects and the extended time to obtain this approval, SC INBRE has determined that it will no longer provide short-term funding for research involving human subjects. This determination affects all USC Aiken INBRE funded projects.

**For research projects involving biohazardous material:** USC Aiken is required to follow strict state and federal guidelines related to the use of biohazardous materials. Student proposing the use of biohazardous materials must receive training prior to initiating the project. Contact William Jackson ([billj@usca.edu](mailto:billj@usca.edu)) to arrange a training session.

Faculty working with biologically regulated materials must have a protocol approved by the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC). This includes all work with recombinant DNA, cell lines, and regulated plants. For more information about this requirement, contact William Jackson ([billj@usca.edu](mailto:billj@usca.edu)).

**For each of these situations, the student/mentor must have the appropriate approvals before funding will be made available.**

## Application Review Process

Applications from eligible students that are complete and responsive to these guidelines will be evaluated for merit by the Review committee. The Review committee will provide a prioritized list of recommendations for funding to the Center for Research Excellence, based on the quality of the proposals per the review criteria. Awards will be made based on review committee recommendations and available funds.

The following criteria will be used to assess proposals (a copy of the review rubric can be found on the PROBE webpage):

- Overall merit
- Student's clarity of explanation
  - Research topic or question
  - Project plan or how the question is to be answered
  - Significance or impact of project
  - Writing style

**Applicants and mentors will be notified via e-mail of award decisions. See webpage for announcement date.**

## Award Administration

*Primer* awardees are **required** to:

- 1) Present results at USC Aiken's Scholar Showcase (April)
  - 2) Attend Summer Scholars Institute weekly workshops (May-July)
  - 3) Present results at USC Aiken's Summer Scholars Institute Symposium (July)
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- Expenditures –Established University procedures must be followed in expending project funds. Special attention should be paid to policies and procedures relating to Purchasing, Travel, and Personnel. Compensation (of any form) for faculty and graduate students is not allowed. **All grant overages are the mentor's responsibility.**
  - Compliance Issues - If the project includes the use of biologically regulated materials or vertebrate animals, the faculty member is responsible for ensuring IBC or IACUC approval (see pages 3-4). The faculty member is responsible for compliance with University, state and federal requirements relating to their work. Students proposing the use of biohazardous materials must receive training prior to initiating the project. Contact William Jackson ([billj@usca.edu](mailto:billj@usca.edu)) to arrange a training session.
  - Publications and Presentations - Any publications or presentations produced as a result of this award must contain an acknowledgment of USC's support such as: "This project was supported by grant P20GM103499 (SC INBRE) from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, National Institutes of Health."