



MRS University Chapter Special Project Awards

mrs.org/chapters-special-projects-program

The Materials Research Society (MRS) University Chapters Program is a network of students from universities around the world that fosters an environment of collaboration and open exchange of ideas across all scientific disciplines.

Each year, MRS offers current University Chapters an opportunity to organize community events that broaden awareness of materials science education by way of the University Chapter Special Projects Program. Grant funding is dedicated to supporting projects proposed by Chapters, and projects are evaluated against the following criteria:

- New initiatives rather than a continuation or expansion of a present activity.
- Project addresses a well-defined need.
- Deliverables are clearly stated with desired outcome.
- Timeline and plan for successful completion are clear and realistic.
- Funding request and proposed budget are reasonable.
- Deliverables are potentially useful to other University Chapters or to MRS in general.

The Chapter must be active and in good standing. Funding ranges from USD\$250–\$1,000 per project. The following are Chapters that have received University Chapter Special Projects Grants in 2021.

Scientist's Show and Tell: A Science Communication Workshop & Competition

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

The MRS University Chapter at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill received a grant to host a four-part science communication workshop series and competition for graduate students in the fields of materials science, chemistry, and physics.

Throughout this program, graduate students will gain experience communicating their research to an audience from different scientific backgrounds and learn critical skills for job interviews, fellowship applications, and outreach events. Experts in the field of science communication will be invited to present on the following four topics:

Part 1: Communicating science to a broad audience

Part 2: Crafting an engaging elevator pitch

Part 3: Designing an effective graphical abstract

Part 4: Peer review workshop.

The workshop series will culminate with a competition where students can enter their work in one or two categories: elevator pitches or graphical abstracts. These entries will be judged by hosts of the workshop and faculty members in materials science. Students and faculty in the chemistry, materials, and physics departments will also have the opportunity to vote for the best submissions in each category, with prizes being awarded to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place.

High School Materials Research Day

The University of Texas at El Paso

The MRS University Chapter at The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), a major Hispanic-serving institute, will organize the High School Materials Research Day event. This one-day workshop will invite high school students from traditionally underrepresented minorities to UTEP to experience hands-on science activities, participate in laboratory tours, and interact with current graduate students in physics and materials-related fields. The program will provide students with information about possible research opportunities at UTEP and other universities in the area, and will include a relaxed discussion about the questions and concerns students have about materials science education.

To obtain funding for University Chapters Special Projects Grants, a written proposal must be prepared and submitted to MRS by students of the chapters and should include:

- A description of the project and its value to further materials science education
- A cost estimate
- An estimated time of completion
- A clear description of the deliverable.

The deadline for submitting a special projects proposal is December 15 of each year and should be submitted electronically to foundation.mrs.org. Upon review of the proposals by the University Chapter Special Projects Review Group, an announcement of selected projects will be made by the end of January the following year. □