



Impact Report

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From the *Executive Officer*

As we look back on 2025, I'm struck most by the strength of our community. Your commitment to one another, to your students, and to the practice of undergraduate research. In a year marked by rapid change across higher education, you continued to show up with generosity, curiosity, and determination. CUR's progress this year is a direct reflection of that collective spirit.

KEY CELEBRATIONS

This year, **we launched CUR Twenty30**, our new strategic plan that positions us to support the community well into the future. Guided by foresight and energized by your feedback, the plan centers on the needs of our members, the evolving realities of campuses, and the opportunities ahead for undergraduate research. CUR Twenty30 gives us a clear path forward, which is ambitious, responsive, and grounded in the values that define this community.

2025 also marked **the launch of our badged, on-demand content**, expanding access to flexible, high-quality learning opportunities for mentors and program leads. We deepened our partnerships across the higher education association landscape, strengthening collaborations that amplify the role of UR in student success and institutional resilience.

Our federal advocacy efforts expanded significantly this year. CUR introduced a new send-a-letter tool that makes it easier than ever for the community to engage with policymakers.

More members participated in advocacy than ever before, demonstrating the power of a unified community speaking on behalf of undergraduate research.

Volunteer engagement grew as well, with more accessible roles and clearer pathways for involvement across content review, working groups and new initiatives. Your willingness to give your time, expertise, and energy is one of CUR's greatest strengths.

Amid a year of transition, competing demands, and rapid change across your institutions, **you continued to support one another and the students who depend on this work.**

Moments like these highlight just how essential community truly is. In 2025, we were reminded of the power of encouragement, generosity, and grace, all qualities this community consistently offers as we navigate a shifting landscape together.



LINDSAY CURRIE, CAE
CUR EXECUTIVE OFFICER

MISSION

CUR is the premier community of higher education professionals advancing excellence in undergraduate research.

VISION

Through the transformative power of research, all undergraduates will be empowered to tackle complex challenges for better lives and a better future.

CUR TWENTY30

The plan to guide the undergraduate research community forward with three main goals:

- Empowering the Undergraduate Research Community
- Driving Excellence + Innovation in Undergraduate Research
- Elevating Undergraduate Research

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The background of the page is a photograph of a woman with dark hair, wearing a blue polka-dot shirt and a blue lanyard, speaking into a silver microphone. She is smiling and looking down at a smartphone in her left hand. Another woman with long brown hair is visible in the background, also smiling. The image has a dark, semi-transparent overlay.

EMPOWERING *The Community*

National Office Staff



Lindsay Currie
Executive Officer*



Natalie Jones
Senior Manager,
Customer Experience



Heather Wakefield
Senior Director,
Community + Learning



Todd Waggoner
Lead Manager,
Content Engagement



Pam Dodge
Director, Organizational +
Governance Operations



Jodi Wilson
Coordinator, Customer
Experience



Elizabeth Moris
Director, Brand
Engagement



Tori Meador
Coordinator,
Community + Learning

Board of Directors

*Also a member of the Board of Directors



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President
Valdosta State
University



Karen Resendes
President-Elect
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Maria Iacullo-Bird
Immediate Past
President
Pace University



Linda Blockus
Treasurer
University of Missouri
– Columbia



John Barthell
University of Central
Oklahoma



Sean Fox
Carleton College



Lance Barton
University of North
Carolina at Charlotte



Eric Hall
Elon University



Winnie Dong
California State
Polytechnic University
– Pomona



Sarah Johnson
Moravian University



Lourdes Echegoyen
University of Texas at
El Paso



Haseeb Kazi
Trine University



Tim Raines
Raines Consulting, LLC

Elected Leadership



26

Councilors



221

Division Representatives



13

Divisions



112

Collaboration Group Members

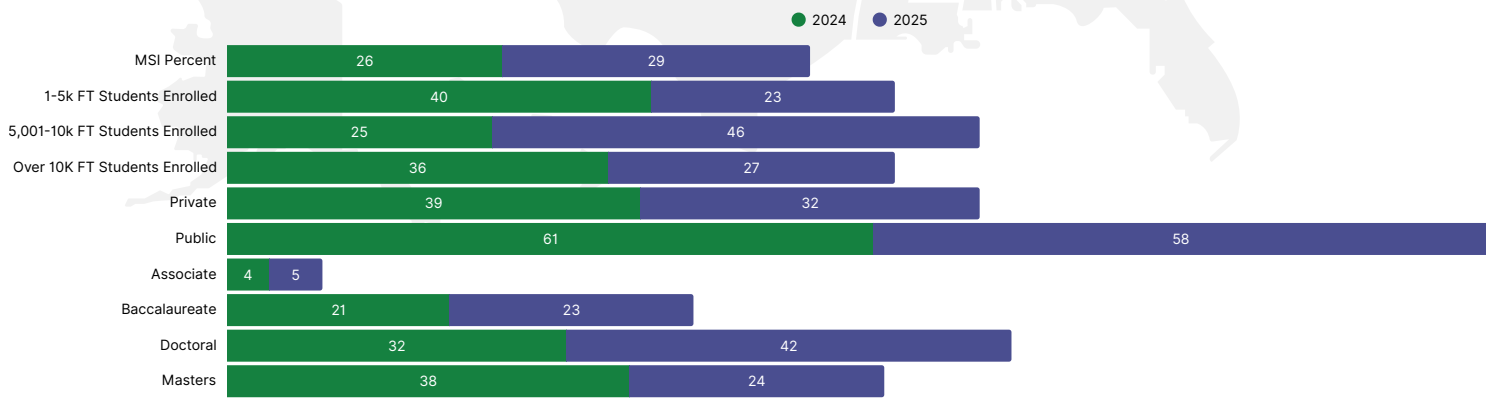
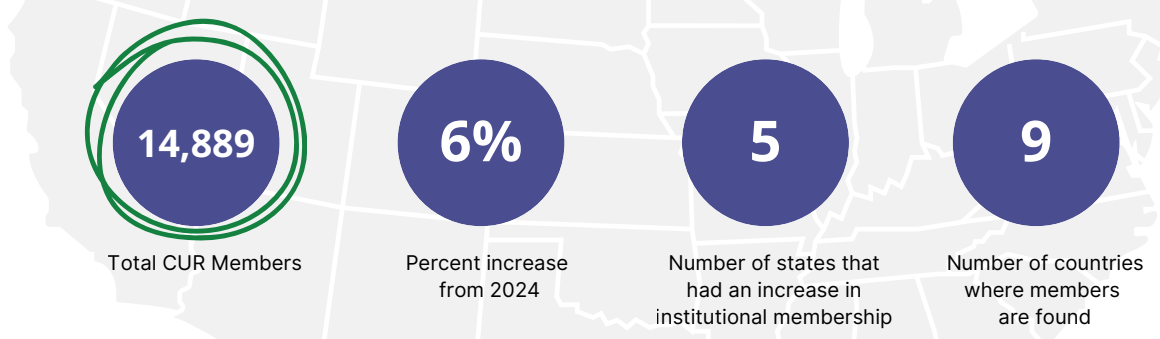
Committees

Executive
Compensation
Finance
Nominations and Leadership Development (NLDC)
SPUR Editorial Board
Arts + Humanities Faculty Mentor Award
CUR Campus-Wide Award for Undergraduate
Research Accomplishments (AURA)
CUR Fellows Award for Excellence in UR
Leadership
CUR-Goldwater Scholars Faculty Mentor Award
Silvia Ronco Innovative Mentor Award

Advisory + Working Group

Empowering the UR Community
Driving Excellence and Innovation in UR
Elevating UR
Advocacy + Ambassador
Broadening Participation
Foresight Guidance + Resource Development
Annual Conference Knowledge + Community
Building
Career Readiness Resource Development
Student Scholarship + Presentation
Characteristics of Excellence

CUR's members are higher education professionals dedicated to supporting undergraduate research. CUR supports undergraduate students through their institutions while broadening opportunities for its constituents through relationships with higher education, disciplinary organizations, government agencies, and industry partners.



*ALL ABOVE ARE PERCENTAGES REPRESENTED BY SELF REPORTED PROFILE DATA



Online Community Engagement

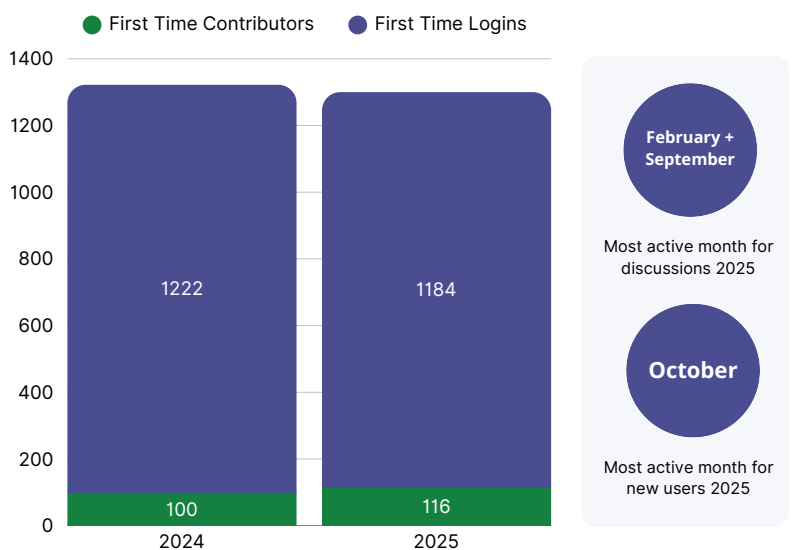


Photo: ConnectUR 2025 Attendees (Left) Korine Wawrzynski, Michigan State University + Donna Chamely-Wiik, Florida Atlantic University

DRIVING EXCELLENCE + INNOVATION IN *undergraduate research*

Event Statistics

Participants
6152 ↑ **6%**

Speakers
260

Event Volunteers
973 ↑ **18%**

NCUR Attendance
4740 ↑ **19.2%**

Virtual Events
31 ↑ **55%**

Event Plenaries

ConnectUR Online

The Evolving Landscape of Undergraduate Research | James LaPlant, Aaron Brown, Steven Dandaneau, Elizabeth Paul, and Dawn Whitehead

ConnectUR

A Researcher Development Framework to Guide Undergraduate Research Program Design and Assessment | Janet Branchaw

ConnectUR

Can GenAI Really Improve Their Research and Writing Skills? Cautions and Opportunities for Faculty Members and Undergraduate Researchers | Antonio Byrd

ConnectUR

The Power of Undergraduate Research: Alumni Innovating for a Better World | Jennifer Drake, Nkrumah Grant, Landon Hughes, Delia Fernandez

NCUR 2025

Bring It On: Embracing Challenges in the World of High Achievers | Kevin Wildenhaus

NCUR 2025

Where Science Meets Art: Simulating Hair for Animated Films | Hayley Iben

New Content Releases



On Demand Courses

To meet the growing need for flexible, impactful, self-paced learning, CUR developed and released in July 2025, two on-demand courses providing strategies and expert insights into Assessment and Funding.



Where Career Readiness + UR Intersect Booklet

Thanks to the Career Readiness Working Group, a detailed understanding of the powerful framework that connects research experiences to the top competencies employers and graduate schools seek was created as a member-only benefit and released in December 2025.



Connecting the Dots to COEUR 2.0

After the August 2024 release of COEUR 2.0, CUR updated its website to add dedicated pages for each characteristic, outlining related resources, events, and guidance.

Scholarship + Practice of Undergraduate Research

Journal

8.2 Winter released March 2025

This issue of SPUR explores a wide range of topics including mentoring, science identity, career readiness development, and hands-on activities to increase undergraduate research positivity.

8.3 Spring released July 2025

The theme of this issue is Vertically Integrated Projects (VIP). This innovative team-based approach incorporates various year levels in large-scale, long-term, multi-disciplinary research teams.

8.4 Summer released September 2025

For this issue, we invited undergraduate research professionals to share their perspectives, insights, and best practices on mentorship across diverse academic settings.



Best 2025 Article

How Research and Mentorship Shape STEM Paths for Community College Students by Stephanie K. Ramos, Randy Bell

*9.1 Fall released November 2025

This issue explores a broad array of timely and thought-provoking topics centered on the responsible and ethical conduct of undergraduate research.

**Top performing article with over 200 downloads*

86

Total Authors

Recognition + *Awards*

22

Total Awards

53

Total Recipients

Organizational Awardees

Campus-Wide Award for Undergraduate Research

Accomplishments (AURA) recognizes higher education institutions that have devised exemplary programs to provide high-quality research experiences.



Faculty + Mentor Awards

The **Arts and Humanities Faculty Mentor Award** illuminates exceptional mentorship of UR by faculty in the arts and humanities.



Olivia Carr Edenfield, PhD
Georgia Southern University

The **CUR Fellows Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research Leadership** annually recognizes leaders and role models within the UR community whose careers represent the values and ideals represented in CUR's COEUR.



Ami Ahern-Rindell, PhD
University of Portland



Winny Dong, PhD
California State Polytechnic University - Pomona

The **CUR-Goldwater Scholars Faculty Mentor Award** recognizes faculty mentors who conduct their research in a science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) discipline



Juliane Strauss-Soukup, PhD
Creighton University

The **Silvia Ronco Innovative Mentor Award** recognizes original and insightful research work that has had a significant impact on chemistry and the STEM careers of students involved.



Shainaz Landge, PhD
Georgia Southern University

Student Awards

The **Trimmer Travel Fund Award** supports undergraduate scholars in the arts and humanities who present their research at meetings.



Emily Strickland
Goucher College

The background of the entire page is a high-angle, wide shot of a large, modern exhibition hall. The room has a polished wooden floor with a large, abstract, light-colored pattern. Numerous people, mostly young adults, are scattered throughout the space, engaged in conversations or looking at displays. On the left, a framed poster titled "MOTOR LODGE RESTAURANT KEATING 1900" is visible on the wall. In the center, a black wire mesh display case holds some items. Large windows on the right side of the room offer a view of the outdoors. The overall atmosphere is one of a busy, intellectual gathering.

ELEVATING *undergraduate research*

Advocating for Undergraduate Research

Scholars Transforming through Research (STR) Program

The STR program engages students in the varied stages of the undergraduate research process. Participants learn valuable skills in communicating the impact of their undergraduate research experiences to a variety of audience members and stakeholders.

60

Total Teams
Accepted

54

Institutions
Represented

22

States
Represented

Participants

203 ↑ 39%

Hill Meetings

84



I wanted to personally express my gratitude for the invaluable experience CUR STR provided me. As the sole representative of Purdue University during the Hill Meetings, I initially wasn't sure what kind of impact I could make. However, thanks to the preparation and guidance from your team, I was able to engage meaningfully with the Office of Senator Banks (IN). In fact, I recently had the opportunity to display the research done and talk about the importance of funding at Purdue with Max Engling, the Regional Director from their office, at our Undergraduate Research Expo. Thank you all for giving me the chance to be part of this program and helping me grow into a stronger advocate for undergraduate research.

Mason Martin, Purdue University
STR Class 2024-2025



CUR is actively advocating on behalf of undergraduate research, working across associations and with key stakeholders to protect research opportunities for students and institutions. By engaging policymakers, funders, and higher education leaders, CUR helps position undergraduate research as an essential component of a strong, future-ready education system.

Advocacy Collaborations + Partnerships

- American Association of Colleges and Universities
- American Astronomical Society
- American Institute of Physics
- American Physical Society
- American Psychological Association
- Coalition for National Science Funding
- Committee for Education Funding
- Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain
- National Association of Academies of Science
- National Humanities Alliance
- Research! America
- Science and Technology Action Committee
- STEM Education Coalition
- Vision for American Science & Technology

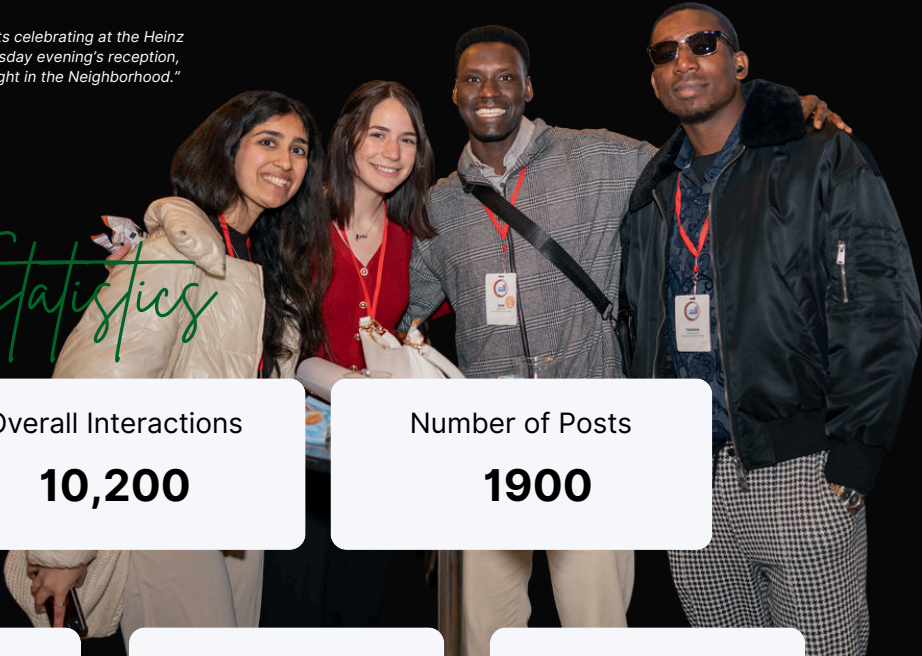
Advocacy Additional Resources

- Monthly Fall STEM Talk: Advocacy Works!
- SPUR 8.3 Championing UR in Uncertain Times
- November Legislative Update: Federal Policy Developments and UR
- November release of a deep dive memo on the Department of Education Executing Six Interagency Agreements
- Updated Advocacy Toolkit to include Career Readiness talking points

Sent Personalized Advocacy Letters

200+





Social Media Statistics

Overall Impressions
348,200

Overall Interactions
10,200

Number of Posts
1900

Followers on Social Media

LinkedIn
3023 ↑ **35%**

Instagram
323
 Launched in March

Twitter/X
2609

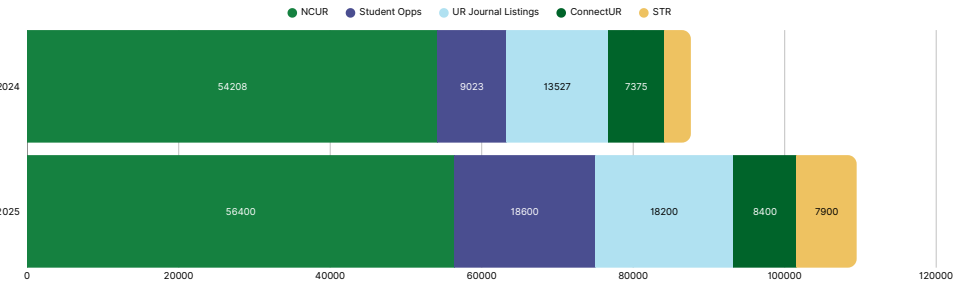
BlueSky
33
 Launched in February

Website Statistics

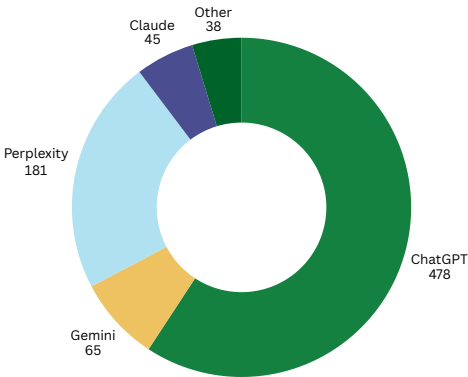
Overall Views
547,595

Overall Users
228,712 ↑ **20%**

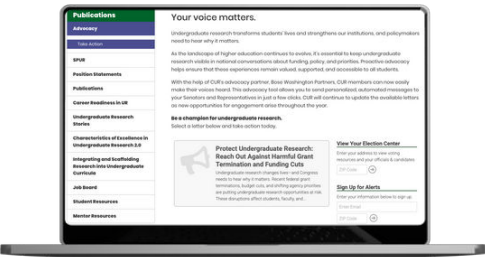
Top Pages Visited



AI Referral Channels



Website Updates



Award Page Restructure
Making it easier to find, apply, and sort when locating CUR's undergraduate research faculty/mentor, student, and organizational awards



Advocacy: Take Action
July release of an automated and personalized writing tool for advocating for undergraduate research



NCUR's Chatbot: NORA
In December, NCUR introduced NORA, an AI-powered chatbot that enables fast, effective responses to questions from prospective and current NCUR stakeholders.

Exhibitors + Sponsors

Sponsors, exhibitors, and partners play a vital role in strengthening CUR events and the broader CUR community by expanding access, innovation, and impact across undergraduate research. Their support helps enhance programs and conferences and creates opportunities for students, faculty, mentors, and institutions to connect with resources beyond their campuses. Sponsors and partners bring valuable expertise, perspectives, and networks that enrich the undergraduate research ecosystem. By collaborating with CUR, they help advance shared goals—supporting student success, fostering mentorship, and promoting discovery—while demonstrating a commitment to the future of higher education. These partnerships create a more vibrant, sustainable community where undergraduate research can thrive. Along with the many advocacy partnerships CUR has, the following are exhibitors who supported undergraduate research in 2025 through exhibiting at a CUR event:

Albany College of Pharmacy + Health Sciences

Alice L. Walton School of Medicine

American University, School of International Service

Arkansas College of Health Education

Auburn University

Baylor College of Medicine

Boise State University

Carlow University

Carnegie Mellon University Programs

Case Western Reserve University Programs

Chatham University

Coltie

Columbia University

Computing Research Association

Des Moines University Medicine + Health Sciences

Drexel University

Duquesne University Programs

East Carolina University, Arthur Graduate School of Business

Emory University

ETS-Educational Testing Service

Florini and Associates

Florida International University, College of Engineering and Computing

ForagerOne

George Mason University Programs

InfoReady

Institute of International Education

Johns Hopkins University -Whiting School of Engineering

Kennesaw State University

La Roche University

Lehigh University - PC Rossin College of Engineering + Applied Science

Marquette University

Mayo Clinic College of Medicine & Science

Medical College of Wisconsin

Michigan Technological University

Missouri University of Science + Technology

Montana Technological University

National Association of Students With A Purpose

National Institute of Allergy + Infectious Diseases

New Jersey Institute of Technology

New Mexico Institute of Mining + Technology

New York University, Tandon School of Engineering

North Carolina State University

North Dakota State University

Northern Michigan University

Northwestern University Programs

Nova Southeastern University

Penn State Health

Pittsburgh Council on Higher Education

Point Park University

Princeton University

Purdue University Programs

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Rice University

Robert Morris University

Rosalind Franklin University

Sage Campus

Salisbury University

School of International Training World Learning

SENS Research Foundation

Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Society

Southern California Institute of Architecture

Southern Methodist University

Texas Tech University

The Ohio State University, College of Social Work

The Pittsburgh Robotic Network

The University of Alabama

University of Albany - State University of NY

University of Alabama - Birmingham

University of California - Los Angeles

University of California-Merced

University of Central Florida

University of Chicago Programs

University of Florida Programs

University of Iowa - Medical Scientist Training Program

University of Kentucky

University of Miami Programs

University of Minnesota - Medical School + College of Biological Sciences

University of Minnesota - Minneapolis

University of Minnesota - Duluth

University of Nebraska at Omaha

University of Nebraska Medical Center

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

University of Notre Dame

University of Pittsburgh Programs

University of Rochester

University of Texas at Arlington

University of Texas at Dallas

University of Texas Health San Antonio

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

University of Wisconsin - Madison

University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee

University of Wisconsin - Stout

Van Andel Institute Graduate School

Vanderbilt University

Virginia Polytechnic Institute + State University Programs

Washington University in St. Louis Programs

West Virginia University

Wichita State University

Winston-Salem State University

**Green and bold acknowledges a higher sponsorship or exhibitor status*

Total NCUR Exhibitors

120 ↑ **27%**

Total Sponsors

8 ↑ **33%**



Looking forward to 2026

As 2026 continues, CUR looks forward to sustained growth across all areas of its Twenty30 strategic plan. The following milestones highlight what's ahead:

Revamped Dialogues

With a new partnership with the National Grants and Management Association, CUR will host its newly revamped Grant Dialogues two-day virtual meeting in February 2026.

NCUR Chat, NORA

The December release of NORA, the NCUR Online Research Assistant, provided great insight into questions that our community had. With additional support, CUR hopes to continue to make revisions and improve the implementation for future use.

Mentor Working Group

Led by a charge from our CUR President, James LaPlant, CUR has put out a call for a highly anticipated mentor working group. Those selected out of the 80+ applications received will begin their charge in 2026.

New Fellows Award Criteria

Following the release of updated Fellows Award criteria, CUR will name the first cohort of Fellows under the revised framework in 2026.

Extended On-Demand Education Courses

The July release of two on-demand courses showed the excessive need for flexibility and self-paced education. In 2026, CUR plans on releasing additional on-demand education courses.

Revised Award Timelines

As the award process continues to recognize the amazing contributions that our members are providing to the undergraduate research community, CUR looks forward to streamlining and simplifying the process for user friendliness.



#CURINACTION
CUR@CUR.ORG

