The 2022-2023 UCLA La Kretz Center & Stunt Ranch Reserve Research Awards

Call for Research Proposals

The UCLA La Kretz Center for California Conservation Science and the UC Natural Reserve System (UC NRS) Stunt Ranch Santa Monica Mountains Reserve are pleased to announce our joint annual call for research proposals. We invite undergraduate student, graduate student, and postdoctoral researchers in all areas of ecology, evolution, conservation, and environmental sciences to apply. We are particularly interested in projects that address questions related to environmental, ecological, evolutionary, and/or conservation science in California. **This year, we are also emphasizing undergraduate-led projects that comprise collaborative projects between faculty and UCLA students. These may include a team of undergraduates working together, and up to a total of $4,000 in student summer support.**

To be competitive, proposals must have clear research objectives that demonstrate the project will provide impactful outcomes, particularly for conservation-relevant projects. The maximum budget is $6,000, with the possibility for continued funding in future years. We anticipate funding 6-8 projects ranging from $500 to $6,000. Projects with matching support from PIs are encouraged, but not required.

Our joint funding is derived from two sources. The La Kretz Center's core mission is to preserve California's biodiversity and ecosystems by supporting field and laboratory-based research that addresses questions with direct management outcomes for conservation. Although we do not limit the geographic scope or academic discipline of the work, we are particularly interested in projects that are centered on Southern California's environmental, ecological, and conservation problems and their solutions.

We also seek research proposals conducted at the UC NRS Stunt Ranch Reserve. Stunt is a 310-acre property located in the heart of the Santa Monica Mountains ~ 25 miles from UCLA, adjacent to the Cold Creek Preserve. Stunt Ranch offers opportunities for a wide variety of short and long term research projects in an ecologically pristine site. Chaparral and riparian ecosystems comprise the dominant ecosystems on the Reserve. Cold Creek seasonally flows through the Reserve.

To learn more about Stunt Ranch, including currently funded projects, please visit http://stuntranch.ucnrs.org/. To learn more about the La Kretz Center, visit https://www.ioes.ucla.edu/lakretz/. For additional information or questions, feel free to email Brad Shaffer (Brad.Shaffer@ucla.edu) or David Blake (dblake0405@g.ucla.edu).

To apply for this funding opportunity, you must include all of the following:

1) A research proposal that includes (i) the fundamental problem to be addressed, (ii) the proposed methods, including how you will maintain safe working conditions, (iii) the expected data and results, (iv) the broader impacts of the work, and (v) a budget with justification. Items (i-iv) should be no more than three pages, singled-spaced, including figures and literature cited. Item (v) should be a separate document and may include funding for mileage and modest stipends to hire UCLA undergraduate research assistants.

2) Your current CV

3) A brief letter of recommendation from your thesis/undergraduate advisor explaining why this work is timely, how it is impactful, their support (financial and otherwise) for the project, and why the requested support is necessary. For projects that span multiple undergraduates working across labs, please include a letter from each relevant faculty mentor.

4) Materials for the La Kretz Center's Website. This includes an image of yourself, an image related to your project, a short bio, and a short project description (each roughly 100 words). **Do not embed images in documents. Please send them as individual files. Your application will be considered incomplete without these materials.**

5) Previous awardees may apply for further support but must provide a description of work accomplished under their previous support (250 words max, separate document), including presentations and publications recognizing prior support. **Failure to provide this information will render your application incomplete.**

All application materials, including letters of reference must be received by 11:55 PM on Sunday, 11 December, 2022. Applicants should merge all documents except their letter of recommendation into a single PDF and email a compressed file with images included to lakretz@ioes.ucla.edu. Advisors should send their letters of support to the same address. Any questions, please contact Brad Shaffer (brad.shaffer@ucla.edu) or David Blake (dblake0405@g.ucla.edu).