An overview of research funding at Harvard for incoming freshmen

Funding for a range of research opportunities at Harvard College is abundant and broadly based. Each year students receive over $7 million in funding from academic departments, institutional research centers, and offices that support undergraduates across all academic disciplines. These awards are designed to provide financial support to conduct research throughout the academic year and summer term. Students customize their individual research programs, choosing from over sixty funding sources based on their particular area of academic interest and research topic. Students work in close collaboration with faculty members and, in some cases, graduate students and postdocs, in a variety of independent and programmatic research enterprises over the course of the four years.

**Academic Year Funding:** during the academic year, there are at least three distinct ways undergraduate students can receive funding to support research endeavors:

- The Harvard College Research Program (HCRP) provides term-time and summer grants to enable students to receive funding for independent research in close collaboration with a faculty member. The average term-time grant is $1,000 and summer awards are considerably greater (see below); these awards allow some students to avoid getting another term-time job.
- The Faculty Aide Program (FAP) provides a subsidy to the faculty member to assist with the payment of an undergraduate research assistant. Students earn wages over the course of the academic year with funding covered by the Student Employment Office.
- Many academic departments and specific faculty members hire students directly to serve as research assistants. Undergraduate students work anywhere from 3-15 hours a week in such jobs depending on the department.

**Summer Funding:** during the summer term, there are over sixty different sources of funding and support university-wide to enable undergraduates to have a worthwhile research experience. Funding is provided to support students conducting independent research with faculty members around the country, in Cambridge with Harvard faculty, through Summer School opportunities abroad, and through a variety of community-based research groups in Cambridge and Boston:

- Over 20 different international centers support students conducting research in area studies throughout the world.
- Five Cambridge-based research programs (PRISE, BLISS, PRIMO, SHARP and SURGH) allow approximately 190 Harvard College students conduct research in close collaboration with faculty mentors while benefiting from the experience of living in one of Harvard’s Houses and participating in the community of undergraduate research scholars.
- A variety of science funding programs support students working in labs in and around Cambridge.
- HCRP and Herchel Smith programs provide financial support to students conducting independent research around the world.

**Possible Student Funding Options Freshman through Senior Year:**

1. **Freshman Year:** student hired by Government Department to serve as research assistant for Freshman Seminar Professor (student earns $2,000-$3,000 for the year).
2. **Summer Following Freshman Year:** Program in Research in Science and Engineering (PRISE), receives summer room and board within a community of scholars and earns stipend while working in lab of Physics professor; (approximately $8,000, including summer savings).
3. **Sophomore Year:** Faculty Aide Program (FAP) for 2 semesters with Faculty member at Harvard Stem Cell Institute (student receives $3,000).
4. **Summer Following Sophomore Year:** Weismann Fellowship to work for an NGO in Switzerland; fellowship provides all expenses for the summer plus the financial aid summer savings contribution (value roughly $7,500).
5. **Junior Year:** Harvard College Research Program (HCRP) for 2 semesters advised by faculty member to begin early research in preparation for senior thesis ($2,000 for the year).
6. **Summer Following Junior Year:** Weatherhead Center for International Affairs provides a stipend of $6,000 for student to conduct thesis research in South Africa.
7. **Senior Year:** Harvard College Research Program (HCRP) for 1 semester in preparation for senior thesis ($1,000).