



## **VT Center for Autism Research Student Award Program FY2022-2023**

**Purpose:** The program's purpose is to provide support for a graduate or undergraduate student on research that is consistent with the mission of the Virginia Tech Center for Autism Research (VTCAR). Broadly speaking, VTCAR's mission is to "merge science with service" by conducting research from multiple disciplinary perspectives on the causes, consequences, and treatment of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and related conditions. This may also include research on typical development to the extent that it helps inform atypical development in autism or other disabilities. For more information on VTCAR, see [www.vtcar.science.vt.edu](http://www.vtcar.science.vt.edu). The VTCAR Student Awardee will have the option of presenting their project at the upcoming biennial VTCAR conference or another VTCAR event.

**Eligibility:** Graduate or undergraduate students working with a VTCAR faculty affiliate are eligible to apply. It is intended that the student (or students) and the associated VTCAR faculty affiliate will apply as a team. The award money is to be used for research on ASD and related conditions or disabilities.

**Funding amount:** VTCAR can offer up to \$500 for the 2022-23 fiscal year. **All funds awarded must be spent by the end of fiscal year 2023.**

**Use of funds:** Funds can be used for a wide variety of purposes, including, but not limited to the following

- To pay for a graduate or undergraduate student on an hourly wage to conduct a literature review for a grant proposal, conduct portions of a project, organize or analyze data, etc.
- To provide participant incentives for a research project
- To purchase supplies or equipment needed to complete a project
- For student travel to present the project at a relevant conference
- For student training

### **Submission and review process**

- Proposals should be submitted as PDF documents by email to Angela Scarpa at [ascarpa@vt.edu](mailto:ascarpa@vt.edu) and should not exceed two pages (see instructions below).
- Proposals must be received by **5:00 PM on Sept 30, 2022.**
- A small group of 2-3 VTCAR faculty not involved in any proposals will review the proposals based on the criteria below and make a recommendation to the VTCAR director.
- Results will be announced by end of day on **October 14, 2022 with funding to be available beginning soon thereafter. Funds must be used by June 15, 2023, in accordance with your departmental guidelines.**
- A final brief report (no more than 2 pages) of the project will be due on **July 31, 2023** that includes an abstract of the project, how the funds were used, plans for future external funding, and any product outcome (e.g., thesis, dissertation, poster, presentation, paper, etc.).

### **Application Instructions**

- Proposal: Faculty/student team should submit a proposal of no more than 2 pages (Arial, 11 pt. font, single-spaced). A coversheet and references should be included but are not counted in the 2-page limit.
- The coversheet should include the following information:
  - Name and email addresses of **both** student/s and faculty mentor on the proposed research effort
  - Title of the proposed research effort
- The proposal document should contain the following information:

- Brief overview of the proposed research effort: background, need, impact, research questions, approach
- Statement of the research effort's relevance to the mission of VTCAR
- Plans for seeking external funding: target program, approximate amount
- Requested support amount for the current proposed research effort
- How funding will be used, along with a plan to spend funds by **June 15, 2023** (NOTE: Funds will be transferred from a VTCAR operating account to an account in the faculty affiliate's department or institute. We advise that you consult with the financial person in your department/institute BEFORE SUBMITTING THIS APPLICATION to determine specific guidelines for spending funds in that operating account by the end of fiscal year 2023.)
- Address whether the research falls under an already funded project, and if so, please explain why funding cannot come from the funded project.

### Review Criteria:

- Relevance to the mission of VTCAR to merge science with service by fostering research from multiple perspectives on the causes, consequences, or treatment of ASD and related conditions. Priority will be given to research that strengthens VTCAR's work in the areas of biomedical research, clinical translational research, technology research, or education research, though other areas may be considered.
- Prospects for future external funding
- Quality and feasibility of the plan for making use of the funding and plan to spend funding by June 15, 2023
- Quality of the research approach

### Expectations:

- It is expected that funding from VTCAR will be acknowledged for products coming out of this project, such as conference posters/presentations, papers, and grant proposals. Contact [ascarpa@vt.edu](mailto:ascarpa@vt.edu) for appropriate VTCAR logo.
- It is expected that funds will be spent within the 2022-23 fiscal year, according to guidelines provided by the faculty affiliate's department or institute.
- It is expected that a brief 2-page project report (including abstract and use of funds for the project) will be provided to the VTCAR director by **July 31, 2023**. Email reports to Angela Scarpa at [ascarpa@vt.edu](mailto:ascarpa@vt.edu).

### FAQ:

- *Who hires the student?* The faculty member does; VTCAR just provides the funding.
- *How many awards will there be?* We are able to fund one award, up to \$500.
- *How is the amount of the award decided?* This will be decided by the director depending upon the funds available, the amount requested, the plan for spending, and the quality of the proposal.
- *Does the student award come with tuition?* No. Student wages would only be for work performed.
- *Are fringe benefits included for student stipends or wages?* If a student is being paid, consult with the department/institute's financial person before submitting the application. In most cases, if fringes are allowed, the funding amount requested will need to include fringes within the total budget.
- *Can I submit more than one proposal?* Yes.
- *Do all team members need to be VTCAR members?* The primary faculty mentor for the project has to be a VTCAR faculty affiliate.
- *Can funding be used for travel?* Yes, but only for students to allow them to present the project at a relevant conference, within the funding period, and with acknowledgement of VTCAR as a funding source on the presentation. Funding may also be used for travel for training purposes.
- *Can funding be used for participant incentives or gift cards?* Yes, but only if given to participants before **June 10, 2023** and a receipt is obtained from the participant by that time.
- *Can students be funded if they received a VTCAR award in the past?* Yes, as long as funding does not overlap with the prior project and is justified for a new project or new activities. If the research falls under an already funded project, explain why funding cannot come from the funded project