

## PRESIDENTS' COMMISSION SCHOLARS PROGRAM 2025 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

[www.calstate.edu/csubiotech](http://www.calstate.edu/csubiotech)

### Important Dates:

RFP Release Date: November 20, 2024  
Proposal Due Date: February 10, 2025 by 5:00 pm  
Award Notification: April 2025  
Maximum Award: \$8,000  
Project Duration: Summer 2025 (all work and reporting must be completed by October 1, 2025)

### Program Description:

The California State University Program for Education and Research in Biotechnology (CSUBIOTECH) recognizes that research experience is critical to engaging and graduating students interested in biotechnology careers. The focus of this program is to increase the number of lower-division undergraduate students who have access to a full-time research experience. The Presidents' Commission Scholars program aims to support up to 11 CSU undergraduate scholars during Summer 2025. Students will conduct biotechnology-related laboratory-, field-, clinic- or community-based research for the first time. Sponsoring faculty mentors will receive funding to support their research program.

### Review Criteria:

- Feasibility and transformative nature of the research project plan. The proposed project must be an original, faculty-mentored student research project. Literature reviews are not acceptable.
- CSU faculty mentor's commitment to the project and the student's success.
- All things being equal, CSUBIOTECH may choose to limit the number of Presidents' Commission Scholars in a single laboratory, project or group.

### Program Eligibility and Application Requirements:

- **Have no prior industry, community college or university level research experience, including previous or existing funding, support, or academic credit received for a research experience** (examples include but are not limited to Howell-CSUBIOTECH Scholars, NSF REU, HHMI, NIH MARC, etc.). CSUBIOTECH views lab volunteers and work-study students as engaged members of a research group; this program is designed to engage students in a research experience for the first time.
- The President's Commission Scholars Program is open to **first-year or second-year CSU students** and **first-year incoming transfer students** from a non-four-year institution. Students must be in good

standing at the time the proposal is submitted on February 10, 2025 and remain at their CSU campus for at least one additional academic term after the last semester of the research experience.

- CSUBIOTECH follows the CSU Admission Handbook (<https://www.calstate.edu/attend/student-services/Documents/csu-admission-handbook.pdf>) to determine first-year and second-year standing. Students must have fewer than 60 semester or 90 quarter units in order to be eligible. Earned AP credits are not counted toward the maximum unit amount.
- The Faculty-Student team must be able to complete the proposed research project during the Summer 2025 term. Final reports must be submitted by October 1, 2025. It is expected that project completion will require a student's full-time commitment. CSUBIOTECH defines a full-time commitment 30-40 hours per week over 10 weeks.
- The proposed project must be biotechnology-related. CSUBIOTECH defines biotechnology as a fusion of biology and technology. BIO lists biotechnology examples, applications and sectors; CSUBIOTECH explicitly adds to these lists health IT and medical device research and development. CSUBIOTECH welcomes and encourages applications from CSU student-faculty teams in all disciplines related to the current practice of biotechnology, including but not limited to life sciences, physical sciences, clinical sciences, math, computer science, agricultural science, engineering, and/or business (<https://www.bio.org/what-biotechnology>).
- Projects with IRB, IBC, or IACUC requirements must provide proof of campus approval by the time awards are made. CSUBIOTECH will not make awards to projects without IRB, IBC, or IACUC registrations or approvals by the time the faculty/student team begin to start work on the project.
- Applicants should use the 2025 proposal template and complete all sections of the InfoReady application (<https://csuperb.infoready4.com/CompetitionSpace/#>). Failure to follow style and length instructions in the template may result in proposal rejection during administrative review.

#### **Funds Administration:**

Award amount is \$8000. Please note that indirect costs are not allowed.

\$6000 of the award will be provided as a student scholarship that may be used for living expenses, tuition, fees, books or other allowable academic expenses as defined by the student's campus office of financial aid/scholarship. Timing for the release of scholarship funds is determined exclusively by the student's campus office of financial aid/scholarship and applicants are encouraged to discuss this with their office prior to submitting their application.

\$2000 of the award can support the faculty mentor's research program. Faculty mentors intending instead to use the funds to directly support the student and/or their individual project must notify CSUBIOTECH immediately upon receipt of the award notification. This additional support may be considered by the campus office of financial aid as a portion of the student's scholarship.

Student applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with their campus financial aid office prior to applying to determine the potential impact of awards and grants on financial support provided through their university, especially financial aid packages. Awards paid directly to students will be processed through campus financial aid offices. Please be advised that receiving and accepting a CSUBIOTECH award could lead to a decrease in other forms of financial assistance. Ordinarily, financial aid adjustments (if any) are made to loans before other grants or scholarships. Because of Internal Revenue Service regulations and other requirements, campuses may also consult with accounting, human resources and international programs staff to determine appropriate method of payment and any tax withholding requirements. Award Recipients should consult with a tax professional regarding tax liability resulting from any award.

Exact project start dates are contingent upon award conditions, including IRB, IBC or IACUC registrations and approvals on campus. If project involves Human Subjects or Vertebrate Animals and the campus has approved the work, a copy of the campus approval letter must be appended to the proposal. CSUBIOTECH will not make awards to projects without IRB, IBC, or IACUC registrations or approvals by the time the faculty/student team begin to start work on the project.

CSUBIOTECH grants are issued as a result of an internal competition within the CSU and are not subject to Facilities and Administrative (F&A), or indirect, costs. F&A costs are not allowed as a grant-funded expense in proposals submitted in response to RFPs from programs, like CSUBIOTECH, that receive the majority of their support from legislatively appropriated funds, CSU lottery funds, or student fees (including State University fees). The F&A foregone at the campus/auxiliary's federally negotiated off-campus rate may be shown as cost match on the proposal. This amount may be used by the auxiliary or enterprise fund as an offset to the university's cost allocation plan, in accordance with EO 753/1000.

### **Submission Instructions:**

**PROPOSAL DEADLINE** is **Monday, February 10, 2025** before 5:00 pm PT.

The 2025 Presidents' Commission Scholars proposal template form is available at the CSUBIOTECH webpage (<http://www.calstate.edu/csUPERB>). Faculty mentors should submit the complete proposal, in either Microsoft WORD or Adobe PDF format, before the deadline using CSUBIOTECH's InfoReady electronic submission system.

Only faculty mentors can submit a proposal to InfoReady using their campus-issued ID/username and password.

The complete proposal package includes:

1. Completed and signed **2025 Presidents' Commission Scholars Proposal Template**
2. Faculty mentor's **one-page CV** (should list no more than 5 recent publications related to this project).
3. Student's **transcript** (unofficial transcripts are acceptable).

Please note that page 1 of the proposal template requires student, mentor and dean signatures, so plan ahead! Applicants can submit a scanned image of page 1, including signatures, as part of the proposal package. Electronic signatures from all parties are acceptable.

If you have any problems submitting your nomination package, contact CSUBIOTECH **before** the deadline at [csubiotech@sdsu.edu](mailto:csubiotech@sdsu.edu).

Applicants who are unable to access or use the InfoReady submission system should send their completed proposal template, including any additional documentation or support letters, to Christine Montgomery at [rmontgomery@sdsu.edu](mailto:rmontgomery@sdsu.edu) by the submission deadline of February 10, 2025 at 5pm.

The CSUBIOTECH program office will evaluate proposals for completeness and eligibility. Qualified proposals will be evaluated by a review panel comprised of CSU faculty. Notification of award is expected in April 2025 so that awardees can start project work at the start of the summer term.

In 2024, 11 Presidents' Commission Scholar awards (\$8000) were made to students from 8 universities. Previous Presidents' Commission Scholars can be found in the CSUBIOTECH grants database (<https://www.calstate.edu/impact-of-the-csu/research/csubiotech/Pages/grants.aspx>).

## **Generative Artificial Intelligence Technology**

CSUBIOTECH has adopted a policy on the use of generative artificial intelligence technology similar to that of the National Science Foundation (NSF). The NSF policy can be found at <https://new.nsf.gov/news/notice-to-the-research-community-on-ai>. The CSUBIOTECH policy applies as follows to all grant and award programs, including peer review.

To safeguard the integrity of the development and evaluation of proposals in the merit review process,

- CSUBIOTECH reviewers are prohibited from uploading any content from proposals, review information and related records to non-approved generative AI tools.
- Proposers have the option to indicate in the project description or proposal/application documents the extent to which, if any, generative AI technology was used and how it was used to develop their proposal.

**Use of generative AI by reviewers in CSUBIOTECH review panels.** CSUBIOTECH reviewers agree to maintain confidentiality of the review process, reviewer identities, and application/proposal materials submitted to CSUBIOTECH in response to grant and award Requests-for-Proposals (RFP's) and Requests-for-Nominations (RFN's).

The obligation to maintain confidentiality of review related information extends to the use of generative AI tools and "checking" programs. CSUBIOTECH reviewers are prohibited from uploading any content from proposals, review information and related records to non-approved generative AI tools or websites not approved by the CSUBIOTECH program office. If reviewers take this action, CSUBIOTECH will consider it a violation of the program's confidentiality policy. CSUBIOTECH reviewers may share publicly available information with current generation generative AI tools.

**Use of generative AI in proposal preparation.** Proposers are encouraged to indicate in the project description or narrative of their proposals and applications the extent to which, if any, generative AI technology was used and how it was used to develop their proposal. Similar to NSF, CSUBIOTECH is studying the use of generative artificial intelligence in responses to our calls for proposals and nominations. CSUBIOTECH will continue to review NSF policy and may adapt its own policies as more is learned about this tool in future rounds of grant and award programs. To be clear, the use of generative AI in proposal preparation is not prohibited in CSUBIOTECH grant and award programs.

Proposers are responsible for the accuracy and authenticity of their proposal submission in consideration for peer review, including content developed with the assistance of generative AI tools. CSUBIOTECH's policies stated in its Code-of-Conduct and Applicant Certification statements remain in force with regards to the use of generative artificial intelligence technology. Generative AI tools may create risks of violating these rules and regulations, and proposers and awardees are responsible for ensuring the integrity of their proposal and reporting of research results. This policy does not preclude research on generative AI as a topic of study.

CSUBIOTECH adopts the definition of GAI as stated in the NSF guidelines: "Generative artificial intelligence (GAI) is a technology that can create content, such as text, images, audio, or video, when prompted by a user. Generative AI systems create responses using algorithms often trained on large datasets of information, such

as text and images from the internet.” (Source: U.S. Government Accountability Office, Science and Tech Spotlight: Generative AI; June 2023 available at [www.gao.gov/assets/830/826491.pdf](http://www.gao.gov/assets/830/826491.pdf))

## **CSUBIOTECH Statement of Principles on Professional Behavior, Policies and Procedures:**

CSUBIOTECH values diverse perspectives where all individuals can flourish. CSUBIOTECH is dedicated to providing an environment that fosters intellectual curiosity and creativity, free and lively debate conducted with mutual respect for individuals, and freedom from intolerance. These values are applicable to any aspect of CSUBIOTECH’s work, including meetings, symposia, and funded activities.

Specifically, members of our community value:

- Critical scholarly discourse for the purpose of understanding, advancing scientific ideas, and educating the next generation of science and engineering practitioners;
- Education and research environments where all people are treated equally, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and free of bias, hostility, and harassment of any kind;
- Conversations and discussions where community members can share ideas in a collegial atmosphere that is inclusive and values everyone’s input and opportunity to participate;
- Advocacy for equality and inclusivity in science;
- The use of inclusive examples, graphics, and stories in presentations and proposals;
- Access for all community members, including traditionally underrepresented groups, to fully participate in and become leaders in science;
- The support and promotion of the education and careers of all scientists, engineers, and bio-entrepreneurs;
- Leadership in our fields to strengthen scientific mentorship and create an atmosphere of collaboration;
- Commitment to our own education and participation in activities related to recognizing and eliminating implicit bias.

### CSUBIOTECH Policies

- All participants in CSUBIOTECH events and activities are expected to follow the requirements of Title V, Title IX, and California State University (CSU) Executive Orders and adhere to the CSUBIOTECH Principles of Professional Behavior and values. Non-CSU participants who do not follow these expectations may be asked to leave a CSUBIOTECH event or activity and/or prohibited from participation in future CSUBIOTECH events or activities. Individuals can report incidents immediately to the CSUBIOTECH designee to facilitate this process.
- Individuals found in violation of Title V or IX or CSU Executive Orders 1096 or 1097 are not eligible to receive CSUBIOTECH funding or participate in CSUBIOTECH program activities for a period of 5 years from the final substantiation of the violation or the end of any current grant award, whichever is later. Faculty who are found to be in violation before funds are transferred for an award, will be ineligible to receive funds for the award.
- After a five-year ineligibility period, individuals found in violation of relevant policy for a second time lose eligibility for all future CSUBIOTECH funding or participation in CSUBIOTECH related activities permanently. Relevant CSU Executive Orders include:
  - Executive Order 1095 Revised (Systemwide Sex Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Dating and Domestic Violence, and Stalking Policy);
  - Executive Order 1096 Revised (Systemwide Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment, Retaliation, Sexual Misconduct, Dating and Domestic Violence, and Stalking against Employees and Third Parties and Systemwide Procedure for Addressing Such Complaints by Employees and Third Parties); and

- Executive Order 1097 Revised (Systemwide Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation, Sexual Misconduct, Dating and Domestic Violence, and Stalking against Students and Systemwide Procedure for Addressing Such Complaints by Students) may be found at the following website address: <http://www.calstate.edu/eo/>.

#### CSUBIOTECH Certifications

- CSUBIOTECH will include the Statement of Principles on Professional Behavior (section III above) in event registration processes. Event participants will be asked to acknowledge the principles.
- Applications for CSUBIOTECH funding, award opportunities, or event registrations will include the following certifications:
  - Applicants will indicate whether they have been found in violation of Title V, Title IX, or CSU Executive Orders 1096 or 1097 in the last 5 years.
  - Applicants will allow the campus to disclose to the CSUBIOTECH program office any substantiated violations of Title V, IX, or CSU Executive Orders 1096 or 1097.

#### CSUBIOTECH Reporting Procedures:

- Incidents that involve CSU faculty, staff, or students only
  - Individuals who believe there has been a violation of Title V, IX, or Executive Orders 1096 or 1097 at a CSUBIOTECH event or activity should report the event following CSU policy and procedures on their home campus.
  - Prior to transfer of grant or awards to campus, CSUBIOTECH will ask for campus confirmation that the awardee has not been found in violation of Title V, Title IX, or Executive Orders 1096 or 1097 in the prior 5 years. The campus information provided will include only the existence of a final, substantiated violation and the date of the violation. The information will be kept confidential in the CSUBIOTECH program office.
- Incidents that involve non-CSU individuals
  - Suspected violations of Title V, Title IX, or Executive Orders 1096 or 1097 by participants not affiliated with the CSU should be reported to CSUBIOTECH administration immediately. Participants may also e-mail CSUBIOTECH administration to report at a later date, if so desired.

#### **Post-Award Reporting Requirements:**

Presidents' Commission Scholars and their mentors are required to answer CSUBIOTECH surveys before and after the summer research experience. The final survey must be submitted by each student and faculty mentor within 30 days of project end date or October 1, 2025, whichever comes first. Reporting helps document the project's progress, gauge the impact of the experience on students' academic and career plans, and justify continuation of the program.

#### **Program Contacts:**

Applicants are encouraged to contact CSUBIOTECH via email with any questions.

#### CSUBIOTECH Equally Effective Alternative Access Statement:

Applicants who are unable to access or use the InfoReady submission system should send their completed proposal template, including any additional documentation or support letters, to Christine Montgomery at [rmontgomery@sdsu.edu](mailto:rmontgomery@sdsu.edu) by the submission deadline of February 10, 2025 at 5pm.

Any questions about using the InfoReady system can be directed to Tyson Gadd at [tgadd@sdsu.edu](mailto:tgadd@sdsu.edu).

**Submission questions:**

[CSUBIOTECH@sdsu.edu](mailto:CSUBIOTECH@sdsu.edu)

**Program and RFP questions:**

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