

# SMU<sup>®</sup> Dedman College Interdisciplinary Institute

The Dedman College Interdisciplinary Institute (DCII) is pleased to announce a call for applications for the **Robert Mayer Undergraduate Research Fellows Program** for 2026–27. The Program is designed to support undergraduate students in pursuing ambitious **interdisciplinary** research.

Mayer Fellows applicants must:

- Have completed at least 60 credit hours by the end of Spring Semester 2026
- Be a full-time student during AY 2026–27
- Have a double major or a major and minor(s), of which at least one major/minor is in Dedman College

Students interested in the Mayer Fellowship propose a substantial and significant interdisciplinary research project that will combine and integrate the perspectives of their major(s) and/or minor(s). They also enlist two faculty mentors from different disciplines (presumably the students' major/minor disciplines) to act as supervisors on the project during the fellowship year. Each faculty mentor will receive a small honorarium for their time working with the student.

Mayer Fellows will have access to up to \$2000 for research travel or other expenses related to the development and completion of their research projects, to be utilized any time during Summer 2026 or AY 2026–27. Fellows may also use these funds to attend appropriate scholarly conferences to present their work and/or interact with others working in their field(s). Students who anticipate needing more than \$2000 to complete their proposed research may make a request for supplementary support, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Ideally Mayer Fellows will enroll in an independent study or directed reading course in one of their major/minor fields, to allow time for them to work on their project. Each Fellow is required to produce a substantial research paper, the parameters of which will be determined in consultation with the faculty mentors. Mayer Fellows are also **required to publicly present their work during Spring 2027**, preferably at the Undergraduate Poster Session during SMU's Research and Innovation Week.

## **Application Guidelines**

The application should include (1) a completed online application form, (2) a research proposal, (3) an unofficial SMU transcript, (4) a resume, and (5) a letter of recommendation from one of your faculty mentors.

The proposal (maximum length two pages plus bibliography) should be a clear, concise description of the proposed research project, indicating what you will do, how you will do it, with whom you will do it (faculty mentors), and how the project will integrate your major and minor fields of study. You should indicate whether you will enroll in an independent study or directed reading course to complete the project, and if so in what program. You should also indicate if the project requires travel, and if so, to what destinations and for what purpose.

Suggested Proposal Sections:

1. Research Question and Background: State your research question explicitly (a topic of interest is not sufficient) and explain how answering it will bring together two or more disciplines of study
2. Methodology: Describe the research methods you will use to carry out the research
3. Research Significance: Describe the scholarly and/or real-world contributions you anticipate your research will make
4. Faculty Mentors: Describe the mentors' anticipated roles in the project
5. Budget: Provide a brief outline of how you would spend the award funding
6. Bibliography: List key sources guiding your project (maximum length one page, in addition to two-page proposal body)

Applications should be submitted via the following link:

<https://www.smu.edu/dedman/research/institutes-and-centers/dcii/fellowships/mayer/application>.

Letters of recommendation should be submitted directly by the recommender to [dcinterdisciplinaryinstitute@smu.edu](mailto:dcinterdisciplinaryinstitute@smu.edu), with "Mayer Fellows Application LOR" included in the email's "Subject" line.

**Submission deadline: April 10, 2026, at 5 p.m.**

Questions about the program or application process should be directed to Dr. Karisa Cloward, Ruth Collins Altshuler Director of the Dedman College Interdisciplinary Institute, at [kcloward@smu.edu](mailto:kcloward@smu.edu).