

Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania



Allison W. Cusick Undergraduate Research Award 2026

Founded in 1886, the Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania (BSWP) is one of the oldest botanical organizations in the country. BSWP is excited to support undergraduate student research on the flora of Western Pennsylvania. This award is implemented in partnership with PA Botany Symposium (<https://pabotany.org/>) and made possible through donations, including a generous anonymous donation made in honor of Allison W. Cusick, a longtime member of BSWP and retired Chief Botanist of Ohio.

Read more: <https://www.botsocwpa.org/bswp-student-research-award.php>

Eligibility: Students enrolled in an undergraduate degree program or recent graduate. Master's students may also apply. Either student or the student's research mentor must be a member of the society. To become a member or to renew a membership, please visit

<https://www.botsocwpa.org/membership.php>

Scope: Research on any aspect of botany in Western Pennsylvania or immediate region. Projects may be broader in scope and scale than Western Pennsylvania but must include at least one plant species found in the region. Any combination of field, greenhouse, lab, historical, or herbarium work is supported.

Amount: \$1000 per award, but higher amounts will be considered based on need. At least 5 awards are expected to be given in 2026. Funds can be used in any way toward the proposed project, such as travel, equipment, supplies, or as a cost of living stipend for the student.

Application Materials: **1)** a title page listing student's name, school affiliation (including major and anticipated graduation date), and research advisor's name and proposal title; **2)** a project description (max 2 pages), including summary of project, research question(s)/hypothesis (if relevant), timeline of activities, itemized budget, and references cited; **3)** one letter of recommendation from the student's research advisor. Awards will be made on a competitive basis with the applications reviewed by the Awards Committee. Should a member of the committee be the research advisor of an applicant, he/she/they will be excused as a reviewer for that proposal.

Awardees are expected to provide a paragraph summary of their project to be published in *Wildflowers* (BSWP biannual bulletin) and encouraged to present their research at a BSWP monthly meeting featuring student awardees (likely in spring 2027).

All materials should be sent electronically to the BSWP Awards Committee at heberlingm@carnegiemnh.org. Please include title page and project description in a single PDF. The letter of recommendation may be sent separately from the student's materials.

The deadline is [March 20, 2026](#). We anticipate announcing awards by April 3.