Summer Undergraduate Research Program in Molecular and Quantitative & Computational Biology

Frequently Asked Questions
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Program Eligibility: Princeton Students

**Princeton juniors (rising seniors)**
Princeton juniors majoring in molecular biology and writing a laboratory-based senior thesis are invited to participate in the MOL/QCB Summer Undergraduate Research Program during the summer before their senior year. *No application is necessary.* Students interested in participating should inform their advisor and contact Melissa DiMeglio, Undergraduate Administrator, Molecular Biology Department. Princeton juniors are provided with a stipend but are responsible for their own housing and travel.

**Princeton rising sophomores and rising juniors**
Rising sophomores and juniors are *not* eligible to apply to the MOL/QCB Summer Undergraduate Research Program. We are no longer able to support summer research for Princeton rising sophomores and rising juniors due to major funding cutbacks. Rising sophomores and rising juniors interested in participating are welcome to join the program if the student is able to secure a position and funding in an affiliated laboratory. There is no formal mechanism for placing rising sophomores and rising juniors in laboratories; rather it is left to the initiative of the interested student to contact the faculty member. Students who have secured a summer laboratory position and funding should contact Melissa DiMeglio to be included in the summer program activities.

**Princeton Integrated Science students**
ISC students interested in participating will need to find a lab to work in and should contact Jennifer Brick, Student Specialist, Lewis-Sigler Institute for Integrative Genomics.

Program Eligibility: Visiting Students

Visiting students (non-Princeton) students are welcome to apply to the program using the online application.

**Eligibility requirements**
Visiting student applicants who are current undergraduates and U.S. citizens or permanent residents are eligible to apply.
International undergraduates attending a U.S. educational institution fulltime with a valid student visa are also eligible to apply. Princeton does not support visas for summer students.

The summer undergraduate research program is geared towards undergraduates who have a strong passion for scientific research and are seriously considering graduate studies in molecular biology or quantitative/computational biology.

We encourage applications from future life sciences researchers:
(1) whose participation will add to the diversity of researchers in the sciences, or
(2) whose interests lie at the boundary between biology and the computational sciences including physics, chemistry, computer science and engineering, or
(3) who are from institutions that do not have large research programs.
I am not a US citizen or Permanent Resident. Can I apply?
It depends.
Non U.S. citizens/residents who attend a U.S. educational institution fulltime and have a valid student visa are eligible to apply.
Non U.S. citizens/residents who attend a college or university located outside of the U.S. are not eligible to apply. Princeton University is unable to issue visas or visa certificates for international summer students.

Can high school students apply?
No. Applicants must be current undergraduates - rising sophomores, rising juniors, or rising seniors during the summer they participate in the program. High school students are not eligible to apply. High school students should visit the Princeton Laboratory Learning Program website for possible summer research opportunities.

Can incoming college freshmen apply?
No. Applicants must be current undergraduates - rising sophomores, rising juniors, or rising seniors during the summer they participate in the program. Incoming college freshmen are not eligible to apply.

Can recent college graduates apply?
No. Applicants must be current undergraduates - rising sophomores, rising juniors, or rising seniors during the summer they participate in the program. Students who will receive their bachelor's degree before the start date of the summer program are not eligible to apply.

Application Process

What are the application requirements?
To apply to the summer program, please submit the following:
- Application form (submitted online)
- Personal statement (included in the online application form)
- Two letters of recommendation from faculty members (submitted online by faculty recommenders - separate from the application form)
- Transcript(s) of all undergraduate courses and grades, including the current fall semester submitted in PDF or Word format via email to Laura Gallagher-Katz. Unofficial transcript copies are acceptable.
- CV or résumé submitted in PDF or Word format via email to Laura Gallagher-Katz.

When will the online application be available?
The online application will be available in mid-October.

When is the application deadline?
The application deadline is February 1. All required application components must be submitted electronically by 11:59 p.m. EST on February 1.
**What should I write about in my personal statement?**
In your personal statement, please *briefly* describe your academic background, research interests, career goals, reasons for applying to the program, and how your participation in the program may assist with attaining your future ambitions.

**Does the personal statement have a word limit?**
Yes. Please limit your statement to 300 words.

**How do I submit letters of recommendation?**
Please enter your referees’ names, titles, phone numbers and institutional email addresses on page 4 of the online application. Once you click the “Save and send e-mail to references” button, an email will then go out to each referee with a link for them to submit their online recommendation on your behalf.

You do not need to submit your application for your recommenders to receive their email notices.

Please only supply an institutional email address (.edu, .org, .gov) for both your referees. We will not accept referee email addresses from private accounts such as Gmail, AOL, Yahoo, Google, etc. Please contact Laura Gallagher-Katz with any questions, problems, or concerns regarding this policy.

**Who should write my letters of recommendation?**
It is helpful to have your recommendation letters come from college level advisors, professors, researchers, or professionals who can remark on your laboratory skills, academic background, problem solving abilities, and/or overall scholarship. Recommendations can be written by faculty/advisors from your home institution or by professionals outside your home institution (such as an advisor from a past internship). Current college freshmen should avoid submitting recommendations from high school teachers but should feel free to mention high school achievements in their personal statement.

**Can I change my referee?**
You can change your referee only if s/he has *not* submitted a recommendation yet. To do so, log in to your application, revise the referee information and click the button to update your application. An automated email with the recommendation link will then go out to the new referee asking her/him to submit a recommendation on your behalf. The original referee will also receive an email notifying her/him that the prior invitation s/he received is no longer valid. Please let your original referee know of the change before s/he receives the automated email notice.

**What should I do if my recommender did not receive the automated email?**
The email may have bounced to your referee’s spam or junk folders.

If not, make sure that the recommender’s email address is correct on your application. If it is incorrect, make the corrections and hit the “Update” button to have the recommendation request resent.

If your referee has any additional issues submitting his/her recommendation, s/he should email Laura Gallagher-Katz for assistance.
How do I submit my online application?
After you complete the four page online application including the personal statement section, please click the "Approve Application" button on the application home page to submit your application form for consideration.

Can I submit my application before my recommendation letters are received?
Yes. You can submit/approve your application before your recommendation letters are submitted.

How can I find out if my recommendation letters were submitted?
Please log in to the online application home page to check the status of your letters. The reference letter status is listed at the bottom of your application home page. You can log in to the system and check the status of your recommendations anytime.

How do I submit my transcript(s)?
In order to submit a transcript, please email an electronic or scanned version of your transcript that you obtained from your college or university to Laura Gallagher-Katz.
An unofficial of your transcript is acceptable. Transcripts must be in MS Word or PDF format. Please include your name and “SURP Application” in the subject line of your email. Please do not mail a hard copy of your transcript. If you are offered admission to the program and accept the offer, you will be required to submit an official hard copy of your transcript from your current college or university. Mailing instructions will be included in the offer letter.

How do I submit my CV/resumé?
Please email your CV or résumé to: Laura Gallagher-Katz. Your CV or résumé file must be in MS Word or PDF format.

How can I find out if my application is complete?
Please log in to the online application home page to check the status of your application. You will also receive an email notice regarding any missing components before the application deadline.

When will I be informed about the status of my application?
All applicants will be notified of the Selection Committee’s decision by email in early/mid-March. Please see the application home page for this year’s specific date.

What are my chances of being accepted to the program?
The admission committee thoroughly evaluates each application; there is no single deciding factor for admission. The program is fairly competitive. Over the past five years, we averaged 260 applications a year with ~10% of applicants being selected for the program.
Program Specifics

**When does the program start and end?**
The program runs for nine weeks from June 6 – August 5, 2016. Students are expected to participate for the entire duration of the program.

**How much is the stipend?**
The stipend is $4,000 (before taxes) for the nine week program. Participants will receive the stipend during the first two weeks of the program.

**Will my stipend be taxed?**
**U.S. citizens and permanent residents** should report their summer stipend as income on their tax returns. All U.S. citizens and permanent residents will receive a letter regarding this from the Office of Finance and Treasury. Please see the Office of Finance and Treasury [website](#) for details.

**International students will have federal taxes automatically withheld from their stipend checks.**
The summer program stipend for International students holding an F, J, M, or Q visa is federally taxed ~14%. International students will receive a 1042S form in March from the Office of Finance and Treasury to claim the withholdings on their income taxes. Please see the Office of Finance and Treasury [website](#) for details.

**Are housing and travel provided?**
**Visiting students** participating in the program are provided with housing in Princeton dormitories and are reimbursed for traveling expenses within budgetary limits.

**Princeton MOL juniors/rising seniors** are responsible for their own housing and travel.

**What is expected of a summer program student?**
Each student is placed in a world-class research laboratory – headed by a Faculty member – and carries out an original research project. Students will experience first-hand what it is like to be a scientist.

Students are expected put in a 40-hour week in the lab and are also required to submit an abstract and present a poster of their summer research at a poster session held at the conclusion of the program.

**What areas of research are available?**
Available areas of research include: [biochemistry](#), [biophysics](#), [cancer](#), [cell biology](#), [chemical biology](#), [computation and modeling](#), [development](#), [evolution](#), [genetics](#), [genomics](#), [global health](#), [microbiology and virology](#), and [structural biology](#).

Please visit the Department of Molecular Biology’s [website](#) and the Lewis-Sigler Institute for Integrative Genomics’ [website](#) for detailed research descriptions.
Students interested in **Neuroscience** or **Chemistry** should check out the following Princeton University summer research programs:

- [The Princeton Neuroscience Institute (PNI) Summer Internship Program](#)
- [Summer Undergraduate Research Program for Diversity in Chemistry](#)
- [Chemistry Department NSF-Funded Summer Research Program in Biophysics](#)

**How are students placed in a lab?**
We carefully match students to labs based on their research interests as indicated in their application form, recommendation letters and personal statement. We take into consideration each applicant’s overall experience, academic background, and objectives to ensure a good match. Particular lab requests cannot be guaranteed.

**When do I find out about my lab placement?**
Lab assignments are emailed to program participants in April and May.

**What are the other program highlights?**
Other highlights of the program include:
- Research discussion groups (learn to analyze and present data)
- Faculty forum (attend weekly seminars given by Princeton Faculty)
- Poster session (present your research to respected scientists)
- Graduate school seminars (learn about graduate school)

**Who do I contact if I have any other questions?**
Princeton students should contact: Melissa DiMeglio
Visiting students should contact: Laura Gallagher-Katz

Thank you.

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Click [here](#) to return to the application start page.

Click [here](#) to return to the Program home page.