



# Office of Undergraduate and Medical Student Research

Suite 3180, 850-645-2825

## How to Apply for Summer Research Programs

Each research program application is unique, but there are some common requirements for nearly all of the programs. Consult the list below to learn what to expect when applying to a program.

### Basics of all applications:

1. Submission Deadline
2. Eligibility criteria
3. Application: electronic or hardcopy
4. Essay, Personal Statement and/or Resume
5. Transcripts
6. Letters of Recommendation

### Details:

#### 1. Submission Deadline

- Deadlines for Summer programs are usually in DECEMBER, JANUARY, and FEBRUARY.
- Apply EARLY, before the published deadline.
- Most programs adhere to a submission deadline after which they review applications.
- Some programs accept and review applications continuously to find the best candidates that fit their labs.
- Many programs will stop reviewing applications once spaces are filled.
- Plan ahead to ensure all your materials are received by the published deadlines.
- Keep records of what you submitted including dates and addresses where materials were sent.

#### 2. Eligibility criteria

- Be aware of what programs are looking for in competitive candidates.
- Some programs have wide eligibility while others have specific requirements due to funding guidelines or other restrictions. For example, some programs are limited to minority candidates or in-state students.
- Programs vary whether or not they offer exceptions to the eligibility rules, so it is worth the effort to investigate. Read information carefully to see if you are excluded. Don't be a nuisance to the administrative offices by requesting exceptions for your application if information is clearly stated on their website or in their materials.
- International students are usually NOT eligible; most programs are restricted to US citizens and permanent residents.
- Many programs require full-time participation and students are not allowed to leave while enrolled. Keep your summer free in order to commit to a program; it's a chance of a lifetime and worth the time.

#### 3. Application: electronic or hardcopy

- Complete all sections of the application.
- Keep copies for your records.
- Includes demographic and background information
- Read about the program before completing the application. You may be asked to indicate areas of research you are interested in pursuing OR select from a list of faculty to work with. The more you know, the stronger your application will be.
- Be prepared to describe any research related skills you have or courses you have completed. Don't worry if you feel you don't have a lot of experience. Some programs ask for this information as a preliminary way to match students with existing labs, not as a way of eliminating candidates.
- Check if the application needs to be sent electronically or by the postal system. Avoid any delays due to faulty electronic systems or insufficient postage.

#### 4. Essay, Personal Statement and/or Resume

- This is typically a research statement of your interests and background experiences that have motivated you to pursue research, not usually a statement of your personal traits.
- Ask Dr. Foster or a faculty member review your essay before you send it.

- Some common topics to write about:
  - o Why are you interested in research? Why this particular type of research?
  - o What makes you a good candidate for this program?
  - o What are your career goals and how does conducting research help you meet these goals?
- Some of the more competitive programs will ask for specific project proposals or an abstract of current work. Ask for help in such cases.

#### 5. Transcripts

- Request them at least one month in advance of the published application deadline.
- Delays in receiving transcripts are a common reason for having an incomplete application. Do not assume this is an automatic process; take the lead in making sure this gets done.
- Current FSU students may request official transcripts online through Blackboard Secure Apps. An FSUID logon is required to do so. Online transcripts must be paid for in full before they will be processed. The fee is \$5.00 per transcript.
- Official transcripts may also be obtained by coming to the Transcript section of the Office of Admissions and Records (University Center A3900) and presenting your student ID.
- Check if high school transcripts are also required.

#### 6. Letters of Recommendation

- Plan ahead!
- Many programs require at least 2 letters, preferably from faculty members who have taught you or have mentored you in a research setting.
- Be sure to know how the letters are submitted and inform your letter writers about what they need to do.
- Communicate with your professors about your interests before they write your letter.
- Send a thank you card after the letters have been sent. *Aaawwww. That's sweet!*

#### TIPS:

##### Start with a Plan

When should I do a research internship? How many programs should I apply to? Consult with Dr. Foster!

##### Know the Deadlines

Mark your calendar and planner for important application deadlines.

##### Create a resume

Many programs require that you submit one. Be prepared and have one ready to upload!

##### Talk to your professors

Get advice about programs and interesting, state of the art research projects.

#### Universal Checklist for applications:

- Create your List of Programs and Deadlines
- Request Transcript requests for each program
- Create or update your Resume
- Confirm letters of recommendation
- Meet with Dr. Foster to review your application and Personal statement

**Dr. Elizabeth Foster**

**FSU College of Medicine**

**Email:** Elizabeth.Foster@med.fsu.edu

**Phone:** 850-645-2825