APS Summer Research Fellowship Programs

Frequently Asked Questions

1. When is the application deadline?
   a. The deadline is 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on February 1st.

2. What is required in the one-page letter?
   a. See Application Instructions pdf document under Resources at the bottom of each program’s Application Information page for specifics.
      i. IOSP (comparative physiology): www.the-aps.org/IOSP
      ii. STRIDE (heart/lung/blood physiology): www.the-aps.org/STRIDE
      iii. UGREF (> 9 months of research experience): www.the-aps.org/UGREF
      iv. UGSRF (< 9 months of research experience): www.the-aps.org/UGSRF

3. Can applicants upload an unofficial transcript?
   a. Yes. Note that protected (encrypted) files will not be accepted by the online awards system.
   b. Documents in PDF format are preferred.

4. Are students and/or APS members studying or conducting research outside the U.S. eligible for this program?
   a. Yes, if you are applying for the UGSRF or UGREF program, as long as your research host is an APS member in good standing and you are enrolled in undergraduate studies, you are eligible to apply. However, remember that APS does not pay for your travel to another country should you receive an award.
   b. No, if you are applying for the IOSP, STEP UP, or STRIDE programs, you must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident working inside the U.S. Also, IOSP, STEP UP, and STRIDE Fellows must conduct their summer research within the U.S. or its territories. International collaborations are not allowed, i.e. your potential research host must be at a U.S. institution.

5. Are students in professional programs (medical school, veterinary school, PT, etc.) eligible to apply?
   a. No, the program is open only to students enrolled in undergraduate studies. However, students in an undergraduate medical program in another country...
may be eligible to apply for UGSRF and UGREF. Please contact the APS Education Office for further information.

6. Can students graduating in May apply?
   a. Yes, if you are applying for the UGREF or STEP-UP program. Graduating college seniors are eligible to apply for the fellowship as long as they are still enrolled as undergraduates at the time of application. Again, students in an undergraduate medical program in another country may be eligible to apply for the UGSRF or UGREF programs. Please contact the APS Education Office for further information, if you need clarification.
   b. No, if you are applying for the UGSRF, STRIDE or IOSP programs. Graduating seniors are not eligible to apply for these fellowships.

7. Are students in high school or middle school eligible to apply?
   a. No, the fellowship programs are open only to students currently enrolled in undergraduate studies.

8. Who is considered underrepresented in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM)?
   a. Individuals from racial and ethnic minority groups, individuals with disabilities, and individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds that are considered underrepresented in STEM. Please refer to the CDC’s definitions of racial and ethnic minorities and the NIH’s definitions of individuals from groups identified as underrepresented in STEM under NOT-OD-15-053.

9. If an applicant does not qualify as underrepresented, is s/he still eligible to apply?
   a. Students who do not fall under the definition of individuals from underrepresented backgrounds should apply to either the UGSRF or UGREF program. Note the different eligibility criteria between these two programs; you may only apply to one. Visit the Eligibility & Benefits page for more information.

10. How long is the fellowship program?
    a. The program period begins in May and ends the following spring.
    b. APS fellows conduct research in the lab of an APS member for 10 weeks in the summer.

11. Can the applicant apply for more than one undergraduate summer fellowship?
    a. Yes, if you are eligible, but there are exceptions. If you are applying for the UGSRF or UGREF program you are only eligible for one of these awards,
depending on how much previous research experience you have. If you have less than 9 months of previous physiology research you should apply to the UGSRF program. If you have more than 9 months experience you should apply for the UGREF program.

b. If you are from an underrepresented background, you are eligible to apply for all five programs. However, note the past research experience requirements for UGREF and UGSRF. If you are not sure of your specific racial and ethnic group, please refer to the definitions at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC). You may also refer to the NIH’s definitions of individuals from groups identified as underrepresented in STEM outlined in NOT-OD-15-053, and refer to the table on the Summer Research Programs page.

12. Does an applicant need to secure a research host before applying?
   a. Yes. Prior to submitting an application to IOSP, STRIDE, UGREF, or UGSRF, the applicant must identify a research host who has agreed to host him/her in their lab over the upcoming summer. These programs require a joint student/host application. Please visit the Selecting Your Research Host page for more information.
   b. Note: Click here for more information about selecting a research host and to review the list of APS members interested in hosting a student in their lab over the summer. If you are having trouble finding a potential research host, please contact the APS Education Office.

13. If an applicant secures a research host, does that mean s/he will receive an award?
   a. No. Securing a research host is only part of the application process. These programs are competitive and not all applicants receive fellowships.

14. Must the applicant work in a lab at the same institution where s/he is enrolled?
   a. No, the student may choose any institution at which to conduct their research. Many of the Fellows conduct research at their home institution and others conduct research at another institution, such as an institution in their home town. The disadvantage to going to another institution for the summer is that the student will not be able to continue any work once school begins. Please note that only IOSP offers housing subsistence for summer living expenses.
15. If applicable, must the applicant work in the same lab as the previous research experience?
   a. No, students do not have to work in the same lab at the previous research experience. The student can choose whether to stay in the same lab or move to a different lab for this program.

16. Can the research host apply for APS membership so that they will be in good standing by the time the fellowship begins or must they be in good standing by the application date?
   a. For the UGREF, UGSRF, STRIDE and IOSP programs, the research host must be an APS member in good standing at the time of the application deadline. Click here to obtain APS membership application information. (Note: If you are applying for the STEP-UP program, your research host does not have to be an APS member, although it is encouraged.)

17. Can more than one student from the same lab apply?
   a. As many students as are interested in the programs can apply from the same lab. However, each lab is only allowed one awardee per program. So if more than one applicant for the same program was rated highly by the Committee, only the top-rated applicant for that program would receive the award.

18. Do both the research host and the faculty writing a letter of recommendation need to be APS members in good standing?
   a. For the UGSRF, UGREF, STRIDE and IOSP program, only the research host needs to be an APS member. The other faculty member writing a letter does not need to be an APS member.

19. How will a research host/faculty member upload the necessary documents?
   a. In order to upload the research host document and letter of recommendation, the research host/faculty member will need a specific link that is provided in an automated email generated by the APS Awards site. The email will appear to come from the student applicant’s email address with the subject line “APS Online Award Application File Request.” Sometimes this email gets blocked by institution server firewalls or gets sent to spam mailboxes. If the research host/faculty member doesn’t see this email, s/he should check their spam mailbox first. If s/he still does not see this email, please contact the APS Education Office. Note: It is the responsibility of the student to ensure his/her research host/faculty member received this email.
20. Can a research host/faculty member still upload a letter of recommendation after an applicant has submitted his/her application?
   a. Yes, as long as the letter of recommendation is submitted before the deadline. However, the application won’t be complete until all items, including the letter of recommendation and research host’s member number are uploaded. Once everything is uploaded, the system will send the student a confirmation email saying the application is complete. Note: It is the responsibility of the student to ensure his/her research host/faculty member received this email.

21. Can the applicant have another fellowship at the same time from another organization?
   a. No. While the APS fellowship can be supplemented by the research host, the student cannot accept another fellowship for the same period from another organization or institution. Fellows must also agree to conduct their research during the summer.

22. How many fellowships are awarded?
   a. The following number of fellowships is at the discretion of APS and subject to change:
      i. IOSP: 8
      ii. STEP-UP: Up to 24; contingent upon funding
      iii. STRIDE: 24
      iv. UGREF: 6
      v. UGSRF: 24

23. What happens if a applicant applies for more than one award and gets selected for more than one award?
   a. In the application process, students are asked to indicate their preference for the program. APS will try to honor that preference but may need to contact students who have been selected for more than one award and work with them to select only one award to receive. For the IOSP (comparative physiology research) and STRIDE (heart, lung, blood research) programs, the summer research project topic will be considered in the selection process.

24. Can an applicant participate in the same program multiple years?
   a. Yes, for the IOSP, STEP UP, and STRIDE programs, students can participate for multiple years.
   b. No, for the UGSRF and UGREF programs, students can only participate in each program once due to the restriction on amount of previous research experience.
25. What are the selection criteria?
   a. **UGSRF/UGREF**: Selection of participants is based on the quality of both student and research host application and specifically the following parameters: potential impact of the fellowship on the student’s career development, academic merit, student’s understanding of the research project, socioeconomic issues, significant student involvement in research, research environment and funding, proposed interactions with research host and others in the lab, letters of recommendation. Special consideration is given to applicants whose socioeconomic background, access to educational opportunities, and other life experiences suggest that they would especially benefit from this type of program. Applications by students from institutions with few or limited research opportunities are especially encouraged.

   b. **STRIDE/IOSP**: Selection of participants is based on the quality of both student and research host application and specifically the following parameters: potential impact of the fellowship on the student’s career development, academic merit, student’s understanding of the research project, significant student involvement in research, research environment and funding, proposed interactions with research host and others in the lab, letters of recommendation.

   **STEP-UP**: Selection of participants is based on the applicant’s academics, personal statement, and letters of recommendation. Additional review criteria include prior participation in STEP-UP or other research programs, inclusion of underrepresented geographical areas or target populations, and potential to take advantage of the fellowship experience.

26. When will applicants be notified if they’ve been selected?
   a. IOSP, STRIDE, UGREF, and UGSRF applicants will be notified by April 1.
   b. STEP-UP applicants will be notified by mid-March.