Biology Fellows Program

Application Information Sheet

SUMMER 2014 APPLICATIONS ARE DUE MARCH 17, 2014 at 9 am (no exceptions)

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

The purpose of the Biology Fellows Program (BFP) is to provide independent research opportunities for undergraduates in the biological sciences, particularly those for whom financial support would significantly enhance their ability to participate in research. The emphasis of this program has been to increase the number of students from underrepresented groups and women doing research. However, all qualified undergraduates are encouraged to apply and will be equally considered.

The grant program also seeks to enhance interaction among the peer group of undergraduate researchers through faculty seminars, professional development workshops, and by students organizing and putting on an Undergraduate Research Symposium where they will also present their research.

This research experience is not designed simply to provide technical training. It is intended to involve curious undergraduates in exploring biological questions. Top candidates will be interested in learning about a research laboratory, research careers, asking questions at the bench, and learning how to effectively use the scientific method to investigate a biological problem.

GRANT INFORMATION:

The 2014 Summer Program lasts 10 weeks from May 27 – August 1, 2014. The summer semester fellowship includes a stipend of $4000 and a $200 lab supply award. Please note that BFP may affect your financial aid package (see the FAQ on the BFP website for more information). Participants are required to do research in a laboratory for 30 hours/week during the summer, attend all meetings, workshops/seminars, and to organize and present at the Undergraduate Research Symposium (scheduled for August 1, 2014). This is a full-time experience and students should not be taking classes during the summer.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY:

- Continuing Berkeley students with an overall GPA of at least 2.7.
- An interest in pursuing a research-related career in some aspect of the biological sciences
- Some laboratory experience (whether in university coursework or in research inside or outside the university).
- Awards in previous summers or semesters do not guarantee an award this year.
- Prior awards also do not disqualify one from receiving a subsequent award.

ELIGIBLE LABORATORIES:

Students can work with any UC faculty member in the biological sciences on the Berkeley campus. Some stipends can be made available to students working in labs at other sites such as UCSF, Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, and the Children’s Hospital Research Institute of Oakland. See the FAQ on the website for details.

It is not necessary that the student have a research position in a laboratory prior to applying for a fellowship. However, it is the responsibility of the student to obtain a position in a laboratory by initiating contact with faculty whose research is related to the student’s interests. Awardees having difficulty arranging a laboratory should contact Professor George Bentley, the Faculty Coordinator for the Biology Fellows Program, gb7@berkeley.edu and Program Coordinator,
Dr. Corey Welch coreywelch@berkeley.edu. If you are selected as a Biology Fellows Program participant, you must have a laboratory placement within 2-3 weeks of the award.

**SELECTION OF CANDIDATES:**

A committee of biology faculty, post-doctoral researchers and graduate students will evaluate the applications. Criteria for selection of awardees will include interest in pursuing a research career, enthusiasm for research, the extent to which the student may benefit from the experience, and community engagement. The statement of purpose and letters of recommendation are particularly important.

**For previous BFP awardees:** You also must provide a statement detailing the progress of your research project and must include a letter of recommendation from your research advisor.

**HOW TO APPLY:**

Submit your all of your application documents online at [http://bsp.berkeley.edu/bfp](http://bsp.berkeley.edu/bfp), click on the “APPLY NOW” button by MARCH 17, 2014 at 9 am (no exceptions).

Your submitted electronic application must include the following uploaded pdf items:

- Statement of Purpose
- Resume
- Unofficial Transcript (from BEARFacts)
- Progress Report (if you are a previous BFP participant)
- Financial Aid Information (optional- a PDF copy of your BEARFacts financial aid statement is sufficient)
- Statement of financial need (optional, but recommended)

**LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION:**

**Letters of recommendation are due MARCH 17, 2014 at 9 am (no exceptions).**

We require **two letters of recommendation** from individuals familiar with your interests, abilities, and career goals. The letters can be from any individual in or outside of the University and might include your professors, GSIs, research supervisor, employers, or former teachers.

The best letters will come from individuals who know you well and can speak to your academic preparation, capacity to do research, and interest in research. If you are a previous BFP awardee one of the letters **MUST** be from your PI/Research Supervisor. Similarly, if you are currently working in a lab and plan on continuing research in that lab, one of your letters **MUST** be from your PI/Research Supervisor.

**Suggestions for requesting recommendation letters:** Contact your recommenders well in advance and ask them if they will write you a letter. Tell them about the program and why you are applying. Include information about the submission deadline and how/where to submit the letters. You may also want to email a copy of a recent resume to update any recommenders that you have not had recent contact with. Recommenders’ letters should address how they know you, your motivations and capacity to do independent research and how you will benefit from participation.

**Email options for sending recommendation letters**

Recommenders can email letters directly from the letter writer's email to bfpletters@berkeley.edu. **Letters must be sent as a PDF attachment.**
A scanned PDF version of letters that include the letter writer's signature can be emailed to bfpleters@berkeley.edu from the Berkeley Career Center Letter Service.

**Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding.** Summer 2014 awardees will be notified in early April. Laboratory mentors of awardees will also be notified once the award is accepted.

**FUNDING SOURCE:** Support for this program is in part from a grant to U.C. Berkeley from the generous support of a U.C. Berkeley Alumnae whose own undergraduate education was pivotal to her professional development.

For further information, please see the FAQ on the BFP webpage or contact Corey Welch, Ph.D. coreywelch@berkeley.edu, 510-643-3866 or Rachel Henderson, Ph.D., rhenderson@berkeley.edu, 510-643-4746