

Summer Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REUs)

Tips for Successful Applications

1. Apply only to programs that you are eligible for.
2. If you have any uncertainties about applying for the program e-mail the contact person before you apply to the program. Be sure to read FAQ's that might be posted on the program's website.
3. Once you've submitted your application you may want to e-mail the program coordinator to let him/her know that you've applied.
4. Meet all the deadlines posted. Late applications reflect poorly and may jeopardize your chance of being selected.
5. Make sure to give your recommender(s) adequate time to write a polished letter of recommendation for you. Give them as much information as possible about you, the program you are applying to and how you see this program as beneficial to your academic and career goals. If possible, send your recommender a copy of your resume and personal statement or essay questions. It is preferable that your recommender is someone who knows of your potential to succeed in research. Letters from STEM Faculty are preferable.
6. Allow yourself enough time to gather required documentation such as official transcripts, medical insurance coverage forms, if needed. Some residential programs require that you have medical insurance in order to participate. If this is the case make sure you have this complete well before you begin the program.
7. Apply to more than one program.
8. Decide whether or not you can commit time to this program. If you are taking a summer course, decide how much time you will need to study and commute to class. Will this take time away from your research? Some programs have mandatory attendance at programs such as GRE Prep courses. Make sure that your schedule permits you to fully participate in all aspects of the program.
9. Familiarize yourself with the program. Avoid blanket statements such as, "I want to be accepted to a summer research program at MIT because it's a good school." Instead, talk about specific research being done at that institution and in this program. Give the names of faculty that you would like to work with.
10. Last but definitely not least, bring your applications to a counselor, advisor, or faculty member so they can review and give you feedback.

