



Harvard College
Program for Research in Science and Engineering (PRISE)
2020-2021 Application Instructions

PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Program for Research in Science and Engineering (PRISE) will tentatively run from Monday, June 7, 2021 to Thursday, August 12, 2021. (Move-in and move-out dates TBA.) PRISE offers fellows free lodging and a partial board plan, and participants who are not receiving funding from another source (such as their labs or other fellowships like Herchel Smith) are eligible to receive a stipend to support other living costs. PRISE participation is open to any continuing undergraduate student who is in good standing and affiliated with a Harvard Faculty sponsored laboratory.

For Summer 2021, plans are underway to re-introduce both remote and in-person research opportunities, including the Summer Undergraduate Research Village. Please note that program dates, components, and requirements are subject to change as a result of Harvard University's continuing response to the coronavirus pandemic.

COMPONENTS & EXPECTATIONS

PRISE Fellows are expected to fully participate and contribute to the community of scholars in evening enrichment activities not associated with individual lab research throughout the term of the Program. While many activities are voluntary, other PRISE activities, especially those associated with Harvard faculty are mandatory for all fellows. **Individuals who are taking summer school courses, who are preparing to take the summer MCAT or other summer graduate school entrance exams, or who are engaged in full-time public service projects are not eligible to participate in PRISE.**

PRISE consists of the following components:

- **Residential life and community:** PRISE Fellows will live together in a River House for the duration of the Program. PRISE will have on hand its own staff, including the director, resident dean, proctors and program assistants, during the ten weeks of the Program.
- **Dining:** Essential dining services will be available to PRISE Fellows. Weekday evening meal service, sometimes in conjunction with evening activities, as well as a weekday breakfast cart, will be available. The PRISE stipend is intended to help cover other expenses, including food for weekend meals and weekday lunches.
- **Special Campus-wide Events and Evening Programs:** A special PRISE evening program series featuring prominent scientists in the Harvard community and the Boston area will be open to all Harvard undergraduates. Seminars for PRISE Fellows will include a number of topics specifically designed to augment and enrich their knowledge about scientific research and careers in sciences. Topics such as research ethics, poster presentations, and postgraduate career opportunities will be offered throughout the Program. In addition, Fellows will have the opportunity to practice speaking about their research, in both small and large groups throughout the summer.
- **Recreational and Social Programs:** PRISE Fellows are eligible to register for free use of Harvard athletic facilities, including the Malkin Athletic Center, Hemenway Gymnasium, and Blodgett Pool. A calendar of activities will include a range of opportunities to socialize and take advantage of Boston's cultural and recreational summer offerings with your PRISE colleagues, including a variety of excursions, Red Sox games, and PRISE Fellow-initiated community events.

CONTINUE TO THE NEXT PAGE FOR ADDITIONAL PROGRAM INFORMATION.



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ELIGIBILITY

- Any continuing Harvard College undergraduate student in good standing; preference will be given to individuals who have not yet participated in a Summer Research Village Program (e.g., PRISE, BLISS, PRIMO, SHARP, or SURGH). **Fellows who participated in the remote version of PRISE in Summer 2020 are eligible to reapply without prejudice.**
- Must be able to commit 10 weeks* to summer research on campus or remotely.
- Must be participating in a research activity in the natural, physical, engineering, or applied sciences with a Harvard Faculty member in relevant academic departments and research centers in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Harvard Medical School, the School of Public Health, affiliated local research institutes and hospitals, and other academic and administrative units throughout the University.
- May accept funding for only **one** Harvard-funded summer experience. Students opting to participate in PRISE or any other Research Village Program (PRISE, BLISS, PRIMO, SHARP, SURGH, SPUDS) **are not eligible** to enroll in Harvard Summer School courses. This includes students who are eligible to receive the tuition waiver for Harvard Summer School courses in Summer 2021.

***NOTE: Individuals taking summer school courses, preparing for the summer MCAT exam or other summer graduate school entrance exams, or engaging in full-time public service projects are not eligible to participate in PRISE.**

BENEFITS

PRISE offers a variety of benefits to ensure a successful summer research experience and enable fellows to form a close-knit community:

- A modest living stipend for the ten-week program
- Free **lodging** in designated Harvard housing (for in-person research)
- A partial **boarding/dining** plan (for in-person research)

SELECTION CRITERIA

Since the primary purpose of the Program is to build and foster a strong and diverse community of science scholars, a successful application will demonstrate the following:

1. A strong dedication to developing or furthering academic interest and excellence in scientific research;
2. A documented and verified opportunity to participate in a laboratory or other active research experience that fulfills a compelling and specific academic goal over the summer (confirmation may be submitted after the deadline);
3. The ability and desire to participate actively and enthusiastically in a diverse residential community of scholars;
4. An academic record demonstrating success in coursework that develops theoretical knowledge and/or practical application of scientific principles (in course labs);

Evaluation of the applicant will be based on how well and how effectively the components of the application define and address these qualities and requirements.

CONTINUE TO THE NEXT PAGE FOR APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS.



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PLEASE READ CAREFULLY AND ORGANIZE THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS FOR YOUR APPLICATION:

■ **APPLICATION FORM**

Complete the online CARAT information, which will be compiled and displayed as your application cover sheet.

■ **CURRENT RESUME**

Indicate significant activities, achievements, and experiences in college that demonstrate your interests and potential achievements. **Do not exceed one page.**

■ **CURRENT UNOFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT**

Download your unofficial transcript from my.harvard.edu, **including your fall course grades.**

■ **ESSAY RESPONSES**

In a separate document, please provide responses to the following two statements. Please be sure to include your name at the top of the page(s).

1. Briefly describe the research interest(s) you would like to pursue this summer and why. This essay should convince a committee of scientists in different fields that you have thought carefully about the science yourself and are not simply rewording material from Wikipedia or a lab web page. Please be as specific as possible, but describe the research in your own words. If you must use jargon, give your own descriptions of the technical terms you use. If you have not yet selected a lab or project, please describe your intended scientific interest, what you hope to learn, and how you expect the research experience will contribute to your academic goals. (500 words maximum.)

2. Describe how you will contribute to and benefit from participating in a diverse residential community of researchers. Please provide descriptions of your involvement in your Harvard house or dorm (or other communities, such as a club or team or volunteer program), with specific examples of your role in contributing to the cohesion and distinctive identity of the group. In addition, consider how you have pivoted to be a part of a remote community during the fall term. How has the remote experience impacted you, and what have you done to address the challenges of belonging and contributing to a remote community? (750 words maximum.)

■ **LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION**

One academic letter of recommendation is required. See the PRISE Recommender Instructions below. Send your recommender the instructions (see below), which will guide them on the topics we would like addressed in their letter of recommendation.

ACADEMIC LETTER: Your academic letter of recommendation should be written by someone in the Harvard academic/research community who can comment on your academic initiative and interest in pursuing excellence. This letter should include brief examples of how you will benefit from PRISE. If your academic recommender is also your summer faculty research host, he/she also should confirm your lab placement in that letter; in this case, the letter of recommendation will also count as a letter of support, and therefore you do not need a separate letter of support. First year students may consider a high-school academic/research recommender.

HOUSE RECOMMENDATIONS: Applicants do NOT need to seek a residential letter of recommendation. House feedback will be solicited directly from URAF for all PRISE applicants. If you have a community-based reference who is not in your House community (e.g., coach), please contact your House Fellowship Advisor (HFA) so that they can be in touch with that individual to get feedback for your application.

ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL COMMUNITY LETTER FOR 2021: Due to the constrained and/or remote residential environment during the spring and fall of 2020, applicants may provide an optional community recommendation. The recommendation may come from anyone in or out of the university community that can speak to the applicant's engagement in and contribution to a community-based activity or organization (residential, sports, arts, service, club, etc.). The letter should not come from a peer, your proctor, or a House fellowship tutor. This letter is wholly optional – not providing the letter will neither prejudice nor have an adverse impact on the evaluation of the applicant's dossier. If you intend to submit an optional community letter, please direct the respondent to the following URL: https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3xSdSQkUmsJ7ooJ.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUE ON NEXT PAGE.



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■ **CONFIRMATION LETTER FROM HOST LABORATORY**

A letter from your designated research principal investigator must confirm your placement in the lab, provide details about the proposed project, as well as to what extent and by whom you will be mentored.

Once your host laboratory is confirmed, the faculty host should email their confirmation letter in pdf format to undergradresearch@fas.harvard.edu with PRISE and [YOUR LAST NAME] in the subject line. **If you do not have your host laboratory confirmed by the application deadline, please have your faculty host email their confirmation letter as soon as possible.**

If your faculty host is also your academic recommender, your faculty host should confirm your lab placement in their letter of recommendation, which they will upload directly to CARAT on your behalf after you indicate them in the Reference section.

CONTINUE TO THE NEXT PAGE FOR APPLICATION UPLOAD INSTRUCTIONS.



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PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION AS FOLLOWS:

1. **LOG IN TO CARAT USING YOUR HARVARD KEY** at <https://carat.fas.harvard.edu/> and confirm that your profile information is correct.
2. **"APPLY" TO THE APPROPRIATE "FUNDING SOURCE"**
Fill out all required fields.
3. **REQUEST RECOMMENDATIONS (via "References" tab)**
You are **STRONGLY ENCOURAGED** to solicit recommendations at least three weeks ahead of the application deadline. Once you have provided name (Last, First) and contact information for your recommenders, **YOU MUST CLICK "Send Reference Request"** under each recommender's entry in order for CARAT to send the notification to your recommender's email. **"Save and Next" will NOT submit your recommendation requests.**
4. **UPLOAD YOUR DOCUMENTS**
All documents must be submitted concurrently, in PDF format. No supplementary materials will be accepted.
5. **SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION (via "Submission" tab)**
Enter your HUID and click "Submit." The date and time of your submission will be noted, and late applications will not be accepted. Please note that you do not need to wait for your recommenders to submit their letters to submit your materials.

If you or your recommenders have questions about this application or the online submission process, please contact the Office of Undergraduate Research and Fellowships at (617) 495-5095 or undergradresearch@fas.harvard.edu.

■ ■ DEADLINE: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2021 AT 12:00 NOON (EST) ■ ■



**INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE ACADEMIC / RESEARCH RECOMMENDER
FROM THE PRISE SELECTION COMMITTEE**

This applicant is applying to the Harvard College [Program for Research in Science and Engineering](#) (PRISE), to participate in the 10-week summer residential community of undergraduate scientists. A critical factor in evaluating the application is evidence of initiative and motivation in an academic and/or research setting. The applicant has selected you to provide a letter of recommendation to the PRISE Selection Committee, and we thank you for your effort on the applicant's behalf. We would appreciate it if you would address the following questions in your letter:

1. In what capacity do you know the applicant?
2. Can you provide brief examples of their initiative, motivation, and determination in an academic and/or research activity?
3. How would the applicant benefit from and contribute to the PRISE community?

You will receive an email prompt generated by CARAT after the applicant has invited you to submit a recommendation. Simply follow the directions to upload a signed PDF version of your letter on official institutional stationary to the CARAT online link indicated in the invitation.

The deadline for receipt of application materials is **Thursday, February 18, 2021 at 12 noon (EST)**. If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Undergraduate Research and Fellowships at undergradresearch@fas.harvard.edu.