This PDF is only a preview of the of the C-GEM SURP application. Please find the current application at [this link](#).

C-GEM SURP Application

Welcome to the Center for Genetically Encoded Materials (C-GEM) and thank you for your interest in our Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP)!

What does C-GEM study? C-GEM is learning how to repurpose nature's protein synthesizing machine—the ribosome and all its associated factors—to biosynthesize genetically encoded, sequence-defined bio-polymers and natural product-like molecules with unprecedented structures, functions, and activities. C-GEM's goal is to develop the science that transforms how scientists design and produce both bio-materials and medicines.
C-GEM invites applications from undergraduates who are interested in exploring the intersection of chemistry and biology.

As a C-GEM SURP participant, you will:

- Carry out an individual research project under the day-to-day guidance of a graduate student or postdoc in a C-GEM faculty's laboratory.
- Interact with faculty and students across C-GEM institutions.
- Participate in an integrated mentorship and professional development program.
- Attend research seminars, group meetings, and C-GEM team meetings.
  Connect and network with current graduate students and postdoctoral researchers, and learn more about life as a graduate student.
- Strengthen your scientific reading, writing, and oral communication skills.

Program details:

- Participants may be placed in laboratories at Berkeley, Yale, and Boston College, depending on location and scientific preferences.
- The program is 9-10 weeks, June - August (exact start and end date varies by location).
- Competitive stipend. Varies by location, but approximately $6000.
- Room and board will be provided.
- Travel costs will be covered up to $600.

Eligibility:

- To participate in this program, you must be a US citizen or permanent resident.
- You must be a rising sophomore, junior, senior, etc. Students who have recently graduated with a bachelor's degree are **not eligible** for SURP.
- No previous research experience is required!
- We require one letter of recommendation.

The application deadline is February 1 at 11:59 PT.

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Personal information

What is your preferred name? *

First Name | Middle Name | Last Name

What is your date of birth? *

Month | Day | Year

What is your email address? *

This is the address we will use for program information, so please ensure it is one that you will be able to access through Summer 2026.

What is the best phone number to reach you? *

Please enter a valid phone number.

What is your permanent address? *

Street Address

Street Address Line 2

City | State / Province

Postal / Zip Code

Please confirm your eligibility as follows: *

- ☐ I am a US citizen or permanent resident.
- ☐ I am enrolled at a degree-granting program at a US institution of higher education located in the US or its territories.
- ☐ I am a freshmen, sophomore, junior, or non-graduating senior, and will not have received a Bachelor's degree prior to June 2026.
- ☐ I understand that the C-GEM SURP is a full-time (40+ hours/week) commitment and I will not be able to simultaneously enroll in summer courses or other time-intensive activities.

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Demographic information

We'd like to know a little bit more about you! Please answer the following questions if you feel comfortable doing so. Your responses to these questions will not be used during evaluation of your application.

What is your gender?

- ☐ Man
- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Nonbinary
- ☐ Other _____

Which pronouns do you use?

- ☐ She/her
- ☐ He/him
- ☐ They/them
- ☐ Other _____

What is your racial/ethnic background? Please select all that you identify with.

- ☐ White
- ☐ Hispanic or Latinx
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Asian or Asian American
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ Other _____

What is your disability status?

- ☐ Hearing disability
- ☐ Visual disability
- ☐ Mobility or orthopedic disability
- ☐ Cognitive or learning disability
- ☐ Mental health disability
- ☐ None

What is the highest level of education completed by your parent(s) or guardian(s)? Check more than one response if it is different for each parent/guardian.

- ☐ High school/secondary school degree
- ☐ Some college
- ☐ Associate's degree
- ☐ Bachelor's degree

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- [ ] Master's degree (e.g. MA, MS, MBA, MSW, etc.)
- [ ] Professional degree (e.g. MD, DDS, DVM, JD, PsyD, DDiv, etc.)
- [ ] Doctoral degree (e.g. PhD)
- [ ] Not applicable/unknown

Are you a Pell Grant recipient?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

Academic Background

Please tell us more about where you have studied.

What is the name of your current institution? *

When do you expect to graduate? *

Please use the format "Month Year" (i.e. December 2026)

What is your major? *

If you are a community college student, do you expect to transfer to a 4-year University? If so, when?

Please use the format "Season Year" (i.e. Fall 2026)

Have you taken an organic chemistry class in college? (This is not a prerequisite) *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

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Your goals, motivations, and interests

This section asks you to reflect on your goals, motivations, and interests for applying to the C-GEM Summer Undergraduate Research Program. These short statements are an opportunity for you as an applicant to provide the selection committee with additional information and/or context to evaluate your application. We encourage you to draft your statements in a word processor, then copy/paste into the form. Please make sure you read the prompts carefully and address each of the components.

If you have not already, you may want to review the **C-GEM website** to learn more about who we are and what we do. The phrase "genetically encoded materials" refers to our interest in producing new types of polymers by leveraging the translational machinery of the cell (i.e. ribosomes and other factors). **C-GEM does NOT focus on medicine and human genetics.**

INTEREST STATEMENT (3000 characters or less) Please provide a statement of interest below. Be sure to include the following: reasons for applying to this program, how your participation in the program may assist in meeting your future academic goals and/or career plans, and how you believe you will contribute to our program and C-GEM as a whole. *

Please see our blog post for more advice on writing an interest statement! https://gem-net.net/applying-to-summer-research-programs

RELATED EXPERIENCES (3000 characters or less): Please provide information regarding relevant work experience, extracurricular activities, skills, etc. (summer jobs, assistantships, academic clubs, sports, work study, self-taught skills, etc.) *

We do not require prior research experience in order to participate in this program. If you have some, we would love to hear about it! Please include information about the experience in your response: location, dates, type of research (part of a class, independent, etc.), and a brief summary of the work you completed.

COMMUNITY AND BELONGING STATEMENT (1500 characters or less): Provide a statement reflecting on your membership in a community to which you feel connected. Why is this community meaningful to you? You may define community however you like. *

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We welcome applications from eligible persons of all backgrounds.

Please indicate which research groups in C-GEM most interest you. You may select as many as you wish. *

- ☐ Anywhere is fine!
- ☐ Alabi Lab - Cornell University
- ☐ Chatterjee Lab - Boston College
- ☐ Cate Lab - UC Berkeley
- ☐ Francis Lab - UC Berkeley
- ☐ Miller Lab - Yale University
- ☐ Schepartz Lab - UC Berkeley

If you have any geographic restrictions or preferences for a particular C-GEM site, please describe below.

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Letter of Recommendation

We require one letter of recommendation. Recommendations should come from someone you have had as a professor, mentor, or advisor, and can speak to your ability/potential as a student/researcher
When you submit this application, your recommender will receive instructions on how to submit your letter of recommendation to the email entered below. Please let your recommender know to expect an email. We suggest that you talk to your letter writer early (at least two weeks before the deadline) so they have time to prepare your letter.
We will accept letters of recommendation until **February 14, 2026**. Applications without a letter of recommendation will not be reviewed.

Recommender Name *

First Name Last Name

Recommender Email *

example@example.com

Relationship to applicant (optional)

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You're almost done!

How did you hear about the C-GEM Summer Undergraduate Research Program?

- ☐ Professor, instructor, or mentor
- ☐ Email announcement
- ☐ C-GEM website or nsfcci.org
- ☐ NSF REU website
- ☐ Pathways to Science website
- ☐ Cientifico Latino website
- ☐ MESA Program
- ☐ ACS conference
- ☐ SACNAS conference
- ☐ NOBCChE conference
- ☐ ABRCMS conference
- ☐ BlueSky, Twitter, or LinkedIn
- ☐ Word of mouth
- ☐ Other

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