College Center for Research & Fellowships (CCRF)
ccrf.uchicago.edu
Amgen Scholars Program:
An Undergraduate Summer Research Program in Science and Biotechnology

amgenscholars.com

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Amgen Scholars Program: overview

• Premier Summer STEM Research Program
  • Cutting edge research in biotechnology
  • World-class institutions across the globe
• International
  • 24 participating educational/research host institutions
  • U.S., Europe, Asia, Australia & Canada
• Funded by the Amgen Foundation ($74 million)
  • 16-year commitment
    • 2007 – 2022
    • 2020: 14th summer
Amgen Scholars Program: overview

• Full-time faculty-mentored summer research immersion program
  • 8-10 weeks
  • Various disciplines related to the biomedical/biotechnology enterprise
• Cohort-based experience
• Provides:
  • Weekly seminars/sessions; Networking events
  • National Symposium
  • Generous funding
Amgen Scholars Program: program goals

• Engage students interested in science/engineering careers
• Introduction to the world of biotechnology
• Further inform/interest students in scientific careers
  • Broaden perspectives
  • Provide learning & networking opportunities
• Increase # of students pursuing advanced training and careers in sciences
• Train a diverse group of scientists
Amgen Scholars Program: eligibility

- Europe Programme
  - Undergrads enrolled in colleges/universities in Europe

- Canada Program
  - Canadian citizens or permanent residents
  - Undergrads enrolled in 4-year universities in Canada

- Australia Program
  - Undergrads enrolled in colleges/universities in Australia, New Zealand or Oceania
Amgen Scholars Program: *eligibility*

- **U.S. Program**
  - Full-time undergrads enrolled in U.S. 4-yr colleges/universities
  - At least a sophomore/2\textsuperscript{nd} year (with 4 quarters of college exp) – non-graduating seniors
  - 3.2 cumulative GPA
  - **Interest in Ph.D. or M.D.-Ph.D. (MSTP)**
  - U.S. citizens or U.S. permanent residents
  - Not have participated in the Amgen Scholars Program previously
Amgen Scholars Program: eligibility

• Asia Program
  • Full-time undergrads enrolled in colleges/universities worldwide that award bachelor’s degrees
  • Completed first year at time of summer program – non-graduating seniors (returning for at least 1 quarter after)
  • Strong record of academic performance
  • Good working knowledge of English
  • Interest in a Ph.D.

Note: You will be responsible for acquiring any necessary visas to attend the program and symposium in Singapore.
Amgen Scholars Program: eligibility

- Myths
  - Attendance at one of the host institutions is needed
  - Previous research experience is necessary
    - Consider course-based lab experience
    - Some programs may prefer/require research experience (UC Berkeley, UCSF, UCLA; NU of Singapore; Tsinghua)
  - Life sciences major is a must
    - Students in any major(s) are eligible but science or engineering majors are majority
  - A perfect academic record is needed for selection
  - Asian language skills are needed for Asian Program
Amgen Scholars Program: eligibility

• Truths
  • It is very competitive!
  • Each institution has its own application process!
  • You can apply to as many programs/institutions as you want
  • You can participate one summer only
  • You can apply for future summers if you continue to meet eligibility criteria
Amgen Scholars Program: U.S. program

• 13 U.S. Institutions
  • ~15 scholars selected each summer per site
    • Most (if not all) external students
  • ~200 scholars total each summer

• Various Program Dates

• Common Application deadline except for Cal Tech
  • Review when applications due, i.e., 5pm EST, etc.
Amgen Scholars Program: U.S. program

- California Institute of Technology
- Columbia University/Barnard College
- Duke University
- Harvard University
- Johns Hopkins University
- National Institutes of Health
- Stanford University
- University of California, Berkeley
- University of California, Los Angeles
- University of California, San Francisco
- UT Southwestern Medical Center
- Washington University in St. Louis
- Yale University

Programs in bold are more accessible to quarter system schools due to program start dates in June.

Programs in italics identify some flexibility around start date.
Amgen Scholars Program: Asia program

• 4 Asian Institutions
  • ~15 scholars selected each summer per site
    • 1/2 from colleges throughout Asia
  • ~60 scholars total each summer

• Various Program Dates

• Common Application deadline
  • Review when applications due, i.e., 3pm, etc.
Amgen Scholars Program: Asia program

- Kyoto University (Japan)
- National University of Singapore
- The University of Tokyo (Japan)
- Tsinghua University (China)

Programs in bold may be more accessible to quarter system schools due to program start dates in June/July
Amgen Scholars Program: program requirements

- Full-time research position
  - ~40 hours p/week; no outside commitments or vacations
- Commit to program dates and/or length
- Adhere to Code of Conduct
- Live in assigned housing
- Attend all program seminars/events
- Attend summer Symposium
- Final paper, poster and/or Oral Presentations

Note: Participating Scholars will also be required to complete pre/post-program surveys.
Amgen Scholars Program: program offerings

- Research experience in academic setting
  - New and independent lab research
- Mentorship
  - Leading and world-renowned research faculty/scientists
- Exploring another institution/area
- Funding (packages vary by institution)
  - Stipend + room & board + travel, etc.
  - U.S. Stipends may range from $3600 - $6350
  - Asian Stipends in local currency: 180,000 yen; SGD 6,000; 550,000 JPY
Amgen Scholars Program: program offerings

• Access to Campus facilities
• Academic credit (some institutions)
• GRE Prep (some programs)
• Culture and language classes (U'Tokyo)
• Weekly seminars
  • Faculty talks
  • Professional/leadership development
  • Skills-building
  • Peer groups
Amgen Scholars Program: program offerings

- Social/Cultural Activities
- Career training/exploration
- Research Communications
- Networking!
  - Community-building
- Resume-builder
- Recommendations
- Fitness for:
  - Graduate School; Fellowships/Scholarships
Amgen Scholars Program: application

- Apply through each host institution application portal
  - Note: Some host institutions have combined summer STEM application systems including the Amgen program

- Reviewing Application systems/processes
  - Unique vs. Common summer program applications
  - Complete in one sitting?
  - Required components
  - Upload supporting documents, i.e., copy of passport, etc.

Tip: Prepare your application materials, especially those statements, in advance!
Amgen Scholars Program: application

- All programs require at least:
  - Transcript(s) – *Unofficial or Official*
  - Letter of recommendation
  - Personal statement/essay

- Components (Required)
  - Biographical Information
  - Statement(s) (*prompts vary*)
    - Emphasize fit and preparation for program
    - Connection to career goals
    - Skills/experience will gain
Amgen Scholars Program: application

• Statements (cont)
  • Research Interest Statement(s)
    • Choose Research Faculty/Areas
    • Review website of participating faculty
    • Articulate specific interest/enthusiasm
    • Demonstrate preparation for research project(s)
    • What will learn/take away from experience
  • Or Research Project(s)/Proposal Statement
    • Background, purpose, methods, anticipated results

Don’t forget to review and adhere to those WORD/CHARACTER limits!
Amgen Scholars Program: *application*

- **Statements (cont):** Other potential statements
  - Benefit/Contribute to diversifying science
  - Describe Research Experience
  - Optional Statement
    - *Always utilize!*
    - Provide something unique about you

Tip: Have others read and review your statements and don’t forget to proofread and proofread again.
Amgen Scholars Program: application

- Components (Required cont)
  - Resume/CV
    - Academic background
    - Research Experience
    - Professional Experience
    - Extracurricular(s) – Activities, Service/Leadership
    - Skills
  - Transcripts (official or unofficial)
    - GPA & Coursework
Amgen Scholars Program: application

Components (Required cont)

Recommendation Letters: 1-3

- Commonly entering recommenders name/contact info
- *Check for any additional recommendation forms needed (UCLA)*
- At least one-two from Faculty in STEM fields
  - Speak to fit for opportunity
  - Potential benefits of experience
  - Maturity
  - Ability to succeed
  - Connection to career goals

*Note: Recommendation letters also need to be received by application deadline!*
Amgen Scholars Program: application outliers

- **Caltech**
  - Grant-seeking process
  - Application Requires:
    - Identification and contact with a Caltech research mentor
    - Mentor supports application and proposed research
  - More focus on previous research experience

- **NIH**
  - Unique 2-step application process
  - Research focus on health disparities
  - Applicants not accepted to Amgen are put into general pool for Summer Internship Program
Amgen Scholars Program: review/selection process

• Varies by institution
  • Holistic/thorough review
    • Program Administrators; Participating Faculty
  • May include Interviews

• Selection based on:
  • Academic Record/Achievement
  • Demonstrated fit/motivation for program/research faculty & projects
  • Recommendations
  • Career Plans

*Tip: Discuss any barriers to conducting independent/advanced research during academic year.*
Amgen Scholars Program: review/selection process

From UCSF Program website re: competitive applicants:

Please *DO NOT* apply if:

- You are primarily interested in pursuing an MD or other non-PhD degree
- UCSF does not offer a PhD program in the subject you are interested in pursuing
- You cannot handle living in a large, metropolitan city on your own, with minimal supervision
- You are looking for a free summer vacation (We have high expectations of our students! This is a challenging program, which will require your full-time attention and a lot of hard work.)
- You cannot take your eyes off your cellphone, tablet, or laptop during a seminar or lecture
- Note: If your parent/guardian contacts UCSF about the status of your application, we will take this as a sign that you may not be ready to take on this program.
Amgen Scholars Program: notifications

- Contact with program staff/faculty
- Notifications vary by program (may be rolling)
  - U.S.: Typically in March (by end of month)
  - Asia: By early April
- Offers:
  - May or may not include assigned faculty/project
- Acceptance contract

2018 Application Facts:

- >5,700 students from 1,100 colleges applied for 340 available spots.
- 600 applications received by NIH program for 15 spots
Amgen Scholars Program: resources

• Amgen Scholars Program website
  • FAQs
  • Host institution contacts
• CCRF
  • Advising
  • Statement/CV review
• Your mentors
• Peers
Amgen Scholars Program

**Abbreviated thoughts from an Amgen Scholar alum:**

(1) Make sure your application is well-tailored to the PI(s) of interest.

(2) The Amgen program is a great way to get started in a lab in a more structured way.

(3) Often PIs are more open to helping with other programs and scholarships down the line.

(4) Students should try their best to network within their cohort throughout the program.

(5) The program is much more than a resume filler; few people down the line care about what program you were a part of, but rather what you achieved as part of the program.

(6) The extra trainings for Amgen may seem lame at the time, but I found them to be helpful and time-saving down the line. Don't skip out on these!

(7) Interact extensively with the Undergraduate Research staff at the University.

*Malte Lange, 2014 UW Amgen Scholar, current Columbia Graduate Student*
Amgen Scholars Program

Questions?
THANK YOU!

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