



AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Summer Undergraduate Psychology Experience in Research (SUPER) Fellowship 2026 Frequently Asked Questions

Program Questions

What are the summer fellowship requirements?

APA SUPER Fellows are required to complete the following requirements:

- regular weekly fellowship check-ins and career development webinars with APA via Zoom in June, July, and early August 2026;
- verification from your faculty advisor that you completed a minimum of 20 hours/week for nine weeks in the lab;
- final reflection presentation and paper with thoughts on the research process, laboratory engagement, lessons learned, and career aspirations in September and October 2026;
- a series of four surveys: prior to the start of summer meetings, at the conclusion of the program, one-year post-fellowship, and two-years post-fellowship.

What am I expected to report about my project?

You'll be asked to create a brief final reflection paper and presentation about your SUPER Fellowship experience, which may include thoughts on the research process, your time and experience working in the laboratory, lessons you learned throughout the summer, and your career aspirations.

What will my research experience be like?

Prior to the research fellowship, you should contact a potential faculty research mentor to determine whether they are willing to supervise you for the course of the fellowship and help you develop a research plan. You also may want to ask whether there are any preliminary requirements for working in the laboratory (e.g., IRB/IACUC approval, introductory training, background reading).

Specific duties will vary during the summer based on your research project, but you should expect to participate in designing experiments, preparing equipment and stimuli, interacting with study participants, collecting and analyzing data, maintaining a clean and well-stocked laboratory space, and discussing your findings with co-workers and your faculty host. You'll have the opportunity to see professional scientists at work, and you should ask questions about what they do and how they got there.

Throughout June, July, and early August you will meet virtually with other SUPER Fellows to share your experiences and learn about training and career options in psychological science. As

your summer ends, you'll prepare a personal reflection paper and a brief presentation about your experience and what you learned. You and your faculty host may discuss ways to continue your research together. Overall, you will develop important skills, relationships, and insight as a SUPER Fellow that will help you prepare for graduate training and a potential career in psychological science research.

Eligibility Questions

May I apply to be a 2026 SUPER Fellow?

The SUPER fellowship program is designed to promote access among undergraduate students considering research as a career by expanding opportunities to laboratory training and mentorship to those who may not have had the opportunity to lead psychological science research.

I don't have research experience. Is this program right for me?

Yes! The SUPER Fellowship is an ideal opportunity for students who have not had the opportunity to lead research experiences to gain their first experience leading a research project. Students from all types of undergraduate institutions (e.g., community colleges, liberal arts colleges, minority serving institutions, research universities) are encouraged to apply, and we are working on resources to help you reach potential hosts.

I am graduating in Spring 2026. Can I apply to be a 2026 SUPER fellow?

All 2026 SUPER fellows must graduate in Fall 2026 or later. For Spring 2026 graduates who plan to apply to graduate school, we encourage you to apply for other funding opportunities offered by [APA](#).

I am an international student. Can I apply to be a 2026 SUPER fellow?

Any undergraduate student studying at an accredited undergraduate degree-granting institution physically located in the USA or Canada is eligible to apply. Research must be performed at an accredited degree-granting institution physically located in the USA or Canada. Please note Fellows will be required to submit an IRS W-9 or W-8 Form as part of their acceptance paperwork in order to receive Fellowship funds.

Faculty Host Questions

How do I find a faculty research mentor?

Once you know what your research interest is and you have identified some professors you would like to work with, contact them. It is best to send an email that shows your interest in both working with them specifically AND obtaining research experience this summer. Do not just copy and paste things from their website; send an authentic, organic email introducing

yourself and asking about summer research options. Remember that you are making a first impression with that communication; therefore, you want that communication to be as professional and well put as possible, written with respect.

My current mentor is a graduate student. Can they be my host for the SUPER Fellowship?

We encourage you to work closely with your faculty mentor's staff, students, and colleagues during your SUPER experience, but the program requires that your research host be a faculty member with sufficient laboratory space and resources to host you and your project.

Can I do my research project at a university that I don't attend?

Yes! You must conduct your project under your faculty host's supervision at an accredited degree-granting institution physically located in the USA or Canada, but you do not need to be an enrolled student at that institution.

Does my research require IRB/IACUC approval?

Ethical research conduct requires IRB approval for most research involving human participants and IACUC approval for animal research. If your project is part of a larger study in your faculty host's laboratory, their existing IRB/IACUC approval may apply to your project. However, this is not always the case, so be sure to discuss IRB/IACUC requirements with your host during the application process. Proof of IRB/IACUC application or approval is required before any SUPER Fellowship funds are released.

Application Questions

I want to apply for the SUPER Fellowship. Where do I start?

The two aspects of the application that will take the most time and preparation are finding a faculty research mentor and completing your summer research proposal. You are strongly encouraged to identify and meet with potential faculty members whose research aligns with your interests early. Your proposal may fit with a faculty member's larger research program, and they may have helpful ideas to guide you in bringing your project to fruition. This may all sound difficult (and that's OK), but the questions below should help you develop a plan.

What should my application look like?

There are 4 parts to the SUPER Fellowship application:

1. *Project Proposal* (1200-word limit)

Your project proposal must be no longer than 1200 words. It should address your research goals, the scientific value of your project, the methods you plan to use, the outcome you expect, and why you are the right researcher for this project. Proposals should be clearly written in APA format, but references do not count toward the 1200-word limit.

2. *Personal Statement (350-word limit)*

We do not have the opportunity to personally meet with all applicants; this is your opportunity to tell us part of your story. In 350 words or less, you should describe how this fellowship and funding would support your research journey and future goals.

3. *Unofficial college transcripts (in PDF format)*

You will be required to upload PDFs of all your college transcripts. These need not be official transcripts.

4. *Letter of support from faculty host*

It is your responsibility to identify a faculty mentor to guide your summer research experience. They must provide a letter describing your scientific potential and agreeing to participate in the program. We recommend that you contact potential hosts well in advance of your application, based on courses you have taken and/or shared research interests in psychology. Faculty mentors should be prepared to:

- help you develop your project proposal;
- provide space and resources in their laboratory (for a minimum of 9 weeks at 20 hours/week) to conduct your research project;
- meet with you regularly to monitor your research progress;
- offer guidance on academic and career options during regular meetings;
- certify that your research project is feasible and can reach a productive conclusion by the end of the program; and
- address how participating in the SUPER Fellowship will support your research journey and future goals.

Do you have any examples of or tips for writing a successful research proposal?

We encourage you to prepare to write your proposal before sitting down to write it. This includes creating an outline and obtaining feedback on your research plan from your faculty mentor. We highly encourage you to have your faculty mentor and/or your institution's writing center review your full proposal prior to final submission. Some web resources you can review to help in this process include the following:

- *What is a successful research grant proposal?* [slide deck](#) from Duke University
- *Applying for a Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship* [website](#) from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- *Writing an Effective Research Proposal* [website](#) from the University of New Hampshire

Funding Questions

When will I get paid?

Funds will be disbursed in two installments:

- \$2,000 USD to the student upon submission of required program paperwork and confirmation of IRB/IACUC submission is received; and

- \$2,000 USD to the student and \$1,000 USD to the faculty mentor in mid-late Fall 2026 after all summer requirements are met and approved.

The SUPER Fellow and their faculty research advisor will each be issued a 1099 tax form at year's end.

What are these funds supposed to cover?

SUPER Fellowship stipends are expected to help cover your basic living expenses over the summer (e.g., housing, food) to provide you with time to gain research experience. These funds are not to be used towards study expenses, indirect costs, or research overhead.

Can I have another job while I conduct my research over the summer?

Fellows are not required to solely conduct research during their summer. We understand that you may need or want a job in addition to gaining research experience. It is best to discuss your summer scheduling needs with your faculty research mentor to design a project and research schedule that works for both of you. As a reminder, all SUPER fellows must spend at least 20 hours a week for 9 weeks in the research laboratory conducting their project.