

1. What is the BRIDGE Summer Fellowship Program?

The BRIDGE Summer Fellowship Program, hosted by the Division of Infectious Diseases at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School, offers a 10-week mentored summer research fellowship to college students (rising sophomores - seniors) and college graduates taking a gap year. The program focuses on mentoring in laboratory research, epidemiologic research, or clinical research within the field of infectious diseases. It aims to build bridges to careers in medicine, public health, and infectious disease research, particularly for individuals from backgrounds historically underrepresented in these fields.

2. What are the key components of the mentored fellowship?

The program includes experiential and didactic learning, division meetings, educational sessions (journal club, lectures, webinars), and a specific research project conducted under the supervision of a primary faculty mentors. Participants present their research at the program's conclusion to the division and establish relationships with their research mentor and with BRIDGE program mentors that are intended to be long-term, after the summer fellowship ends. Shadowing experiences in laboratories or research groups outside of the primary mentored experience may also be available.

3. Who is eligible to apply for the program?

The program is open to college undergraduate students (rising sophomores - seniors) and college graduates taking a gap year prior to postgraduate training. Eligibility requires self-identification as a member of a racial or ethnic group traditionally underrepresented in biomedical research, as defined by the National Institutes of Health. <https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/underrepresented-person-definition>. Please see the link to a document outlining eligibility criteria in detail on the BRIDGE website.

4. What do I gain from this internship?

This internship offers hands-on experience, mentorship, and exposure in infectious disease research. You'll acquire essential skills and insights, exploring diverse projects from HIV/AIDS to global health. The program provides a supportive foundation for your future career in medicine, public health, or infectious disease research, making it a transformative journey towards impactful contributions in healthcare.

5. If I have a disability, am I still eligible?

Yes, the program encourages applications from individuals with disabilities. Eligibility is based on meeting all other specified criteria (refer to "Am I eligible?").

6. If I am in a Masters program, am I still eligible?

No, enrollment in a Masters program disqualifies applicants.

7. What are the dates of the BRIDGE 2024 Summer Fellowship Program?

The program runs for 10-weeks during the spring / summer from June 10, 2024 - August 16, 2024. Applicants are required to complete the 10-week program in its entirety.

8. How many are selected for the program?

Approximately 9 slots are available for the program.

9. Is quantitative coursework or prior research experience necessary?

While preferred, quantitative coursework or prior research experience is not required. Applicants should convey an interest in infectious diseases and articulate clearly how the program aligns with their long-term career goals.

10. How are students selected for the program?

Students are selected based on a competitive application process. Applications are reviewed by the BRIDGE fellowship selection committee, and candidates are chosen based on their academic and research background, interest in infectious diseases, and potential contributions to the program.	
Now – January 19th	Applicants submit their application; Apply Here: https://redcap.partners.org/redcap/surveys/?s=NCH8W8TLMX4RL7EA
January 20th – Mid-February	Fellowship selection committee reviews applications.
Mid to Late-February	Applicants will receive email notifications informing them of whether they have been selected for an interview.
March	Interviews will be conducted, and applicants will be required to submit a resume along with letters of recommendation or references.
Early-April	Applicants will be notified of the final decision.

11. What should I include in my application?

Your application should highlight your academic achievements, research experience, career goals, and a genuine interest in infectious diseases. Please delineate how your participation in the program aligns with your career goals and how the fellowship might be beneficial to your future career. If you are selected for an interview, we will request two letters of recommendations from supervisors/faculty mentors at that time.

12. How are mentors assigned to fellows?

Mentorship is a crucial aspect of the program. Fellows are carefully paired with mentors from the Division of Infectious Diseases at Brigham and Women’s Hospital and the Harvard Center for AIDS Research based on shared research interests, expertise, and compatibility.

13. Can I apply if I am an international student?

We do not provide J-1 visa sponsorship for this program. International students enrolled in an accredited 4-year college bachelor’s degree program in the United States are eligible if you are on a F-1 visa with an OPT/CPT that allows participation in a summer research fellowship program.

14. Is housing provided for BRIDGE fellows?

Yes, housing is provided for all BRIDGE fellows in a local college campus with a private bedroom within a shared unit and kitchen.

15. Will I receive a stipend for my participation in the BRIDGE program?

Yes, in addition to the housing provided, BRIDGE fellows will receive a \$5,000 stipend to defray the costs of travel to and from Boston, travel within Boston, and costs of living during the fellowship period.

16. What is the Day in the Life of an intern?

Intern experiences vary based on individual mentors and their specific research areas. For instance, our intern assigned to Dr. Sophia Koo had exposure to both clinical and lab aspects. On the clinical side, tasks included working on trials related to immunocompromised patients and a

retrospective study on Covid-19. The lab team focused on studies related to bacterial and fungal pneumonia, involving mouse work and collecting breath samples from patients. The schedule was tailored to the intern's interests, emphasizing hospital work and assisting with research projects. The flexibility allows interns to gain hands-on experience in areas they find most compelling. As a result, our current intern is actively contributing to a publication with our team!

As for their specific hours, normally our intern would start from 9am - 11am and end from 4pm - 6pm working 5 days a week. Additionally, there are mandatory weekly lecture series conducted once a week. These sessions cover valuable topics and provides useful insights for future endeavors.

17. Are there opportunities for networking and collaboration with fellow participants?

Yes, the program includes various networking events, group meetings, and collaborative sessions, fostering a supportive community among participants.

18. How will I be notified if I am selected for an interview?

If selected for an interview, you will receive an email with details about the interview date, time, and platform. Ensure that you regularly check the email address you provided in your application.

19. What should I prepare for the interview?

Prepare to discuss your academic and research background, your interest in infectious diseases, and how you believe your participation will contribute to and benefit from the BRIDGE Summer Fellowship Program.

20. When will final decisions be communicated to applicants?

Final decisions for the summer 2024 program will be communicated to applicants by Monday, April 15, 2024. Please be patient, as the selection process involves careful consideration of each candidate.

21. When is the application deadline for BRIDGE 2024?

The application deadline for BRIDGE 2024 is Friday, January 19, 2024, at 8:00 pm EST.

22. Is it possible to participate in the BRIDGE internship more than once?

Unfortunately, no. Due to the high demand, we can only accommodate an intern for one term. Nevertheless, we encourage you to maintain communication with your initially assigned BRIDGE mentor. This connection may prove valuable in exploring potential future opportunities that align with your interests and goals.

23. Can I withdraw my application?

Yes, please email BRIDGE@bwh.harvard.edu and let us know you'd like to be withdrawn.

24. How can I request feedback on my application if not selected?

If you would like feedback on your application, please email BRIDGE@bwh.harvard.edu with your request. We will do our best to provide constructive insights to assist you in your future endeavors.

If you have any additional questions or concerns not addressed here, please feel free to contact us at BRIDGE@bwh.harvard.edu. We appreciate your interest in the BRIDGE Summer Fellowship Program and look forward to your potential participation!