

NeURO program FAQ

Your questions, answered!

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The NeURO program experience

Learn more about NeURO in the program's [website](#)

Q: What does the program look like for someone who has never done research?

The NeURO program is open to all Stanford students and we are particularly excited to welcome students who haven't done research before. You will start working in the lab for 8-10 hours per week in the spring quarter so that you can gain the background knowledge, skills, confidence, and network that will help you thrive during the summer. In the summer, you will be working in the lab full-time and attending program workshops and events (40 hours/week). Our workshops will supplement your lab learning and help you make the most of your research experience. Learn more about the program experience at the [NeURO website](#).

Q: Is there coursework associated with the NeURO program?

The program doesn't require NeURO fellows to do coursework. However, as part of the program, fellows attend summer workshops related to scientific and professional development.

Q: What's the difference between the Faculty Advisor and the Research Mentor?

The Faculty Advisor is the professor who has agreed to welcome you into their research lab. You need support from a Faculty Advisor in order to apply to NeURO. Once you're part of the lab, you will be encouraged to meet regularly with the Faculty Advisor, but they won't be your day-to-day mentor. This is the role of the Research Mentor, who is a graduate student, postdoc, or lab staff member within the host lab. The Research Mentor will work 1:1 with you to teach you research techniques, assign you literature to read, make sure you're making progress in your research project, etc.

Q: What should I do in the fall and winter quarters in preparation for the program?

- If you don't know where to start, consider joining the [Stanford Undergraduate Neuroscience Society](#). This student organization promotes research, outreach, and professional development opportunities among students interested in neuroscience.
- Start thinking about your interest areas and what techniques appeal to you. Then search for labs that are doing the type of neuroscience research you're interested in. Searching on Google, exploring our website's [Neuroscience News](#) section, and learning which [Faculty](#) are associated with the Wu Tsai Neuro Institute are great ways to start.

- Reach out to the labs you're interested in and meet with their members. This will help you identify a Faculty Advisor who can welcome you into their lab and support your application to NeURO. Check the "Writing an introductory email" section of our [Resources](#) page for tips.

Q: What would a typical day look like during the summer with full-time research?

Your "typical day" will vary depending on the type of research you are doing - you might be in the lab from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, getting up early to run an experiment, or staying up late because you're inspired and writing code. This is an important question to discuss with your Research Mentor.

Q: Is on-campus housing/dining required?

No, but Stanford students doing summer research can apply for summer housing through [RD&E](#).

Q: How much is the stipend for this year?

NeURO fellows receive a stipend for doing research full-time during the summer. We use the stipend formula established by the Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education - the base summer stipend is \$8,500, with an additional need-based supplement of up to \$1,500.

Students do not receive a stipend for the spring portion of this fellowship unless they have financial need as determined by the Financial Aid office. In addition to financial need, students must ensure they have not met their "[Student Responsibility](#)" in order to receive the spring stipend (\$1,500). Students who are not eligible to receive a spring stipend are encouraged to sign up for research credits.

Q: How much does it cost to stay on campus during the fellowship?

Stanford summer room & board rates are generally set in the late spring. Summer rates can be found on [this RD&E website](#). Please use the 10-week rate to plan your finances.

Q: Can you get involved in undergraduate research without a stipend? Do we have to use on-campus existing research programs?

You are free to do as you wish. However, we encourage our faculty to provide stipends so that no students are excluded from the research experience on financial grounds. There are lots of ways that you can explore research on campus! Check out the [Resources](#) page for more information.

Finding a lab for the NeURO program (or in general)

Q: What labs are in need of undergraduates? I've reached out to three already, and all of them are not accepting any new positions / How should we go about reaching out to labs we're interested in working with? / How should I reach out to faculty members? / How do

we find faculty mentors? / What if none of the labs I have tried to contact give me a place?

There are lots of ways to find labs. Googling “Stanford” + the types of neuroscience research you are interested in is a great way to start! You’re also welcome to explore the [Neuroscience News](#) section of our website to learn about some of the neuroscience research being done at Stanford.

No single lab is going to be a guarantee for you - they may have just found an undergrad to work with, be too busy at the moment, or just not be the right fit for you. Plan to email a few labs (e.g., 3-5), and don’t feel bad about following up with one friendly and polite email if you don’t hear back from them after one week. If nothing works - try a different lab! There are hundreds of neuroscience researchers on campus – with a little patience you’ll find a great opportunity. For more guidance about how to reach out, check out our [Resources](#) page.

Q: So are we essentially finding labs doing neuroscience research at Stanford and emailing the professors to see if they can take us on as mentees?

Yes! It’s important for you to meet with potential Faculty Advisors and Research Mentors to make sure their lab is a good fit for you (and you are a good fit for them). Finding the right fit is key to having a great research experience. You might find it most useful to meet with the Research Mentor, who will be your direct research mentor in the lab (see Q above about the difference between the Faculty Advisor and the Research Mentor).

Q: Are research projects predetermined or do they have to be proposed by students themselves? And how do I formulate a project that's suitable for my level to pursue?

Learning how to formulate a well-designed scientific research project takes years of experience. Your Faculty Advisor and Research Mentor will not expect this of you as an undergraduate. They will have projects that they are working on that need your help, or mini-projects that they can spin off from a bigger project for you to work on. Before applying, you will talk with your Faculty Advisor and Research Mentor about available projects.

Q: How do I know whether I'll fit in their lab?

Finding the right fit is important to having a great research experience. The best way to get a sense of whether a lab is a good fit is to talk with the lab members, in particular your potential Research Mentor! Be open and honest about the type of experience and mentorship you are looking for. If it’s not a great fit, it’s totally ok (really, it’s for the best) for you to decline an offer and seek out other labs.

Q: Do we have to contact a faculty member and secure a place in their lab before applying? Or can we apply in general and then get a spot in any lab that offers one?

There are research programs on campus that use both approaches — for some, you apply to the program and they match you with a lab, and for others you find a lab and apply to the program. For the NeURO program, you apply with a Faculty Advisor. We understand that this can be challenging, so we’ve created our [Resources](#) page to help. However, if you’d prefer to

apply to a program that matches you with a lab, that's great too! The Resources page has links to other great neuroscience-related programs.

Q: If we do get a faculty to mentor us, what are the next steps?

Congrats! The next step is to apply to NeURO (and other programs — it's always best not to have all your eggs in one basket).

Applying to NeURO

Learn more about the NeURO application and eligibility [here](#)

Q: Where is the application?

The link to the application can be found on the [NeURO website](#) along with other important information.

Q: What is the timeline for applying to the NeURO program?

The application deadline is Sunday, February 1, 2026 at 11:59 pm.

Q: Are certain neuroscience or psychology courses required to participate? / Will it hurt our chances if we haven't taken many neuroscience or biology classes before?

There are no specifically required courses however, having some bio or neuro courses under your belt will help you thrive in the NeURO program. For a list of many of the neuro-related courses at Stanford, visit the Stanford Undergraduate Neuroscience Society's [website](#). If you haven't already taken bio or neuro courses, we encourage you to take them in the spring quarter.

Q: How should we approach the short-answer questions? What qualities or information do the best responses usually contain? / Are there any specific aspects of the application that the readers are placing an emphasis on, or are there any characteristics that the readers are looking for in a NeURO fellow?

We are hoping to bring together a cohort of students who bring a broad range of perspectives to the program and who are deeply engaged. The “right” approach is to share your genuine self in your application. For the research-related portions of the application, we expect you to have a conversation with your Faculty Advisor and Research Mentor to come up with a research project that you will then summarize for us in your own words. We've intentionally designed the application to encourage these conversations early on so that you and your lab are both on the same page about what your research project will be (and are both excited about it!).

Q: How do we get a lab to support us in the application?

Looking for a lab? See the section above. Looking for your lab to help you with portions of your application? Just ask! A supportive mentor will be happy to talk with you about the research project. We expect the Faculty Advisor and the Research Mentor to involve you in the process of coming up with a research project.

Q: Do you have to write a proposal for an independent project or can you be a part of this program and just join an existing project?

Most undergraduate projects are part of an existing project in a lab, but sometimes labs might have a smaller project that is somewhat more independent from the main research project.

Either way, you aren't expected to come up with your own project - the lab, and specifically your Faculty Advisor and Research Mentor, will let you know the area/project where they will need your help.

Q: Does already being affiliated/ familiar with a lab, and having knowledge of lab techniques hinder chances of being accepted into the program? / Is it recommended to apply to this program if you have a current ongoing research internship?

Though students without previous research experience are strongly encouraged to apply, the program is open and will consider applicants with varying degrees of research experience.