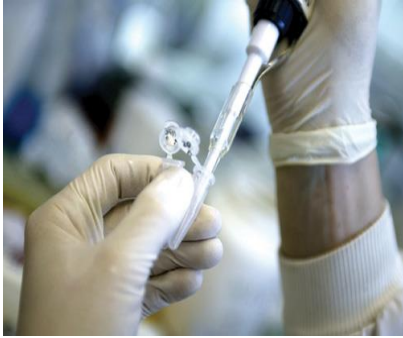


FINDING SUMMER RESEARCH EXPERIENCES

Why do a Summer Research Experience Placement



If you are determined to pursue a career in research, whether this be a full time paid job or a PhD, it is crucial that you gain prior experience within a research environment in order to demonstrate that you have the necessary technical and transferable skills to be successful within this industry.

For those of you who are considering the possibility of this type of career, a research placement will allow you to gain an insight into the work involved in a laboratory setting and confirm whether you would enjoy progressing within this industry.

How to apply for a Summer Research Experience Placement

Trying to find a Summer Research Experience Placement can be daunting and therefore this document aims to help you through the application process. There is a vast array of opportunities out there that fall into two categories, both with their own unique application process;

- 1) **Opportunities advertised by UK & global research institutions/organisations to do research in their laboratories.**
- 2) **Societies/Charities offering bursaries to conduct a project in the supervisor's university.**

Applying to Research Institutions

Research Institutions such as the [Medical Research Council \(MRC\)](#) and [Cancer Research UK](#) offer summer research projects within their organisation.

This is also true for many UK and international universities, for example University of Cambridge (UK), Karolinska Institutet (Sweden), Institut Pasteur (France), and Ludwig-Maximilians—Universität München (Germany), offer summer research projects through the [Amgen Scholars Europe Programme](#).

These organisations advertise specific research topics and provide details of the supervisor, for students to apply. The application process differs depending on the organisation and so a student could be expected to apply with an Application Form/CV/Cover, Letter/Personal Statement by a specific deadline.

The supervisor would then select a successful candidate or invite numerous candidates to interview before deciding.

If the student was successful, they would be expected to conduct the project under the supervision of the academic in their laboratory.

Applying for a Bursary

Many charities and societies offer funding to a student and supervisor to conduct a research project in the University of the Supervisor.

If a student is interested in doing a research project over the summer, they should firstly decide on the area of research they are interested in.

The student should then look at societies/charities that offer funding for projects in this field of research.

Once they have found this, they should research into academics at a university they would like to do a project in and identify those who are conducting current research in the area they are interested in.

At this point, the student should send a speculative e-mail to the academic explaining the reasons for wanting to do a research project, why in this field and with that particular academic and mention the funding that they believe they could be eligible for.

If the academic is interested, the student and supervisor would come up with a project and submit their proposal to the society/charity who would then decide if they would like to fund the project.

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Things to do before applying

Check deadline: The majority of deadlines for applying to projects or funding bodies occur in January – April with some deadlines falling in November – December. It is therefore important to start these applications as early as possible to give you time to contact potential supervisors and submit a project proposal if you are applying to a funding body, or to create an excellent application if you are applying directly to a project with an organisation.

Check eligibility: Many of the organisations offering projects or funding will only accept applications from students in their penultimate year. Therefore, read the conditions to see whether you are eligible to apply.

Check location: Think about whether you will be able to relocate to the place you are applying to over the summer on the pay you are being offered. If you are applying abroad they may offer/help with accommodation so read about the benefits on the application. If you are applying for funding, think about whether you could stay in Manchester over the summer period or whether you would try and find a project in a university closer to home.

Do your research: If you are applying to a research institute, research around the project, the supervisor and the institute. They want to see that you are passionate about the subject area and are impressed with the supervisor/institute's research. If you are trying to find a supervisor to apply for funding, look into universities and academics that are researching into the area of study you are interested in. Find organisations that will offer funding to do research in this field. With this information, you will be able to write an informative speculative e-mail to potential supervisors.

Check the potential supervisor: If you have an academic in mind that you would like to do a project with, check that they are a member of the society that you would like to apply to for funding. The society will only fund projects if the academic is a member and they will often expect the supervisor to submit the project proposal not the student!

Produce a winning application: Remember to read specifically what kind of documentation is required for the application. Do they want you to complete an Application Form/CV/Cover Letter/Personal Statement? Do they require a reference or transcript of your grades? [Official transcripts](#) can take up to 8 weeks to come through whilst unofficial transcripts can be requested from the [SBS Student Support Hub](#). This is why it is important to start applications early! You can book a careers [appointment](#) for a consultant to give you advice on your application before you send it off.

Benefits

PAID: Stipend can vary between £140-400 per week depending on the organisation.

TRAVEL: Opportunity to travel to institutes in Germany, Sweden, Austria, Switzerland, etc.

DURATION: 6-10 weeks of hands-on laboratory experience depending on organisation.

SUPPORT: Additional support may be given such as travel expenses and accommodation.

EMPLOYABILITY: Gain technical laboratory skills and transferable skills, making you more employable to graduate recruiters.

Galabina Bozhanova



Did a summer research project under the supervision of Prof. Alan Dickson at The University of Manchester.

This involved growing cell cultures using Chinese Hamster Ovarian (CHO) cells to produce recombinant antibodies and looking at the effects of different feeds on growth and viability.

“For those who are considering a career in research, doing a summer placement gives you the opportunity to experience a research environment and you will be more favoured by employers if you have work experience on your CV.”

List of Opportunities

For a list of organisations offering projects or funding, then please go to the [SBS Intranet Page](#).

If you have any queries then please e-mail sbs.hub@manchester.ac.uk