

# Summer research can help you:

- Try out research full time, beyond your lab classes
  - Do you enjoy it? Could graduate school and a research career be a good fit?
- Learn about new methods and topics
  - Develop skills that aren't used at Grinnell
  - Work on an issue not covered by our faculty
- Experience “grad school camp”: a large lab with graduate students, post-docs, and other students under a lead researcher
- Prepare for graduate school
  - PhD programs and medical school both look for significant research experience

# Summer research programs

- On campus: **MAPs**
  - Mentored Advanced Project
  - Supervised by Grinnell faculty
  - Usually in collaboration with other students
  - Eligible after second year
- Off campus: **REUs** and similar programs
  - Research Experience for Undergraduates, funded by NSF
  - Other programs have a similar structure but different funding
  - Eligibility & requirements vary

**summer 2023 MAP  
apps due Feb. 26**

# Finding opportunities: formal programs

[career.grinnell.edu/resources/summer-research](https://career.grinnell.edu/resources/summer-research)

[grinco.sharepoint.com/sites/Science Division/](https://grinco.sharepoint.com/sites/Science_Division/) → Research Opportunities

- Both MAPs (for science departments) and off-campus research

[pathwaystoscience.org](https://pathwaystoscience.org)

[nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu](https://nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu) → Search for an REU Site

# Finding opportunities: networking

- Identify researchers doing interesting work and email them directly
  - Introduce yourself (Grinnell College, class year, major)
  - Express your interest in their work; be *brief* but *specific*
  - "Are there any opportunities to get involved with your research this summer?"
- Connect with alumni in your field of interest
  - LinkedIn, Grinnell Connect, GrinNetworking Facebook group

# Finding opportunities: Handshake

The screenshot displays the Handshake website interface. At the top left is the Handshake logo. A navigation bar contains links for Jobs, Events, Q&A, and Students, with 'Jobs' circled in orange. To the right are links for Messages and Career Center. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links for Jobs, Saved, Applications, and Employers, with 'Jobs' underlined. A search bar with a magnifying glass icon and the text 'Search' is positioned below the navigation. A row of filter buttons includes Location, Full-time job, Internship, Part-time, On-campus, and All filters, with 'All filters' circled in orange. On the right side, a 'Filters' sidebar is visible, titled 'Filters' and 'Job type'. It contains buttons for Full-Time, Part-Time, Internship, On-Campus, Job, and + More, with 'Internship' circled in orange. Below these buttons are three checkboxes: 'Paid roles only', 'Work study', and 'Interviewing on campus', all of which are currently unchecked.

# Finding opportunities: Handshake

## Job Role

University Student Researchers

## Industry

Biotech & Life Sciences

## Major

Suggested

Biological Chemistry

## Employer preferences

- Match all employer preferences [^](#)
- Major: **Biological Chemistry**
- School Year: **Sophomore**
- Graduation Date: **May 2025**
- US Work Authorization: **Authorized**

# Considerations for F-1 students

- Always consult OISA:  
[grinco.sharepoint.com/sites/OfficeOfInternationalStudentAffairs](https://grinco.sharepoint.com/sites/OfficeOfInternationalStudentAffairs)
- Enroll in INT-300 for academic credit if you are working in the US, not at Grinnell College
- In Handshake:
  - Are you legally authorized to work in the US? = YES
  - Will you now or in the future require visa sponsorship? = YES

# Components to a successful application

## 1. What will you **contribute** to this project?

- What relevant experience and interests do you have?
  - Projects vary in what they expect of applicants: many do not expect much, if any, prior research experience.
- What skills have you developed?
- How will you be a valuable lab member?
  - Your **curiosity** is an asset!



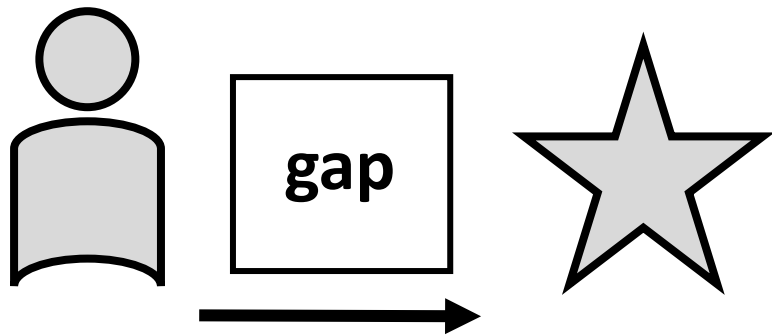
# Components to a successful application

## 2. How will you **benefit** from this project?

- What gap will this project fill for you?
- What skills and knowledge do you hope to gain during this summer experience, and why?
- How does opportunity help you get from where you are now to your post-graduate goal? Be specific!

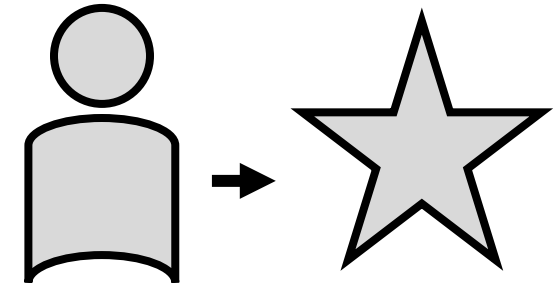
# Components to a successful application

2. How will you **benefit** from this project?



Summer research adds...

**Skills!**  
**Knowledge!**  
**Contacts!**



# More tips

- Your liberal arts education is a strength!
  - Highlight disciplinary breadth, critical thinking skills, and ability to examine issues through multiple lenses
- Use concrete details and specific examples
  - Talk about your specific role and the skills you used
  - Explain why you are drawn to the topics that interest you
- Follow directions very clearly
  - Specific prompt → answer every part of the question
  - Formatting instructions → follow them exactly

# Letters of recommendation

- Best option: a professor in the field who knows you well and has supervised you in research
- Other options:
  - Your tutorial adviser
  - A professor for a class you did well in
- Get to know your faculty! Go to office hours; talk to them about your interests.

# CLS resources

- STEM advising: Sarah Barks [barks] or your exploratory adviser
  - Schedule appointments via Handshake
  - Drop-in hours every afternoon *except Wednesday*, 2 – 4:30
  - STEM drop-in hours are on Tuesdays
- [career.grinnell.edu](https://career.grinnell.edu)