

Opportunities and resources!

Presented by the Biology Student Committee

What opportunities are out there?

There are lots of possible trajectories for someone with a Bachelor's degree!

- Graduate school (PhD or Master's degree)
- Research technician or assistant
- Professional programs (med school, vet school, dental school, nursing)
- Government positions
- Teaching positions (K-12)
- Non-profit positions
- And many more: <https://myidp.sciencecareers.org/>

How do you find opportunities?

Google is your best tool!

- Government jobs: <https://www.usajobs.gov/>
- Grad schools: school websites, faculty websites, Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Researchgate
- Teaching positions: <https://teach.com/careers/become-a-teacher/teaching-career/teaching-job-websites/>
- Non-profit positions: <https://us.fulbrightonline.org/>, <https://www.peacecorps.gov/>
- Texas A&M job board <https://wfscjobs.tamu.edu/job-board/>
- ECOLOG - L (listserv) <https://www.esa.org/membership/ecolog/>
- Fisheries job openings <https://jobs.fisheries.org/>
- Graduate school openings: https://evol.mcmaster.ca/cgi-bin/my_wrap/brian/evoldir/Jobs/
- Science staff/technician positions <http://ecophys-jobs.org/staff.html>
- Conservation jobs: <https://www.conservationjobboard.com/>

Sending a cold email

When you find a position, you'll often have to send a short "cold email"

- Introduce yourself and state why you're emailing
- Include a bit of info about your degree level and relevant experience
- Use a brief and clear subject line
- Attach a resume or CV

Example:

- Hi Dr. Smith, I'm Carmen Hoffbeck, a Master's student at CSU Northridge. I'm emailing because I'm interested in a position in your lab studying coral symbioses, and I was hoping to find if you had funding for a student in Fall 2021. I've attached my CV for your reference. Thank you for your time!

How to write emails to faculty and employers

Emails are often your first line of connection, so it's important to get it right!

- Address the person by the correct title: if they have a PhD, that's "Dr."
 - If you're not sure about someone's title, err on the side of formality
- Be brief and to the point: faculty and employers are usually very busy
- Make it clear what you are requesting and if there is a due date
 - Eg. for letters of recommendation, make it very clear when they are due by
- Use your resources! There are plenty of examples online, and you can have friends and mentors read your emails before you send them
- <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/how-to-write-a-professional-email>

Letters of recommendation

These are a very important part of your application!

- Ask professors, employers, and mentors that you have a good history with and who can speak to specific aspects of what qualifies you
 - "I'm hoping you can speak to my quality as a student researcher. Can you write me a good letter of recommendation before April 15th?"
- Ask well in advance of the due date, and include all relevant information
 - "If you're able to write me a good letter of recommendation, I'm applying to USC and UCSD, the due dates are April 15th and May 1st. I've included my CV and transcript for your reference, and links to the application portal. Let me know if you need any further info!"

Maintaining relationships with professors and employers

In order to get good letters, it's important to have good relationships that you maintain over time

- Visit office hours and get to know your professors and TA/GAs
 - Tell your professors about yourself and your career goals
 - Demonstrate that you're a strong student
- Email periodically to stay in touch, not just when you need something
 - "I saw this article that reminded me of what we learned in class..."
 - "I'm going to be applying for graduate school..."
- Be professional and polite

Making connections in the Zoom era

It's hard to feel connected while learning and working virtually! But you can still be making connections with your professors and reaching out for opportunities.

- Attend virtual office hours
- Leave your camera on in class if possible
- When you send a cold email, offer to have a Zoom or Skype meeting if the person is interested

Writing personal statements

This is another very important part of any application!

- Give yourself time to write a strong statement
- Ask people to read and revise: your friends and letter writers can be great resources
- Read the website for the opportunity and emphasize what they're looking for
 - Eg, if the website says they value outreach, highlight any outreach you've done in your statement
- Tell a story about yourself
- Emphasize both why the opportunity will be valuable for you and how you will contribute to the organization you're joining

Useful tips

Resume versus CV:

- Your CV (*Curriculum vitae*) is a master list of all your experiences, degrees, awards, scholarships, and more (tip: keep this up-to-date at all times)
- Your resume is a short (usually 1-2 pages) document detailing your relevant experience for a specific position

Use your school or work email when sending cold emails

- Employers and faculty are more likely to receive and read an email from a .edu address
- Use an email signature to make your emails more professional

Useful tips

Applications can be expensive

- Narrow down what you're really interested in
- Apply for fee waivers (if you're eligible)

Get organized:

- Keep a spreadsheet or document where you list what you're interested in applying for, what you've submitted, costs of applications, due dates, etc

Don't limit yourself!

- There are lots of opportunities out there, and there's no one "correct" path