

MERRIT FELLOWSHIP FAQ

What is MERRIT?

MERRIT stands for Multidisciplinary Engineering and Renal Research for Innovation of Technology. It is an educational, design and research pipeline for teams of engineering students to focus on the development of new technologies for nephrology and to encourage the pursuit of academic careers in kidney research. Our program brings together two complementary sets of mentors: engineering faculty from Cooper Union and the nephrology faculty from Mount Sinai.

How long is the program?

It is 10 weeks (about two and a half months) long. The exact starting and ending dates vary from year to year and are posted on the website, but in general it runs from first week of June to middle of August. 2023 program started on May 31st, 2023 and ended on August 11th.

Who can apply?

You must be an undergraduate engineering student with a declared major or a master's student currently enrolled in an accredited university. All subdisciplines of engineering are welcome.

How do I apply?

Selection for the program is competitive. We accept 3-6 students each year. You can apply through the MERRIT application portal.

Is there an application deadline?

Yes, the date changes from year to year and is posted on the MERRIT website. 2024 application deadline is February 23, 2024.

What kind of research will I be working on?

While all the research labs participating in the program are in the Division of Nephrology, they have varying interests that range from immunology to tissue engineering. Some labs focus on specific diseases (e.g., polycystic kidney disease) while others are more clinical or translational (e.g., discovery of new urinary biomarkers).

Do I need to have prior research experience?

While prior research experience is not necessary, the application process is competitive and prior research experience could be a factor in admission.

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What are the deliverables at the end of the program?

Each student is expected to prepare an oral presentation at the end of their fellowship and participate in the MERRIT Research Symposium at Mount Sinai.

How much is the stipend?

The current stipend is \$6,000.

Is housing available?

You are responsible for your own housing, but we will provide a generous housing allowance.

Is this program only for engineering students?

Yes, undergraduate or master's students must be in an accredited university and must have declared their major in engineering.

Do I get academic credit for participating?

No.

Are there any official courses?

There will be one formal class on Responsible Conduct of Research. There will also be several didactic programs that are jointly administered with other summer research programs at Sinai. These may include scientific seminars, research presentations, and journal clubs where research papers will be discussed.

When will I get my stipend?

You will receive your stipend as two paychecks, once on your first day and the second midway.

Will I have to pay taxes on my stipend?

Yes.

Do I have to sign a photo/video release to participate?

Yes.

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Do I really need to be at the program from 9:00am to 5:00pm every weekday?

Yes.

