

Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program At the Department of Microbiology and Immunology LSU Health Shreveport

Program Overview

The Barrié Foundation and the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at LSU Health Shreveport have partnered to launch the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program for Galician undergraduate students considering a career in biomedical research.

In an intensive nine-week summer program, fellows will carry out research in the host-pathogen interaction in a laboratory at LSU Health Shreveport under the guidance of faculty and laboratory members. In the process, fellows will attend research seminars, journal clubs, and other academic and social activities at LSU Health Shreveport. At the end of the Program, fellows will present their research results to students and mentors at a poster session.

The Fellowship Program, co-sponsored by the Barrié Foundation and LSU Health Shreveport Department of Microbiology and Immunology, is designed to provide hands-on experience in biomedical research at a leading academic medical center, together with guidance on how to plan for a research-related career.

The Program will run from June 28 through August 27, 2021. Applicants in their first or last year of study are not eligible to apply.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the Fellowship Program, applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Be Spanish citizens.
2. Have been born in or have been a legal resident of Galicia for a continuous period of at least two years immediately preceding the application deadline; or have at least one birth parent born in Galicia.
3. Be registered full-time in an undergraduate program at a Spanish University leading to an undergraduate degree in life sciences or related fields. Eligible fields of study include:

- Biology
- Biochemistry
- Biotechnology
- Biomedical Engineering
- Genetics
- Microbiology / Molecular Biology
- Medicine
- Pharmacy
- Biomedical Sciences
- Veterinary Sciences

Applicants in their first or last year of study are not eligible to apply.

4. Have a cumulative undergraduate grade average of 7.0 or higher on a 10 scale at the time of application (equivalent to a cumulative GPA of 3.3 or higher.)
5. Be proficient in the English language (at least a B2 CEFR level.)
6. Be willing and able to attend the entire fellowship period, from June 28 to August 27, 2021.

Application

Applications for the Fellowship Program are accepted from **10am on November 25, 2020 until 10am on January 25, 2021** (local time in Spain). Applicants must complete an online application form available on the Barrié Foundation website, and submit the following supporting documentation by the application deadline:

1. Copy of a citizenship document (e.g. national ID or passport.)
2. Applicants born outside of Galicia must provide either proof of Galician direct descent (e.g. national ID or passport of both or either parent) or proof of Galician continued residence for at least two years immediately preceding the application deadline (e.g. certificate of registration in Galician Census.)
3. Recent passport-size photograph.
4. Proof of enrollment as a full-time student at an accredited Spanish University.
5. University degree transcripts to date (an unofficial copy is acceptable.) Transcripts must be in English or accompanied by an English translation prepared by the University.
6. Curriculum vitae (CV), briefly detailing educational and academic background (and work experience, if relevant to the application.) This document should be one to two pages in length, in English.

7. Evidence of English Proficiency, either a copy of original English language test results or a scheduled test date. The below are accepted English language tests and minimum required scores:

- International English Language Testing System (IELTS.) Overall score of at least 6.0; or
- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL.) Overall score of at least 87; or
- C1 Advanced (formerly Cambridge English: Advanced [CAE].) Overall score of at least 160 (Grade C); or
- Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic.) Overall score of at least 59.

Only test scores from exams taken within three years of the application deadline will be accepted.

The deadline to meet the English language requirement is March, 22 2021. We highly recommend applicants to register months in advance of the test, as testing centers have limited availability and seats tend to fill up quickly.

Exemptions to providing an official language test score:

- Applicants who are enrolled in an accredited Bachelor's degree program conducted entirely in English (teaching, assessment and examination); or
- Applicants who have completed at least one academic year of full-time study at a university located in an English-speaking country as part of an international exchange program leading to an accredited Bachelor's degree.

Attested proof from the educational institution will be required, in the form of either unofficial transcripts indicating language of instruction or Official letters, sent directly from the Registrar's Office, verifying that all subjects are taught in English.

The exemption will not be granted for distance-learning courses or studying bilingual degrees (50% English and Spanish.)

8. Personal Statement (1,000 word limit.) The statement should express your aptitude and motivation for applying to the Fellowship Program –including your preparation for this field of study, your academic plans or research interests, and your career goals– and how the Fellowship Program would positively influence your career development.
9. Letter of recommendation by two academic referees. Applicants are required to invite two referees to provide them with a letter of recommendation (maximum of two pages, in English) before the application deadline. Letters may be sent to the Barrie Foundation electronically or on paper depending on the referees'

preference. A template for the letter of recommendation can be found on the Barrié Foundation website. During the selection process referees may be contacted by the Barrié Foundation if further information is necessary.

All applications and supporting documentation must be uploaded to the online application system by deadline.

Selection

Candidates are selected through a competitive, merit-based process. Once the application period closes, applications will undergo an eligibility check. Incomplete or late applications will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered. Eligible applications will proceed to a two-stage selection process:

Stage I. Screening

In the first stage of the selection process, eligible applications are assessed by a Selection Committee, comprised of two representatives from the Barrié Foundation and two faculty members of LSU Health Shreveport.

The Selection Committee will individually evaluate and numerically score each application in accordance with the following criteria:

- i. Academic merit and potential to succeed in a rigorous academic setting, as demonstrated by transcripts, awards, distinctions and English language proficiency (45%)
- ii. Research ability and potential, as demonstrated by personal statement, referees reports, relevant work experience, and related research achievements (40%)
- iii. Teamwork and leadership abilities, as demonstrated by collaborations with supervisors, peers, and students; and participation in community activities (15%)

All applicants will receive written notification of the status of their application by March 1, 2021. Only shortlisted candidates will advance to the next stage.

Stage II. Interviews

In the second stage of the selection process, shortlisted candidates will be invited to an in-person interview at the Barrié Foundation headquarters. Virtual interviews shall be permitted only in exceptional circumstances. Such instances are considered on a case-by-case basis and a decision is made following consultation with LSU Health Science Center, Shreveport.

The interview period will run **March 8-12, 2021**. Interviews will last approximately 30 minutes, and will be conducted in both English and Spanish.

The interview will be a competency-based panel assessment. The panel will be comprised of representatives from both the Barrié Foundation and LSU Health Shreveport. A member of the Barrié Foundation staff will also be supporting the panel administratively.

The purpose of the interview is to enable candidates to demonstrate their commitment to pursuing an academic career; motivation for participating in the Program; ability to adapt to a challenging environment; and their potential to become outstanding representatives of Galicia in the U.S. academic community.

After the interviews are completed, applicants will be ranked in order of preference by the panel. The decision of the panel will be final and binding.

All applicants will be informed of the outcome of their interview on **March 15, 2021**. Selected candidates will receive conditional offers of fellowships and will be asked to provide additional information (e.g. copy of original English language test results, etc.) by **March 22, 2021**. Should they respond in a timely way with the requested information, the conditions will be removed and they will be awarded the fellowship.

If a candidate does not accept the fellowship or fails to provide the requested information by **10 am on March 22**, an established list of alternates will be used to fill the vacated position.

Fellowship

The Fellowship Program runs for 9 weeks, from **June 28 to August 27, 2021**. Fellows will be assigned to work in a specific laboratory for the duration of the Program, typically on a project unique to the research goals of that laboratory. LSU Health Shreveport faculty and members of their laboratories will guide fellows through the planning and practice of daily research experiments and activities. Fellows will be integrated into the daily work of the laboratory, participating in meetings and gaining exposure to different facets of the laboratory's research. Mentors will help students apply their current knowledge and skills and assist them in making the connection between laboratory experiences and their academic studies. In addition to laboratory experience, fellows will participate along with LSU Health Shreveport students in journal clubs, seminars, and other events to deepen their understanding of microbiology and immunology.

At the end of the 9-week period, fellows will submit a 2-to-3-page scientific manuscript plus a 1-page personal statement about their summer experience at LSU Health

Shreveport. The Program concludes with a research symposium, where fellows present individual posters on their projects in front of their peers, faculty and lab mentors.

The fellowship comprises:

- i. Stipend of \$4,320 (before taxes), based on 40 hours' work per week at rate of \$12 per hour in an assigned laboratory.
- ii. Round-trip international travel and domestic flights. Fellows will not be entitled to create their own travel itinerary, nor will they be entitled to reroute or extend the travel itinerary created by the Barrié Foundation.
- iii. Student visa. Fellows must enter the United States on an exchange visitor visa (J-1). While LSU Health Shreveport and the Barrié Foundation will provide fellows with supporting documents for visa application, the timely securing of the visa is the sole responsibility of the fellows. Visa application processes are lengthy –the average processing time is 4-6 weeks– and fellows should plan accordingly. The Barrié Foundation will reimburse fellows visa application processing fees.
- iv. J-1 Visa health insurance coverage. The Barrié Foundation will provide fellows with health insurance coverage at the level required by the U.S. Department of State for J-1 visa holders.
- v. A contribution of €2,000 towards living expenses (i.e. housing, meals, and local transportation costs), payable in two equal installments, at the end of June and the end of July. LSU Health Shreveport shall provide local housing options to each fellow. However, it will be the fellows' responsibility to secure their own housing.
- vi. English Language test fees, upon receipt of proof of payment. Fellows can only request reimbursement of one test fee. Only tests taken after the application start date will be considered for reimbursement.

LSU Health Shreveport will assist fellows with orientation and adjustment to living in the United States and more specifically, living in the city of Shreveport, Louisiana.

Timetable

Application opens	November 25, 2020
Application closes	January 25, 2021
Notification to candidates of screening results	March 1, 2021
Candidate interviews scheduled and conducted	March 8-12, 2021
Notification to candidates of selection	March 15, 2021
English language requirement deadline	March 22, 2021
Pre-Departure Orientation	Late-March, 2021
Start of the Fellowship	June 28, 2021
End of the Fellowship	August 27, 2021

Fellow Responsibilities

In accepting the fellowship, recipients agree to the following conditions:

- i. attend in the pre-departure briefing arranged by the Barrié Foundation;
- ii. provide the required information in a timely manner to the Barrié Foundation so as to ensure the effective administration of the fellowship;
- iii. satisfy all visa requirements determined by the relevant authorities;
- iv. provide the Barrié Foundation with a short biography and photograph that can be published as a way of demonstrating the quality of fellowship recipients;
- v. carry out the project agreed and conform to the rules and code of conduct of LSU Health Shreveport. Full-time commitment to the project is expected during the fellowship period. Fellows considering any other activity during the Fellowship Program, must first consult with the Barrié Foundation to determine whether the proposed activity is permissible;
- vi. attend all scheduled events and activities related to the Program;
- vii. maintain a clear and direct line of communication with the Barrié Foundation and, in particular, keep the Barrié Foundation informed if:
 - Change your U.S. address, even temporarily.
 - Suffer any injury, illness, loss, or damage to your person or property.
 - Become involved in any legal action, actual or threatened.
 - Are absent for more than four days at any one time from the Program;
- viii. remain in the United States (except for authorized absences) during the entire fellowship period;
- ix. comply with all applicable laws and regulations in the United States, including all civil and criminal laws;
- x. acknowledge the support of the Barrié Foundation and LSU Health Shreveport in reports or other published materials that arises from the research, and other forms of media communication, including media appearances, press releases and conferences; and
- xi. submit, at the end of the fellowship period, a 2-to-3-page scientific manuscript and a 1-page personal statement about your experience at LSU Health Shreveport. If a fellow is unable to complete the report in time, he or she must contact the Barrié Foundation before the deadline to request an extension

Failure to abide by any of these terms and conditions could result in:

- suspension or withdrawal of stipend;
- dismissal from the Program; and/or
- repayment of the award in full

Acknowledgement

Fellows must acknowledge the support of the Barrié Foundation and LSU Health Shreveport Department of Microbiology and Immunology in publications (articles, posters, book chapters, thesis, websites etc.) of any material, whether copyrighted or not, based on or developed under the Fellowship Program. The following wording should be used when acknowledging support from LSU Health Shreveport and the Barrié Foundation: “This material is based upon work developed under the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program the LSU Health Shreveport Department of Microbiology and Immunology, supported by the Barrié Foundation and LSU Health Shreveport, supported by the Barrié Foundation and LSU Health Shreveport”.

The Fellowship Program also must be orally acknowledged during all news media interviews, including popular media such as radio, television and news magazines.

Except for articles or papers published in scientific, technical or professional journals, the following disclaimer must be included: "Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of LSU Health Shreveport and the Barrié Foundation."

Intellectual Property

All intellectual property conceived, generated, made or otherwise during the course of the Fellowship Program shall remain the absolute property of LSU Health Shreveport, and shall be disposed of in accordance with LSU Health Shreveport policy.

Termination of a Fellowship

The Barrié Foundation, acting on behalf of LSU Health Shreveport, has the right to dismiss a fellow from the Fellowship Program at any time, by immediate notice to the fellow in writing, in the event of:

- i. Failure to abide by any of the terms and conditions of fellowship.
- ii. Misconduct, whether in connection with the Fellowship Program or otherwise.
- iii. Failure to make such progress in the project as is considered satisfactory.
- iv. Exceptional circumstances arising which would render it impossible for the fellow to complete the Fellowship Program satisfactorily.
- v. Breach of any local U.S. law and practices.
- vi. The discovery that the fellow has submitted fraudulent documentation.

In the event of such dismissal, the Barrié Foundation and LSU Health Shreveport shall have no further obligation to the fellow, and the fellow shall be bound to repay the amount that has been paid to under the fellowship, unless the Barrié Foundation has exercised its discretion to exempt the fellow from this condition.

Data Protection

The Barrié Foundation and LSU Health Shreveport may use and share a fellow's details for purposes necessary for the administration of the Fellowship.

By applying for the Fellowship Program, each Applicant agrees (i) to be contacted by the Barrié Foundation by telephone, mail or email regarding this Fellowship Program; (ii) to provide the Barrié Foundation with a short biography and photograph that can be published as a way of demonstrating the quality of recipients; (iii) and that personal data submitted by the Applicant may be processed for the purpose of conducting and/or administering the Fellowship Program.

COVID-19 information

The Barrié Foundation and LSU Health Shreveport are continuously monitoring guidance from the U.S. Center for Disease Control and the U.S. Department of State about when it is realistic and safe to travel to the United States from Spain.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and with the safety and well-being of fellows as the highest priority, the Barrié Foundation and LSU Health Shreveport may temporarily suspend the Program.

In the event that fellows are unable to participate in the Program in summer 2021, LSU Health Shreveport Department of Microbiology and Immunology, will endeavor to offer a one year deferral. The Department of Microbiology and Immunology will grant deferrals at its sole discretion in highly exceptional cases.

Deferral offers to the next academic year can only be granted by and are only valid when documented in writing by LSU Health Shreveport.

Fellows that have been offered a deferral shall have the option to either defer the Program's start date by 12 months from the start date set out in their award letters or waive their right to participate in the Program.

General Conditions

The Barrié Foundation and LSU Health Shreveport reserve the right to modify, cancel, terminate or suspend Fellowship Program at any time, in their absolute discretion.

The Barrié Foundation will not be responsible for any damage or harm that fellows may suffer during their trip to or from the United States or during their time in the United States. The Barrié Foundation shall not be liable for any loss or expenses (including airfares) for travel delays incurred by the fellow as a result of inaccurate information provided by the fellow, delays in submitting the required forms to the relevant authorities, or refusals of American authorities to grant a visa to the fellow.

By applying for the Fellowship Program, each Applicant agrees to be bound by these Terms and Conditions.

Please refer to our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) page, available on the Barrié Foundation website, for answers to any queries you might have. If you have any questions that are not listed in the FAQs, please contact becas@fbarrie.org