Frequently Asked Questions About the Beckman Scholars Program Application Process

What are the goals of the Beckman Scholar Program?

The Beckman Scholar Program provides awardee institutions with the resources to support six (6) exemplary Beckman Scholars over a 15-month (summer – academic year – summer) mentored research experience with an approved Faculty Mentor. Awardee institutions are encouraged to identify potential Scholars who have:

- taken a variety of pathways to higher education studies in STEM;
- lacked access to early education in STEM;
- faced financial obstacles in their pursuit of higher education in STEM; and/or
- who may not have had STEM role models that reflect their own experiences.

How do we create a distinctive and competitive application?

The Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation does not provide specific guidance on how to create a distinctive Beckman Scholars Program; however, we do recommend addressing the following in your application:

- What impact will the Beckman Scholars Program have on the institution, Mentors, and individual Scholars, if awarded?
- In what ways will the Beckman Scholars Program (and its participants) stand out from other honors and programs on your campus?
- What qualities or characteristics of the program will enable it to be recognized as different and special?

*Tip: Try not to worry about what other institutions are doing or proposing. Rather, focus on what makes your institution and its students unique and a particularly good fit for the goals of the Beckman Scholars Program. Proposing a program that you are excited to implement will generally lead to a proposal that the reviewers can get excited about as well.

It is also worth noting that 140+ different institutions have won Beckman Scholars Program awards since the program's start. A full list of former awardees can be found on the Beckman Foundation website at https://www.beckman-foundation.org/awarded-scientists/

Is our institution eligible to apply?

Eligible institutions will meet the following requirements:
- Each institution may submit **ONE** application for consideration for an award and must meet the Foundation's requirement as a 501(c)(3), or similarly qualifying, non-profit organization (IRS Determination Letter/Federal Tax ID required).
- Current awardee institutions that will be entering into their third (final) year of the program are eligible to apply.
- Must have a Science Department in either biology, chemistry, or both.
- Accredited four-year college or university in the U.S.

Service academies and government laboratories, such as NIH or federally funded national laboratories, are not eligible to apply.

If we are a previous Beckman Scholars Program awardee, how likely are we to be successfully awarded again?
During the application review process, previous awardee institutions (within the last 10 years) will be grouped together. Each year, our final awardee cohort is comprised of both new applicant institutions and past awardee institutions. If your institution received a Beckman Scholars Program award in the past 10 years, you will be asked to submit an Institutional Progress Report that provides reviewers with a holistic view of your institution's previous program and the outcomes of your institution's Scholars.

What can I expect of the application?
All applications will be submitted through an online portal, which can be accessed directly at https://beckman-foundation.smapply.io/prog/beckman_scholars_program/. In preparation for submitting your application, you will need to put together the documents listed below. Each document will be uploaded to the portal and should be in <u>PDF format, utilize 11 pt Arial font, and have 1-inch margins</u>. Page limits are listed in the program announcement for each section. ***Please note that applications that contain documents that do not conform to these requirements or exceed the page limits for a section will be ineligible.***

Do <u>not</u> include hyperlinks in any of the documents (with the exception of publications in Mentor CVs). Doing so will render your application administratively ineligible.

    Cover Page: Why is your institution a particularly good fit for the Beckman Scholars Program? What do you want reviewers to know about your institution that might not appear elsewhere in your application? This is a place to highlight institutional strengths that are particularly well aligned with the goals of the Beckman Scholar Program.

    Proposal: You have 8-pages to help the reviewers see why a Beckman Scholars Program at your institution would be particularly valuable and uniquely "you". While the following sections must be included, you are welcome to provide additional context, so long as you can do so without going over the 8-page limit or using hyperlinks.

- *Scholar Recruitment, Selection, and Enrichment*: When answering each of the prompts from the program announcement, you will want to make sure to pay attention to any efforts that your institution has made or is making that will enable you to select potential Scholars who have taken a variety of pathways to STEM higher education, who might have lacked access to early education in STEM, and/or who may not have had STEM role models who reflected their own experiences.

- *Mentor Recruitment, Selection, and Training*: How will you ensure that you recruit the broadest possible mentor pool for inclusion in your application? Once selected, how will these faculty be supported and trained so that students from all walks of life and pathways to STEM can be encouraged and aided in their STEM educational goals? You are encouraged to include both junior and senior faculty members as potential Mentors.

- *Institutional Support*: Be sure to include details regarding the institution's past and current commitments to promote a thriving undergraduate research environment (e.g., level of undergraduate research activity, availability of required instrumentation and infrastructure, etc.).

    BSP Institutional Endorsements: Before you will be able to submit your application, you will need institutional endorsements from the Chief Academic Officer for your institution (or similarly authorized signatory) as well as the Dean of the College/School/Division for each major that is included in your

application, which we refer to as Participating Academic Units. Signatures will be requested and received through the application portal; it is always good to notify these signatories that they should expect an email from noreply@mail.smapply.net with "Beckman Foundation" in the subject line before you initiate the requests.

If the same Dean oversees multiple Participating Academic Units, you will need to collect a signature for each Participating Academic Unit that they oversee.

The application preparer will also need to accept these endorsements in the portal. If this step is skipped, the application system won't allow you to submit your application.

Institutional Data Sheet (IDS) (template provided): The IDS requires you to collect information from a number of different stakeholders such as department offices, grants/contracts office, and other campus offices. Reading the instructions carefully reviewing the template early (found within the application portal) will help you to allot enough time to assemble this table.

*Tip: These types of requests for information may take a while, so start early.

Faculty Mentor Summary Data Sheet (FMSDS) (template provided): Similarly to the IDS, the FMSDS will require you to collect information from a number of different stakeholders, including each included faculty Mentor and the grants/contracts office. Reading the instructions carefully and reviewing the FMSDS template early (found within the application portal) will help you to allot enough time to assemble this table. List the potential Mentors in alphabetical order by last name.

Mentor CVs (template provided): While you are asking for information for the FMSDS, it is also a great time to collect the CVs of faculty who are going to be included on the FMSDS. These CVs need to use the provided template (found within the application portal) and can be no more than 2-pages each. At the time of submission, you will create a single PDF file that includes all the mentor's CVs in alphabetical order by mentor's last name. The order of CVs must match the order that Mentors are listed in your FMSDS.

Mentor Statements (template provided): Similarly to mentor CVs, each mentor will also need to provide a Mentor statement using the template (found within the application portal). These statements must be prepared individually by each Mentor included on the FMSDS and should reflect their unique mentoring style and plans. Mentor Statements can be no more than 2-pages each.

*Tip: Mentoring statements that appear to be "boiler plate" or that all sound the same are likely to garner reduced enthusiasm from the BSP application reviewers.

Institutional Progress Report (only required and visible in the portal if your institution has received a Beckman Scholar Program award in the past 10 years). Within the Progress Report, you will be asked to summarize how your previous BSP awards have been implemented, determine the success of your prior BSP award, while identifying the metrics that you have used to measure success, and discuss how the BSP award benefited the Institution's undergraduate programs, Scholars, and Mentors.

*Tip: An Institutional Progress Report will be required if you have received a BSP award since 2017(i.e., applied in the summer of 2016).

Award Terms and Conditions (template provide, upload *all* pages): Before you can submit your application, the Award Terms and Conditions document must be signed manually by your Chief Academic Officer (or similarly authorized signatory) and the <u>entire</u> document uploaded to the portal.

*Note 1: No changes or amendments, other than those expressly noted on page 1, will be accepted by the Foundation.

*Note 2: At the application stage, the signature of your Chief Academic Officer (or similarly authorized signatory) recognizes that these will be the award terms, if funded; however, you need not make any changes or modifications to include your Institution's name at this stage. If your Institution is chosen to receive an award, award terms that are specific to your Institution will be issued.

*Tip: Given that administrator's schedules can be unpredictable, we recommend acquiring this signature early in order to avoid missing the submission deadline, as <u>no</u> late applications will be accepted.

What does the award cover?
The Beckman Scholars Program award totals $156,000 over three years. The Beckman Scholars Program award provides $26,000 per Scholar to fund the Scholar's stipend ($18,200 over 15-months), Scholar travel and supplies ($2,800), Mentor research funds ($4,800), and institutional contact funds ($200). A full description of how these funds are to be allocated can be found at https://www.beckman-foundation.org/programs/beckman-scholars/.

Can I schedule a phone call or Zoom to discuss my questions about the application?
Please start by sending your questions to bsp@beckman-foundation.org.

Can we submit multiple applications from our institution?
No. Each institution may only submit a single Beckman Scholar application per award cycle. If multiple applications are received from a single institution, all received applications will be deemed ineligible.

What if we accidentally create duplicate applications?
Please delete the extra application(s) from the online application portal. This will prevent confusion and avoid duplicate submissions. If multiple <u>different</u> applications are submitted by an institution, all submissions will be ineligible.

Can we submit multiple applications for our institution if they are from different campuses?
No. Only one application will be considered from your institution, regardless of how many campuses make up your institution. In cases where university systems exist (e.g., Rutgers, CUNY, SUNY, California State University, University of California, etc.), each individual campus of the system may submit one application. In the event that an institution/individual campus submits more than one application, knowingly or not, all applications will be ineligible.

Should our application come from our institution or our university's foundation?
Applications can come for either so long as they meet the 501c3 or similar requirement. Most colleges and universities, though not all, are 501c3 or similarly qualifying institutions. Regardless, the foundation or institution's IRS determination letter will indicate its status. Your institution's grants/contracts office will likely be able to assist you in collecting this information or will be able to refer you to the appropriate department.

What/Who is the institutional contact?

The Institutional Contact is the individual at your Institution who is responsible for submitting all required reports throughout the term of the award and who will be the Foundation's main point of contact throughout the award. Since these tasks often require interacting with Scholars, Mentors, and financial offices at your institution, it is often best to choose an Institutional Contact who can easily collect information from these individuals.

What is a Primary Academic Unit (PAU) and what PAUs can be included?

You will likely think about PAUs as departments or majors. These are the unique units from which you will select your Beckman Scholars. **Beckman Scholars are selected from majors that provide meaningful preparation for laboratory-based biological and/or chemical research**.

When listing Participating Academic Units, name individual majors (e.g., Chemistry or Biology), rather than larger entities (e.g., College of Arts and Sciences). Beckman Scholars can only be selected from the PAUs included on your Institutional Data Sheet (IDS).

Please see the BSP Participating Academic Unit Guidance document provided in the supporting application materials for a full description of PAU eligibility and details.

How to decide if a Participating Academic Unit is Eligible:

Does the major primarily focus on chemistry, biochemistry, biology, or biomedical sciences?
→ Yes → *Eligible.*
→ No → Go to next question.

Does the major require substantial wet-lab, dry-lab, or bench-based research training?
→ Yes → *Potentially eligible* (e.g., neuroscience, biotech, bioinformatics with lab research) → Go to next question.
→ No → Likely *not eligible*.

Is the major aligned with chemical, biological, or biomedical research—either experimentally or through interdisciplinary research (e.g., biophysics, computational biology, biochemical engineering)?
→ Yes → *Eligible if students can participate in biological/chemical research with approved mentors.*
→ No → Not eligible.

Determining Eligibility: Quick Check

A major is likely eligible if:
- It is primarily based in chemistry, biochemistry, biology, or biomedical sciences; and
- It includes meaningful laboratory research and training; and
- Students can participate in wet-lab, dry-lab, bench-based, or chemical and/or biological research with approved Faculty Mentors.

If these conditions are not met, the major should not be listed.

The intent of the Beckman Scholars Program is to provide meaningful preparation for laboratory-based biological, chemical, and medical sciences research. Majors that do not meet this criteria may not be submitted.
Submitting non-qualifying majors will result in an ineligible application.

Computational Science
Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering
Pharmacy Science
Integrative Physiology
Physics, Biophysics

How many PAUs should we include?
Applicant institution must include at least 1 PAU. An applicant institution may include no more than 6 PAUs.

*Tip: It is best to include PAUs that are ready to support Beckman Scholars in the chemical, biological, or medical sciences and that are enthusiastic about the program. There is no penalty for including only one PAU on your application.

Can Scholars be selected from departments outside of the listed PAUs?
No. Scholars must be seeking a major within one of the PAUs that are listed on the Institutional Data Sheet. Additional PAUs cannot be added after an application is submitted.

Can Mentors be included from departments outside of the listed PAUs?
Yes. While Beckman Scholars must be selected from the PAUs listed on the Institutional Data Sheet (IDS), the potential mentors can come from any home department, regardless of whether that department is included on the IDS. This means that a Scholar could work with a Mentor outside of the PAUs included on the IDS, but that Scholar must still be pursuing a major in one of the included PAUs.

How many Mentors should be included on the Faculty Mentor Summary Data Sheet (FMSDS)?
Institutions must include between 8-15 Mentors on the FMSDS. Applications that include fewer than 8 Mentors or more than 15 Mentors will be ineligible.

Will we be penalized for including junior faculty mentors on our Faculty Mentor Summary Data Sheet?
No. The Beckman Scholars Program encourages the participation of both junior and senior Faculty Mentors. The evaluation of each potential mentor's CV will take into account their junior or senior status. You are welcome to include Mentors who have served as Beckman Scholar Mentors during previous awards.

How should we handle the data for a PAU or Mentor who is new to our institution?
For Mentors, data from the requested timeframe from a prior institution or appointment may be included; however, a footnote should be included to help the reviewers put the mentor's data in context. For newer programs, include as much data is available, including a footnote that describes when the program started to give context to BSP application reviewers.

Can a Scholar have more than one Mentor or have another senior faculty as a resource?
Yes, but all mentors must be included on the Faculty Mentor Summary Data Sheet and wherever else required in the application (CV, Mentor Statement, etc.). If a Scholar has =multiple Mentors, one Mentor will need to be identified as the primary Mentor. If dual mentorship is planned for all Scholars, how the primary and secondary mentors will be determined should be articulated in the proposal. No additional Mentors can be added after submission.

Will mentors be required to attend the symposium?

The Foundation generally extends a Symposium invitation to one mentor from newly selected BSP institutions and mentors whose Scholar has been selected as a speaker. Both of these opportunities are contingent upon space at the event venue. The Institutional Contact will be contacted directly if there is space available for the Foundation to extend an invitation to a mentor.

Will I be able to complete the Faculty Mentor Summary Data Sheet (FMSDS) and Institutional Data Sheet (IDS) on my own?
No. Both the FMSDS and IDS require information from a number of sources, including the faculty members who are included on the FMSDS, the grants/contracts office, as well as the alumni and specific department offices.

*Tip: Because there will be a number of different offices and individuals involved in gathering the required information, it is best to download these templates early and review the instructions carefully.

Can I add collaborators to help me complete the application?
In most cases, it is sufficient for only one person to prepare the application. If after designating one primary institutional contact, the application preparer would like to add collaborators, the instructions for doing so are provided within the online application portal. If more than one collaborator is working on the application, be cautious not to skip tasks within the application. The first two stages of the application must be completed in order for the following application tasks to be revealed properly (i.e., number of PAU endorsements).

*Tip: We recommend downloading templates for colleagues to return completed to the designated application preparer to upload into the application portal. It is not advisable to have multiple people start applications as only one application may be submitted from any given Institution.

Are there additional resources to help me get started in the application portal?
"How to" videos on registering an account and submitting an application are available for additional assistance.

What are Mentor Statements and what makes a Mentor Statement "good"?
Mentor Statements are completed using the template in the application portal and must be 2 pages or less per potential Mentor. Within the Mentor Statement, each potential Mentor should highlight their approach to mentorship, especially as it applies to undergraduates within their laboratories. These statements should be unique to each Mentor, and it should be clear from the statement that the Mentor has considered how a Beckman Scholar will fit and be supported within their group.

*Tip: We suggest Mentors prepare their own Mentor Statements. In general, applications where the individual mentoring philosophies of each Mentor are evident tend to review more favorably than those where Mentor Statements use "boiler plate" or common language.

Who is eligible to sign the terms and conditions?
The signer should be an individual authorized to sign an institutionally binding document. If awarded a Beckman Scholars Program award, the application terms and conditions are considered institutionally binding.

Can we edit the terms and conditions to reflect our institution or foundation name and to indicate the person who is signing them?

There is no need at the application stage. If awarded, you will be asked to sign a fully updated version of the terms and conditions that includes these details.

Can we include different or additional information on the templates?
Please provide the data as requested. If necessary, you may add a footnote, providing additional explanation or context. Do not exceed page limits.

Can we include hyperlinks with additional information?
Hyperlinks may be included in **one section only:** Mentor CV Publications may have hyperlinks to the actual publications listed for that mentor. Hyperlinks in any other section or to any other material will make the application administratively ineligible. -

Can we make edits to the application?
Applicants can edit their application until submission. After the application has been submitted, no further edits are possible.

Can we us AI tools to prepare our application?
The Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation supports the use of AI tools as supplementary resources. However, while their use in your application is at your discretion, we expect that you will use these AI tools in an ethical and responsible manner. As the applicant, you are expected to comply with best practices in research and publishing ethics, take full responsibility for any errors made by an AI tool, and to cooperate by responding to any questions that may arise relating to the accuracy or integrity of any part of your work, including data analyses and representation. *If AI tools are used in producing any parts of your application or in assisting with the writing process, a brief statement describing this use must be included.*

In order to protect your information from AI algorithms during the review process, the Foundation's reviewers are NOT allowed to use or upload your materials into an AI tool. In addition, the Foundation does not use AI tools for screening or evaluating applications.

Who will be reviewing our application?
The reviewers for your proposal will be a multidisciplinary group of potential or current Mentors from Institutions with active Beckman Scholar Program awards.

*Tip: While reviewers will be familiar with the BSP award and how it is run at their own institutions, you should strive to introduce them to your institution and convince them that the design of your program is well matched to your setting, research infrastructure, and the characteristics of your student body.

Can our institution fund additional Beckman Scholars during the award term?
No. Institutions may not fund additional or "matching" Scholars during the Beckman Scholars Program award.

Can we continue the Beckman Scholars Program after the award with institutional funding?
Yes. An institution can continue a 'Beckman like' program, but it cannot carry the Beckman name.

Can we submit an application next year, even if we don't submit one this year?
Yes. Beginning with the 2026 application cycle, the Beckman Scholars Program is an open call. Any eligible institution can submit an application, so long as the Institution is not in the first or second year of an active Beckman Scholar Program award. (Institutions that are in the final year (year 3) of their Beckman Scholar Program award are eligible to apply.)

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2027 BSP Application Webinar FAQ

Q: For the summer, how would the student's room and board be covered?
A: Typically the institution will cover the room/board for summer.

Q: Can the mentor research funds be used as a stipend for mentors?
A: No, but it may be used for travel, research supplies, publication other mentoring activities related to supporting the scholar.

Q: Can the mentor funds be divided if student is co-mentored?
A: Scholars will have one designated primary mentor.

Q: Are finalists from last year who were not selected eligible to submit again this year?
A: Yes, if your institution was not awarded last year, you remain eligible for submitting to the upcoming program.

Q: Do you provide feedback on prior year's applications if an institution were to reapply?
A: The Foundation does not provide additional feedback on an unsuccessful application.

Q: How about are past awardees from more than 10 years ago handled in the application process?
A: They are considered new applicants. If you are unsure of your institution's award history, please email bsp@beckman-foundation.org and we can provide that information.

Q: Where can we find the Institutional Data Sheet?
A: The Institutional Data Sheet template (and all the other templates) is within the application portal. You can download it after the application opens and you start an application. The information you will need to collect is available on our website under 'Application Instructions'. There is also a downloadable PDF of the instructions under 'Helpful Guides'

Q: Do you have any guidance on the size of the mentor pool for the 6 scholars? How many would be desirable?

A: We require a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 15 mentors. There is no desired amount recommended by the Foundation, however when choosing mentors consider the PAUs and where Scholars would be selected from and if those students would be well matched with the proposed mentors.

Q: Will lecturers be eligible mentors?

A: Mentors must be full time faculty with lab.

Q: May PI of the Beckman Scholars Program also serve as faculty mentor?

A: Yes.

Q: Can you share details on post award management of funds? What financial information will need to be provided. For example, if we underspend in mentor research funds, do those funds get returned to you?

A: The underspend may need to be returned to the Foundation depending on the amount. Please email bsp@beckman-foundation.org to get additional information.

Q: Does research need to be a graduation requirement for the students or can it be optional or non-credit?

A: Research does not need to be a graduation requirement.

Q: Can you give more information about how institutions typically apply, through the dean's office or department chair, or office of advancement?

A: This is up to the institution and the Foundation does not have a preference.

Q: I heard you say that returning institutions are reviewed separately from new applicants, but is there preference given to one type of application over the other?

A: No, there is no preference.

Q: An announcement I saw about the program stated that the evaluation of diversity criteria has changed this year. Can you say a bit more about what has changed? In an era where a commitment to diversity, equity, and access has been de-emphasized at the federal level, what does this mean (if anything) for Beckman Scholars?

A: The language changed for our 2026 program which was just awarded. The language was rewritten to avoid conflicts with state laws.

Q: Please could you break down the costs per scholar over the 3 year period. So, for instance, is it 2 scholars per year for a total of 6 scholars and 6 individual mentors? Is the supplies and travel per student?
A: Yes to each of those questions
26k per scholar
$18,200 stipend to scholar; 2800 travel/supplies to scholar; 4800 mentor research fund; $200 institutional contact

Q: Could you go over one more time the interaction of the Beckman award with financial aid student may already be receiving?
A: A Beckman Scholars Award may not decrease a scholar's financial aid package.

Q: Can faculty from the medical school or graduate school serve as mentors? These faculty may not be tenure track but are well funded and run robust undergraduate research programs.
A: Yes, junior and senior faculty are encouraged to serve as mentors. **They must be full time faculty members with a lab.**

Q: Can you say anything about how important current external funding is for mentors? Wondering about weighing more established faculty vs. newer junior faculty who may not have an established record of funding yet, especially in the current funding environment.
A: While external funding is important, the Foundation encourages that both junior and establish faculty be put forth as mentors. Junior faculty provide wonderful opportunities for scholars and are encouraged.

Q: Mechanically, are the funds required to go to/through a 501c3?
A: Yes. The University of College Foundation can submit the application for benefit of the University

Q: At my institution, all awards must go through Financial Aid- we have not been able to circumvent financial aid.
A: The Foundation can provide language on this and it is part of the award terms which must be signed at time of application.