

2014 Application Instructions and Forms

Imagine Yourself ...

... learning to track and image a near-earth asteroid with your two teammates, up in the dome after midnight ... writing your own software to calculate its orbit ... working harder and learning faster than you ever thought possible ... and sharing the whole mind-expanding experience with some of the brightest, most interesting friends you'll ever make!

The Summer Science Program is a 39-day residential enrichment program, held on two campuses (one in Southern California, one in New Mexico). Since 1959, talented high school students from diverse backgrounds have come to SSP for its research-based curriculum, stimulating guest lectures, and behind-the-scenes field trips to places like NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab or the Very Large Array (of radio telescopes). The challenging, college-like "SSP experience" accelerates students' academic and personal development, by immersing them in a supportive community of scholars. And, it's a lot of fun!

Is SSP for You?

Are you currently a high school junior (graduating in 2015), now taking calculus or pre-calculus? If so, you're eligible to apply. Sophomores may also apply, although most sophomores should wait a year to avoid being disappointed (see the Admissions FAQ at ssp.org for more advice). *Sorry, we do not admit graduating seniors or freshmen under any circumstances.*

The academic program is challenging - lectures in astronomy, physics, calculus, and programming are taught at a college level - but every one of the 36 students receives a very high level of personal attention from the seven resident faculty, so no one is left behind. Teams of three students tackle the asteroid orbit determination research project together. The spirit of collaboration is reinforced by the absence of grades, tests, or formal credit.

To be admitted, you should be earning top grades in the most advanced math & science courses available to you. Your standardized test scores in math and science should also be strong. However, we do not require any particular test, nor do we rank applicants by test scores. We do look for scientific pursuits outside of the classroom, and evidence of good character and motivation. We take into account any personal or family circumstances that may have presented obstacles to your academic achievements. The application will provide an opportunity for you to explain your interests and background.

The Summer Science Program seeks a diverse enrollment on the basis of gender, ethnicity, citizenship, national origin, and socioeconomic status. Young women, and students from racial and ethnic groups that are traditionally underrepresented in science, are especially encouraged to apply.

*Note to international students: it's a big world, but SSP is small, and most of the 72 spots go to applicants from U.S. schools. If you live in a country where thousands of students want to attend college in the U.S., you can assume that dozens of them will apply to SSP, competing for **very few** spots. Keep that in mind when deciding whether to apply.*

For much more information, including admissions FAQ and comments from hundreds of alumni and parents, visit www.summerscience.org.

Choosing a Campus

SSP takes place at two campuses, starting and ending one week apart:

- on the campus of New Mexico Tech in Socorro, New Mexico (about 70 miles south of Albuquerque), **Sunday, June 15 - Wednesday, July 23, 2014**
- on the campus of Westmont College in Santa Barbara, CA (about 90 miles northwest of Los Angeles), **Sunday, June 22 - Wednesday, July 30, 2014**

The curriculum and facilities are largely identical at the two campuses. You will tell us in the online form whether you are applying for a particular campus only, or either campus. You may also indicate a preference. Check your school's academic calendar and ask your parent or guardian. Your chance of admission will be somewhat higher if you can attend either campus, since one may fill before the other.



We cannot accommodate late arrivals or early departures; do not apply if you have another commitment during the dates shown.

How to Apply

SSP's college-like experience starts with the application itself. In fact, applying to SSP is good practice for your college apps next fall. To open your application, you will first complete an online form that tells us who and where you are. You may log in later to add information or check the status of your application.

The rest of your application will consist of short answers, official transcript, test score reports, evaluations from your current math and science teachers, and an optional third evaluation or letter from another adult, and up to two pages of supplemental information. For more details see "Your Application" below, and the Admissions FAQ at ssp.org. Incomplete applications cannot be reviewed. Give your teachers as much time as possible to complete their evaluations. (If the two required teacher evaluations do not reach us by the deadline, it may not be your "fault", but it is your problem!)

There is **no advantage** to sending your application early, or in sending some parts while you wait for other parts to be ready. **We strongly prefer to receive everything together in one envelope.** If necessary, we will accept teacher evaluations or transcripts sent separately (if they arrive by the deadline).

If you attend school **outside** the U.S., **or** your U.S. visa expires before August:

➤ your application must be **at our office and complete** by **Wednesday, Feb. 5, 2014**

If you attend school **within** the U.S.:

➤ your application must be **at our office and complete** by **Friday, Feb. 28, 2014.**

Send by courier or mail to:

SSP Admissions
2054 Kildaire Farm Rd #404
Cary, NC 27518 USA

We strongly recommend using a service that allows you to track the envelope and confirm delivery.

Our reviewers will carefully consider all of the information presented in your application. Admissions decisions are sent by email and shown online (when you log in) about 6 weeks after the respective deadline.

Program Fee and Financial Aid

There is no application fee. **Financial concerns should not be a factor in your decision to apply.**

We understand that many families have little or no room in their budgets for a residential summer science program. The all-inclusive program fee – the most we ask any family to pay – is \$4,300 (much less than our actual cost of \$7,000). It covers tuition, room & board, supplies, and local transportation ... everything except travel to campus.

Thanks to donations from alumni and friends of SSP, **need-based financial aid** is available to further reduce the cost. Each summer between a third and a half of students receive financial aid. As an example, students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch at school are likely to attend at no charge, with SSP paying the airfare too (up to \$500). International students are eligible for financial aid on the same basis as other applicants.

The optional Financial Aid Application form is in the PDF with the other application forms. Applying for financial aid has **no impact** on admissions decisions. Parents of applicants in the U.S. may wait for the admission decision before deciding whether to apply for financial aid. It is really true that **financial concerns should not be a factor in your decision to apply.**

More questions? Check the **Admissions FAQ** online.



Your Application

Online form at www.summerscience.org (required first)

This must be completed **before** you send the rest of your application. Click the Admissions tab, then "Online Form / Status" on the left menu.

Short Answers (required)

We are interested in getting to know more about you, and your background and interests. There are no right or wrong answers; let your personality shine through. Include your name and email address at the top of each page, number your responses, and use single-spacing. **No staples** please!

- 1) What topic in science or math do you currently find most interesting and why? When and how did you become aware of this topic? How have you explored it since? (150 words or fewer)
- 2) We know you lead a busy life, full of activities, many of which are required of you. Tell us about something you choose to do for enjoyment or relaxation. (150 words or fewer)
- 3) Describe the world you come from; for example, your family, school, community, city, or town. How has that world shaped your dreams and aspirations? (150 words or fewer)
- 4) What do you hope to gain from attending SSP? (150 words or fewer)
- 5) Respond to **any or all** of these topics with up to 500 words **altogether**:
 - Describe a life challenge (of any nature, past or present) you have faced.
 - Describe an achievement that you are personally proud of.
 - Describe a time when you could have taken the easy way out, but didn't.
 - Describe any science or math reading, research, projects, or competitions (individual or team) you have done outside of regular coursework.
- 6) If you have studied physics and/or calculus (and checked either box on your online form), list the specific topics covered in your coursework and any related extracurricular study or projects. If your study was not regular for-credit coursework, indicate that. (a list will do here)

For questions 7-9, **answer yes or no**, and provide an explanation of any "yes":

- 7) Is there a broader context that we should consider when comparing your qualifications (including grades and test scores) to other applicants? Examples include family responsibilities, English as a second language, or other personal circumstances. **If you are a sophomore**, explain why are you applying this year rather than waiting until next year.
- 8) SSP is an intensive residential program that can be both mentally and physically stressful. Would you need any special accommodations (medical or otherwise) in order to fully participate physically, academically, and socially?
- 9) Have you ever been suspended or subjected to any school or legal disciplinary action?

Official school transcript and fall grades (required)

An "official transcript" is a complete list of the courses you have taken and grades received, prepared by your school. Ask your school to give the transcript to you in a **sealed envelope** to enclose with your application (or if they prefer, send it to us directly). If a "school profile" is available, ask for that to be included. If the transcript does not show your **fall courses and grades**, you **must** send a copy of a recent report card.

Test Scores (required)

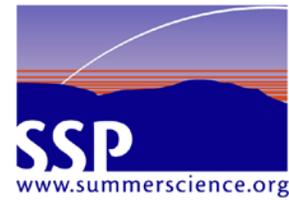
SSP does **not** require any particular test, but we **do** require your scores from any and all of the following standardized tests you may have taken: PSAT, SAT, SAT II, PLAN, ACT, AP, TOEFL. Do **not** ask the testing service to send the report to us directly. We accept photocopies of reports sent to you, printouts of online reports, and/or test scores recorded on your official transcript by your school. For the PSAT report, we only need the top part, showing your name and 3 scores.

Science & Math Teacher Evaluations (required)

Two evaluation forms are included below. Give one to your **current science teacher**, the other to your **current math teacher**. Ask each of them to return the form to you in a **sealed envelope** to enclose with your application. If your teachers prefer to send the evaluation to us directly, they may do so. If there is a **third adult** who knows you well (teacher, counselor, employer, coach, etc.), feel free to include a form and/or letter of recommendation from that person too. Note: if you are not currently taking math or science, or if your current teacher has known you for less than two months, you may ask a previous teacher to complete the evaluation.

Supplemental Information (optional)

You may include a résumé or other supplementary information of your choice, **up to two pages**.



Evaluation by Science Teacher

Name of Student _____

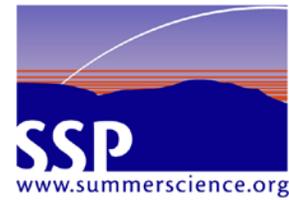
birthdate MM/DD/YYYY _____

This student is in competition with other academically gifted applicants for admission to the Summer Science Program. By requesting this evaluation, the student has authorized your frank and confidential assessment. To learn more about SSP, visit our website at www.summerscience.org.

On the back or on another sheet, describe the applicant’s motivation, intellectual curiosity, and potential contributions to a residential science program. **No staples, please.**

Note that we have a strict deadline and the student’s application is not complete until we receive this form. **Return it to the student in a sealed envelope.** Thank you very much for your time.

Teacher name							
Teacher phone number				email			
Course(s) you taught this student:							<input type="checkbox"/> your current student
Please place check marks in the single most appropriate box that represents your evaluation of this applicant in comparison with other college-bound students at your school.							
ACADEMIC OR PERSONAL QUALITY	NO BASIS FOR JUDGMENT	BELOW AVERAGE	AVERAGE	ABOVE AVERAGE	TOP 15% THIS YEAR	TOP 5% THIS YEAR	ONE OF THE TOP FEW I HAVE EVER TAUGHT
Academic Ability							
Motivation							
Listening / following instructions							
Class Participation							
Written Communication							
Interest in subject material							
Originality							
Teamwork							
Dependability and Work Habits							
Energy and Initiative							
Emotional Maturity							
Concern for Others							
Warmth of Personality							
I recommend this applicant:	NOT RECOMMENDED	WITHOUT ENTHUSIASM	FAIRLY STRONGLY	STRONGLY	ENTHUSIASTICALLY		
For academic promise	<input type="checkbox"/>						
For personal character	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Responses to the following are required. Use the back or another sheet to elaborate.							
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Is there a broader context in which we should consider the candidate’s performance and involvements? Some examples include family situation or responsibilities, after-school work obligations, sibling childcare, or other circumstances, either positive or negative.							
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Are there any observed problematic behaviors (e.g., discipline problems, intolerance or anti-social behavior in interactions with peers or teachers), perhaps separable from academic performance, which should be explored further by the Admissions Committee?							
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO To your knowledge has the student ever been subjected to any school-related or legal disciplinary action?							
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO To your knowledge, has the student taken advantage of the most challenging math & science courses and enrichment activities available to him or her?							



Evaluation by Math Teacher

Name of Student _____

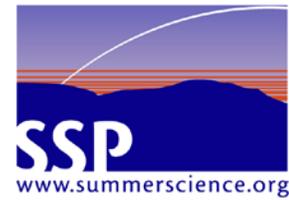
birthdate MM/DD/YYYY _____

This student is in competition with other academically gifted applicants for admission to the Summer Science Program. By requesting this evaluation, the student has authorized your frank and confidential assessment. To learn more about SSP, visit our website at www.summerscience.org.

On the back or on another sheet, describe the applicant's motivation, intellectual curiosity, and potential contributions to a residential science program like SSP. No staples, please.

Note that we have strict deadlines and the student's application cannot be reviewed until we receive this form. **Return it to the student in a sealed envelope.** Thank you very much for your time.

Teacher name							
Teacher phone number				email			
Course(s) you taught this student:							<input type="checkbox"/> your current student
Please place check marks in the single most appropriate box that represents your evaluation of this applicant in comparison with other college-bound students at your school.							
ACADEMIC OR PERSONAL QUALITY	NO BASIS FOR JUDGMENT	BELOW AVERAGE	AVERAGE	ABOVE AVERAGE	TOP 15% THIS YEAR	TOP 5% THIS YEAR	ONE OF THE TOP FEW I HAVE EVER TAUGHT
Academic Ability							
Motivation							
Listening / following instructions							
Class Participation							
Written Communication							
Interest in subject material							
Originality							
Teamwork							
Dependability and Work Habits							
Energy and Initiative							
Emotional Maturity							
Concern for Others							
Warmth of Personality							
5) I recommend this applicant:	NOT RECOMMENDED	WITHOUT ENTHUSIASM	FAIRLY STRONGLY	STRONGLY	ENTHUSIASTICALLY		
For academic promise	<input type="checkbox"/>						
For personal character	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Responses to the following are required. Use the back or another sheet to elaborate.							
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Is there a broader context in which we should consider the candidate's performance and involvements? Some examples include family situation or responsibilities, after-school work obligations, sibling childcare, or other circumstances, either positive or negative.							
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Are there any observed problematic behaviors (e.g., discipline problems, intolerance or anti-social behavior in interactions with peers or teachers), perhaps separable from academic performance, which should be explored further by the Admissions Committee?							
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO To your knowledge has the student ever been subjected to any school-related or legal disciplinary action?							
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO To your knowledge, has the student taken advantage of the most challenging math & science courses and enrichment activities available to him or her?							



Optional: Financial Aid Application

Generous need-based grants are available up to and including the entire program fee of \$4,300 plus travel aid, with no loan component. Applying for aid has no effect on whether admission will be offered; admissions is need-blind. (*Note: travel aid is limited to \$500 regardless of actual airfare.*)

This form must be completed by the applicant's parent or legal guardian.

Applicants living in the U.S. may wait until after admission is offered to apply for aid. International applicants must include the Financial Aid application with the rest of the application.

Your information will be held in strict confidence, used only to determine the applicant's eligibility for financial aid, then destroyed. Financial aid is granted on the basis of information you provide here and limited by our budgeted funds. Use separate sheets to explain any unusual financial circumstances. Send by email, fax, or mail (do not staple pages), with these **required attachments**:

- U.S. Citizens / Residents: attach your most recent **Federal tax return**: IRS Form 1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ, with **all associated schedules**.
- If you are **not** the head of the applicant's household, also attach the tax return of that person. If father and mother file separate tax returns, include copies of both if available. If the applicant (student) filed a return, include it also.
- **International applicants** should attach official documents (such as tax returns and employer income statements) showing all family income and taxes paid, with translations into English.

Applicant's name	
Your name	<input type="checkbox"/> mother <input type="checkbox"/> father <input type="checkbox"/> guardian
Are you the head of household? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Do you <input type="checkbox"/> rent or <input type="checkbox"/> own your home?
	Number of dependent children:
Your phone numbers: daytime _____ evening _____	
Father/stepfather _____ occupation _____ employer (if any) _____ expected 2014 income from this job \$_____	
Mother/stepmother _____ occupation _____ employer (if any) _____ expected 2014 income from this job \$_____	
Income (yours and applicant's combined), if any, that is not reflected in the attached tax return(s) , such as untaxed child support, trust fund, survivor benefit, interest from tax-exempt bonds, etc.: \$_____ from this source: _____	
How do you expect your 2014 income to be different from what is shown in the attached tax return(s)? <input type="checkbox"/> increase –or– <input type="checkbox"/> decrease, by amount \$_____	

On a separate sheet explain:

- any unusual or significant financial burden(s)
- if your income and/or expenses this calendar year will be significantly **higher or lower** than what is shown on your attached tax return
- any other relevant financial information not given in the tax return or in the other sections of this form

The next section is based on the Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA), required by U.S. colleges for financial aid calculations. "Net worth" means the current fair market resale value of an asset (minus the remaining balance of any loan or mortgage used to purchase the asset).

Indicate the approximate net worth of your:	
Cash, checking accounts, savings accounts, CDs, money market funds	\$
Retirement accounts, including 401-K plans, IRAs, etc.	\$
Other investments you own, not including retirement accounts or the value of your primary residence, but including other real estate, mutual funds, stocks, stock options, bonds, trust funds, other securities, etc.	\$
Businesses you own (including real estate, equipment, inventory, etc.)	\$
Any and all assets owned by the student in his or her own name.	\$

Be sure to indicate (in the box) **how much financial aid you are requesting from SSP**, up to the entire program fee (do not include amounts related to travel costs).

amount to be paid by person completing this form	\$
+ amount to be paid by non-custodial parent, if any	\$
+ amount to be paid by child using his/her own funds	\$
+ amount to be paid by other family members	\$
+ requested financial aid	\$
= total tuition, room & board ("program fee")	\$4,300
Are you also requesting travel aid (up to \$500)?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

I affirm that the information given above is true, complete, and not intentionally misleading. I understand that it will be kept confidential and used only to determine the applicant's eligibility for financial aid.

X _____
Parent/guardian signature

print name

date