



HOW TO FIND A RESEARCH EXPERIENCE IN SCIENCE



CAREER CENTER
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

Do you hope to get involved in scientific research as part of your college experience, but are not sure what benefits to expect or which steps to take to find an opportunity? This guide was created to help you navigate this process.

Some Benefits of Doing Research as an Undergraduate Student:

Learn what research involves and if you want to consider a career in research.

Networking! Build relationships with peers and professionals in research who can help open new doors to future opportunities.

Learn skills that are transferable to future research experiences and many careers outside of research.

Include research on your resume and cover letter and talk about what you learned during interviews with potential employers or graduate schools to increase your chances of getting selected.

Action Steps for your Research Search:

1. Identify your research areas of interest and ask yourself some important questions. Most research is interdisciplinary so you can start your search on your department's website but don't be afraid to expand your search to include other departments. Explore labs that are attempting to answer questions that most align with your interests. What area of science are you most passionate about? Also think about what kinds of research activities you're most interested in doing. Fieldwork or working in a laboratory? Observing behavior or working strictly with data? Also consider summer opportunities in other geographical locations for a potential experience outside of the spring and fall academic semesters at CSU.

2. Know the difference between a CV and a Resume. Some labs will ask for a CV and others will ask for a Resume. The biggest difference is that a CV does not have a page limit, whereas a Resume should be limited to 1-2 pages. Learn more about a [CV versus a Resume](#) and view a sample of an [Entry Level Lab Resume](#).

3. Be prepared to make your case about how you can bring value to the research team you would like to join. Learn about [Career Competencies](#) and practice articulating these transferable skills for interviews. Learn [Interviewing Basics](#) and check out our digital interviewing platform, [Big Interview](#). Even if you are early in your college career, you've probably taken some classes where you've gained skills or experiences that might apply to a research situation. Make sure to highlight those.

4. Know where to look. Talk with your advisors and instructors about your interest in research since they may know of openings. Prepare some talking points in advance, and if you would like some strategies for approaching these conversations, come see a Career Educator. Check bulletin boards and screens on campus for recent postings. Research online openings by starting with the links on the other side of this page.

Links to Reputable Research Postings:

Handshake	CSU Warner College Research and Outreach	US Government Research Positions for Undergraduates	Shovel Bums for Archaeology
CSU College of Natural Sciences Research	University-Based Research Positions	The Colorado-Wyoming Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation	National Science Foundation – Research Experience for Undergraduates
CSU College of Agriculture Undergraduate Research Fellowship	CSU College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences Research	National Association for the Practice of Anthropology Job Board	US Government Research Positions for Graduate Students

How to Organize your Search:

Consider using a table, like the one below, to help you stay organized.



Organization	Position Title	Program Name	Location	Application Deadline	Application Link	Dates
XYZ Organization	Research Assistant	Lab Experience for STEM Students	Denver, CO	April 1, 20XX	www.xyz.edu	June 10 – Aug. 10, 20XX

CSU Offices that could be Helpful:



Office of Undergraduate Research and Artistry



Career Center



Health Professions Advising & Health Professions Advising Newsletter

Additional Resources:



United in STEMM

Read about CSU's United in STEMM Initiative to connect students of color to opportunities in science, technology, engineering, math, and medicine.

Learn about CSU's Multicultural Undergraduate Research and Artistry Symposium (MURALS) for opportunities focused on bringing students of color into undergraduate research.



The Career Center can help you with questions related to searching for research opportunities and other career topics. To access drop-in hours, appointments, or hundreds of resources, find us here or call 970-491-5707 to talk to the front desk.