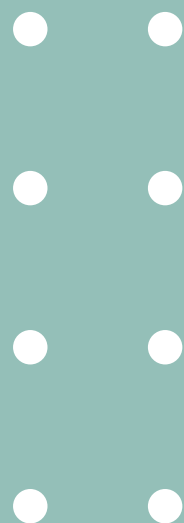




ASTP

Guidance Document

This document contains all information and questions in the 2023 application form for the ASTP. It should be used to help you to plan your answers before logging into the application as you will not be able to save your progress and go back later.



Aspiring Scientists Training Programme 2024: Application Form

Application Guidance

Please read this information carefully.

The Aspiring Scientists Training Programme is funded by the [Isaac Newton Trust](#) Widening Participation and Induction Fund for Colleges. Our aim is to enable students with an interest in pursuing a career or higher education in science to get first-hand knowledge of an academic research environment when they may not ordinarily have the opportunity to do so. Priority will be given to applicants from backgrounds which would make it unlikely for them to obtain a similar experience through personal connections.

This programme will offer a diverse and interesting experience for students. Successful applicants will spend five afternoons in a lab practicing biological research techniques (the specific techniques will be determined by the individual departments and labs). Students will also spend five mornings in hands-on workshops and skill-building seminars. Previous topics for workshops and seminars have included: microscopy, image analysis, presentation skills, information about applying to selective universities and a tour of a Cambridge college. In addition to attending workshops and spending time in a lab each day, students will prepare and deliver a presentation on a scientific topic at the end of the training programme week.

All students who receive a place in the programme will be provided with accommodation at a Cambridge University college for six nights (check in on Sunday and check out the following Saturday). Meals will be provided .

Due to limited availability, programme places are extremely competitive. Completing this application form does not guarantee a placement. An unsuccessful application for this programme does not reflect your likelihood of being successful in an application for undergraduate study at university.

Instructions

1. Complete and submit this online form. Any submissions in other formats and incomplete forms will not be considered.
2. At the end of this form, you will be asked to enter contact details for one of your teachers. We may get in touch with this teacher to verify some of your responses and we may ask this teacher to write a short reference for you. Before you submit your application, please check with your teacher that they are happy for you to share their contact details with us and to be contacted by us for this purpose.
3. Submit this online form by 5pm on 1st April 2024.

Please note: Incomplete applications will not be considered. Be sure to answer all the questions to the best of your ability. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

We will let you know whether or not your application has been successful by 1st May 2024.

Note: By submitting this application, you are confirming that you have checked with your parent(s)/carer(s) and with your school and you are available to attend the **placement from Sunday 7th to Friday 12th July 2024.**

Please be sure to read through the application guidance document to plan your responses before attempting to complete the application, as you may not be able to save your progress in this application form.

Eligibility

There are some criteria that applicants must meet if they plan to apply for the programme.

Applicants must:

- attend a **state/non-fee paying school** or college in the United Kingdom
- be **aged 16+**
- be in **year 12 (England & Wales), S5 (Scotland) or year 14 (N. Ireland)**
- have achieved a 7 or above in GCSE maths and two GCSE sciences OR a B or above in National 5 maths and two National 5 sciences
- be pursuing
 - **A-level** Biology, Maths and one other science subject (with predicted grade As or higher)*
 - **Higher IB** Biology, Maths and one other science subject (with predicted grade 7s or higher)*
 - **Higher** Biology, Maths and either chemistry, physics or further maths (with predicted grade As or higher)*

*please note that we will be asking for a teacher reference and they will be required to confirm that you have the potential to achieve A-level A*A*A (or equivalent), in line with the eligibility criteria for the Natural Science or Medicine courses at Cambridge. We do not require official predicted grades.

Students must meet all of the qualifying measures above in order to be considered for this programme.

As this is a Widening Participation programme with the particular aim to give students the experience of working in an academic research environment when they ordinarily wouldn't be able to arrange such an experience on their own, we are particularly keen to receive applications from students who meet any of the following criteria (it is not necessary to meet them all):

- Are in care or care-experienced
- Are eligible for free school meals or pupil premium
- Belong to an underrepresented ethnic group
 - Black African or Black Caribbean
 - Pakistani or Bangladeshi
 - Roma, Gypsy or Traveller
- Have experienced disruption in their education such as:
 - Medical/health issues (including mental health), particularly those that have resulted in long or extended periods of absence (over 8 weeks) from school in the last 6 years
 - Bereavement of a close family member (e.g. parent/carer) in the last 6 years
 - Being a young carer
 - Becoming a parent
 - Being an asylum seeker or refugee
 - Becoming estranged from close family members (e.g. parents/carers)
 - Moving schools two or more times in the last 6 years
 - Other (to be specified)
- Are the first in their family/close network to go to university
- Are resident in areas with relatively low participation in higher education (using POLAR4) or in areas with less advantaged socio-economic characteristics (using IMD)

If there is something else you feel we should consider in assessing your application for this programme, please complete the optional short answer question number 23 below.

Important notes:

1. All applicants must have the right to work in the UK and any offer to take part in the programme is conditional upon providing the evidence of right to work. More information on this can be found [here](#) and [here](#), but if you are unsure as to whether you are able to provide the required documentation then please do not hesitate to contact us at **astp@caths.cam.ac.uk**.
2. Information about how your personal information will be used by us in connection with the administration of this activity, and for related purposes, is available at <http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/how-we-use-participant-data>. Please contact the programme team at **astp@caths.cam.ac.uk** with any questions in the first instance.
3. At the end of this application, we will ask for contact details of one of your teachers. We may contact this teacher and ask them to verify some of the information you provide to us in this form and write a short reference for you. Before you submit your application, please check that your teacher is happy for you to share their contact details with us for this purpose.
4. By completing this form, you are agreeing that you are happy for us to share the data you provide in the form with your teacher for validation and with members of the University of Cambridge associated with the programme where appropriate.

Aspiring Scientists Training Programme 2024: Application Form

Your Details

All of the information given in this form is confidential and will only be shared with members of the ASTP 2024 project team, and the teacher who you have listed as your reference if appropriate.

Please answer as many of the questions as you can.

* 1. What is your name?

Please provide your **full name** as it appears on your right to work document

2. What is your preferred name?

If this is the same as you answered for Q1, please leave this question blank.

* 3. What is your date of birth?

DD/MM/YYYY

Date

4. What are your pronouns?

* 5. What is your ethnicity?

- ☐ Arab
- ☐ Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi
- ☐ Asian or Asian British: Chinese
- ☐ Asian or Asian British: Indian
- ☐ Asian or Asian British: Pakistani
- ☐ Asian or Asian British: Other Asian background
- ☐ Black or Black British: African
- ☐ Black or Black British: Caribbean
- ☐ Black or Black British: Other Black background
- ☐ Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian
- ☐ Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African
- ☐ Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean
- ☐ Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups
- ☐ White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British
- ☐ White: Irish
- ☐ White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- ☐ White: Roma
- ☐ White: Other White background
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other

* 6. What is your full home post code?
(Please provide in format AB1 2CD)

* 7. What is your email address?

Please be sure that your email address is spelled correctly and please use an email address that you check regularly.

* 8. Please re-enter you email address

* 9. What is your phone number?

* 10. What school or college are you currently attending?

11. Does your school/college have a website? If so, please add it below.

Aspiring Scientists Training Programme 2024: Application Form

Placement details

* 12. Which department(s) would you prefer to have a placement in?

Click on each department name to go to their own website to find out more.

While we will make every effort to ensure you are placed in one of the departments you select below, please note that even if your application is successful, we cannot guarantee that you will be placed in one of the departments you select here.

- ☐ [Gurdon Institute](#): Understanding the fundamental mechanisms of normal development, to determine how these mechanisms are subverted in cancer and other diseases
- ☐ [Sainsbury Laboratory](#): SLCU brings together people working in biological, physical, and mathematical sciences in a creative and curiosity-driven environment to decipher the amazingly complex, dynamic and self-organising properties of plants.
- ☐ [Cambridge Institute for Medical Research](#): Determining the molecular mechanisms of disease in order to advance human health.
- ☐ [Mitochondrial Biology Unit](#): Understanding mitochondrial biology in health and disease, and to exploit this understanding to develop new therapies and improve human health.
- ☐ [Institute of Metabolic Science](#): Investigating the mechanisms through which metabolic health is maintained and how this is disturbed in disease.
- ☐ [Department of Pharmacology](#): Focusing on how drugs work: from how they act at the molecular level, to their effects on the human body.

* 13. How did you find out about this programme?

- ☐ A teacher
- ☐ A school newsletter
- ☐ A newsletter from another organisation
- ☐ A career/other guidance counsellor
- ☐ A parent/carers
- ☐ Website of one of the departments
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ X (formerly Twitter)
- ☐ Tik Tok
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Aspiring Scientists Training Programme 2024: Application Form

Background information

The questions below are based on standard Widening Participation criteria and are intended to assess your background. If there is any other relevant information you would like to provide to us, please complete the optional short answer question 23.

If you submit this form, we will assume your consent to the data processing described here: <http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/how-we-use-participant-data>. You have the right to withdraw this consent at any time. If you wish to withdraw consent, or have any other questions about how we will handle/protect your personal data, please contact astp@caths.cam.ac.uk in the first instance.

* 14. Are you or have you been eligible for Free School Meals or Pupil Premium now or in the last six years?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

* 15. Are you currently caring, unpaid, for a friend or family member who, due to illness, disability, a mental health problem, or an addiction cannot cope without your support?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

* 16. Are you currently or have you ever been in local authority care in the UK?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

* 17. Do you personally know someone who is a scientist or who works in academia (even in a non-science discipline, for example, history)?

This could be someone who works as a lecturer, researcher, or professor at a university. It could also be a laboratory scientist in industry, or someone studying to become a scientist at university.

☐ No

☐ Yes (please explain their relationship to you and describe how they work in science/academia or what their job title is):

* 18. Has at least one of your parent(s)/carer(s) attended university?

☐ Yes

☐ No

* 19. What is the highest level of qualification at least one of your parent(s)/guardian(s) have received?

☐ GCSE/National 5 (or equivalent)

☐ A-level/Higher/Advanced Higher (or equivalent)

☐ Bachelors

☐ Masters

☐ Other post-graduate qualification

☐ PhD

☐ Post doc

☐ Other (please specify)

20. Have you experience educational disruption in any of the following forms?

- ☐ Medical/health issues (including mental health), particularly those that have resulted in long or extended periods of absence (over 8 weeks) from school in the last 6 years
- ☐ Becoming a parent
- ☐ Being an asylum seeker or refugee
- ☐ Becoming estranged from close family members (e.g. parents/carers)
- ☐ Moving schools more than once in the last 6 years
- ☐ No, I have not
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Prefer not to say

If you are comfortable doing so, please provide further details

Aspiring Scientists Training Programme 2024: Application Form

Your education & experience

* 21. Which year group are you currently in?

☐ Year 12 (England and Wales)

☐ S5 (Scotland)

☐ Year 13 (N. Ireland)

* 22. Which GCSE/Nat 5 (or equivalent) subjects did you take and what was your final grade in each subject?

(Fill in as many subjects as apply to you and **be sure to include your final grade for each subject! Maths and two sciences are required for entry to the programme**)

Maths

Science #1

Science #2

Subject 4

Subject 5

Subject 6

Subject 7

Subject 8

Subject 9

Subject 10

Subject 11

Subject 12

Subject 13

Subject 14

Subject 15

Subject 16

Subject 17

* 23. Which A-level/IB/Higher/Advanced Higher/Equivalent subjects are you currently taking?

Please include your predicted grade for each subject (if your school cannot provide formal predicted grades, please ask your teacher(s) to provide you with target grades for each subject)?

Remember, you must be studying A-level Maths and Biology and either chemistry, physics or further maths (or equivalent to be considered for the programme).

Subject 1	<input type="text"/>
Subject 2	<input type="text"/>
Subject 3	<input type="text"/>
Subject 4	<input type="text"/>
Subject 5	<input type="text"/>

In addition to listing your A-level/Higher IB/Higher subjects above, please include your predicted grades for each subject if you have them.

We are aware that you may not have your official predicted grades at the time of applying, so when we ask your teacher for a reference we will ask them to confirm that you have the potential to achieve A*A*A*, in line with the eligibility criteria for the Natural Science or Medicine courses at Cambridge.

* 24. Have you ever participated in a work experience programme previously?

☐ No

☐ Yes (please specify where and when)

25. Have you achieved the required grades in GCSE/Nat 5/equivalent?: **GCSE 7/Nat 5 B or above in maths and two science subjects.**

This is necessary to be considered for the programme.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Aspiring Scientists Training Programme 2024: Application Form

Short answer questions (maximum 100 words per question)

Please make sure that your answers are specific to you.

Note: this online form will not notify you if you have exceeded the word limit.

Responses that are obviously longer than 100 words will not be read. **Please plan your responses ahead of time to ensure you do not exceed the limit.**

* 26. What achievement are you most proud of and how has it positively affected you? This must be something in the last year and may or may not relate to your academic work.

* 27. What science practical did you most enjoy? Please explain why.

* 28. What do you hope to do in the future and how will an ASTP placement help you achieve these goals?

Please be as specific as possible.

29. **OPTIONAL**: Please share any unique challenges you've had to overcome in your life which you feel would be relevant in your application to this programme.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their response to the optional question. It occupies the upper portion of the page below the question text.

Aspiring Scientists Training Programme 2024: Application Form

Teacher reference

* 30. **Before submitting this form**, please check with your teacher to ensure:

- they are happy for you to provide their contact information to us
- they are willing to validate your application information and write a short reference for you, if requested later.

Teacher's name

Subject

Name of
school/college

School's postcode

Email Address

Please be sure that you have spelled your teacher's name and email address correctly.

Aspiring Scientists Training Programme 2024: Application Form

Confirm and submit application

* 31. By submitting this application form, you are confirming:

- The details you have provided throughout are accurate to the best of your knowledge.
- The application form has been completed entirely by yourself.
- You have checked with your parent(s)/carer(s) and with your school and you are available to participate in the programme during all of the dates specified.
- You are happy for us to share the information you provided throughout this form with your teacher reference.
- You have checked with your teacher and they are happy for you to share their contact details with us.
- You have checked with your teacher and they are happy to verify the information you have provided and write a short reference for you, if requested.
- You understand that to falsify information is grounds for refusal to accept you into the programme or to remove you from the programme, if accepted. If any of the information contained in your application is found to be false or plagiarised, in addition to excluding you from the programme, we will report this misconduct to your school.

☐ I confirm that I have read and understood the information above.

☐ I confirm that my teacher has given consent to sharing their contact details with the Gurdon Institute.



Aspiring Scientists Training Programme 2024: Application Form

Thank you for the time and effort you invested in completing the application for ASTP 2024.

As we move forward with the evaluation of applications, please note that due to the high volume of submissions, we regret that we are unable to send individual email confirmations for received applications. Rest assured, your application has been successfully submitted.

We aim to inform all applicants of the outcome of their application by 1st May 2024.

Should you have any questions or require further assistance during this period, you can reach out to us at astp@caths.cam.ac.uk.

Kind regards,
The ASTP Team