



# APPLICATION CHECKLIST

**updated 3/13/20 – We plan to hold SHINE 2020 in hopes that COVID19 will be under control by 6/15, but we will keep all applicants informed**

Thank you for your interest in USC Viterbi's [Summer High School Intensive in Next-Generation Engineering – SHINE](#). Our program is designed for top performing high school students who have a strong academic record in STEM and research; this non-residential program is for Los Angeles-based commuters. Applicants can request to be placed in their top three areas of engineering research, and we will do our best to make a good match. The professors of each research group make the final selection of whom to accept to their summer research group.

Here's a list of everything you'll need to have ready **before** you sit down to complete the online **SHINE** application; you will NOT be able to begin the application and return to it later (it may be possible to save work on the application if you use the same computer, the same browser, and click the arrow at the bottom of the last page where you input info; however, we suggest you complete the application in one setting). Please also review our [FAQ page](#) or [contact us](#).

## Pre---Qualifications

Applicants must be a rising sophomore, junior or senior in high school by fall semester, 2020, and need to be willing to participate in lab and/or computational research on the USC campus for at least 20 hours per week between **June 15–July 31, 2020**, primarily on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Once a student is matched to a research group, the Ph.D. student mentor will discuss specific hours, generally 9 am - 5 pm, in order to give the SHINE student family and research team the opportunity to discuss and adjust availabilities for a mutually agreed-upon schedule. This individualized agreement works best for students who balance SHINE with summer school or a part-time job.



## Contact Information and Academic Background:

- ✓ You will be asked to provide contact information for you and your guardians (email, street address, home and cell phone). Please note that all follow-up communications will be sent to the legal guardian(s) of the student applicant as well as to the applicant. (Guardians with joint custody should each be listed on the application.)
- ✓ Your overall GPA. We are looking for applicants who have a GPA of 3.4 or higher on a 4.0 (unweighted) scale.
- ✓ Test scores (SAT, PSAT, ACT) are not required, but if you have them, the scores help us place you in the most appropriate lab. Please be prepared to upload a PDF of your latest results, so download the report issued by the testing organization to have it ready to add to the online **SHINE** application.

**Your Research Preferences, Personal Statement and Supporting Materials:** We recommend you begin these action items as soon as you're interested in applying to **SHINE** as we need **ALL documents to arrive by 3/30/2020**. These steps require planning and careful thought.

- ✓✓ Two letters of recommendation must be received by 3/30/2020, both from teachers who discuss your academic qualifications in science, technology, engineering and/or math as well as your readiness to participate in a research lab for seven full weeks over the summer.
  - Start talking to your teachers well in advance of the firm 3/30 deadline about your interest in **SHINE** so we receive their letters by 3/30. Teachers can email their letter to [K12STEM1@usc.edu](mailto:K12STEM1@usc.edu) before or by 3/30 with the subject heading SHINE20 Rec STUDENT LAST NAME\_FIRST NAME. **MUST BE RECEIVED BY 3/30/2020.**



- Before you begin the online application, be sure to have the names, title, and email addresses of your two recommenders.
- ✓ A third letter of recommendation is optional; follow the same guidelines.
- ✓ On the application, you'll need to rank your top three preferences for the types of [engineering research teams](#) you would like to join. Please know that availability in each lab can vary; although we cannot promise you will be placed in your first or second choice, we will do our best to match you well. You can find out more about each of USC Viterbi's academic departments [here](#). Take a look at the past SHINE [students discussing their research](#).

- We want to get to know you better, to find out why you're interested in doing research at [USC Viterbi School of Engineering](#) over your summer vacation, so this is your chance to let us know more about you. Please put some time and effort into your personal statement as it is a key document in the professor's decision, along with your teacher recommendations. In 500 words or less, write about a specific time when you used your STEM knowledge to solve a problem and a specific time when you realized that research was key to your future academic goals. On the same document, please add up to 250 words about why you selected the three engineering research areas where you would like to be placed. Applications with over 750 words will be disqualified from consideration. Please name your file: LASTNAME\_FIRSTNAME\_PERSONAL STATEMENT and make sure your first and last name are also on all documents, which need to be in pdf format.

- ✓ You will also need to upload a PDF of your Unofficial High School Transcript.
- ✓ Additionally, please be prepared to submit online the \$35 application fee or mail a **check made out to the University of Southern California (not SHINE)** – applications will not be processed until the fee & all materials are in:

**ATTN: SHINE** c/o Dr. Katie Mills  
3650 McClintock Ave. OHE332  
USC Viterbi K-12 STEM Center  
Los Angeles, CA 90089-1450

Or

**Secure online portal:** <https://viterbipk12.usc.edu/payment-shine/>

- ✓✓ You are also welcome to add one supplemental PDF that showcases your interest in research, e.g., an award, a technical paper, lab report, science fair essay, etc.

#### **Timetable:**

Early bird applications and all teacher recommendations are due February 17, 2020, to be qualified for either financial aid or the reduced early bird fee of \$6,300; Regular applications are due by March 16 for the regular fee of \$6,500. Once we receive all materials from the applicant (including teacher recommendations, which often take longer for teachers to send than applicants realize), we send a dossier on to the professor. If a professor is already committed for SHINE students or rejects an applicant, we pass the applicant dossier to another professor.

Notification of admission via email to the applicant and her/his legal guardian will usually be made within two weeks, and admitted students must confirm their participation in **SHINE within 2 weeks or sooner to secure their spot in the program**. Payment schedule for students attending the SHINE program: Deposit of \$1,000 is due upon acceptance of USC's offer letter

Balance will due by deadline in USC's offer letter

SHINE FAQ page: <https://viterbik12.usc.edu/shine/faq/>

Application page: <https://tinyurl.com/USC-SHINE2020>

**Questions, please contact the K-12 STEM Center [k12STEM1@usc.edu](mailto:k12STEM1@usc.edu), 213---740---1999**