



# SHINE 2021 APPLICATION CHECKLIST

**DUE DATES: Early admit 3/26/21 (\$5,100, best choice of teams, scholarship deadline); Regular admit 4/23/21 (\$5,250)**

Thank you for your interest in USC Viterbi's [Summer High School Intensive in Next-Generation Engineering – SHINE](#). Our program is designed for high school students with a demonstrated passion for STEM and research. Although safety due to COVID requires us to host SHINE remotely again in 2021, we discovered in 2020 many ways to deliver experiential and hands-on research experience and also to bond as a cohort, which is one of SHINE's essential outcomes. Remote means we can accept students who are not based in Los Angeles, although we do give preference to local students because the K-12 STEM Center has a commitment to the students and districts of Southern California.

Before you start, be sure to [review the projects](#) so you know the types of engineering you want to experience (e.g., Biomed, Electrical, CS, etc.) and if there are any projects that especially appeal to you. Applicants need to include in their personal statement reasons why they are interested in any particular projects, and we 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; ***we suggest you complete the application in one setting, but it is possible to close and then return to your application if you use the same browser again if you have not cleared the cache.*** 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, 2021, and need to be willing to participate in remote research from their own residence for at least 20 hours per week (both synchronous and asynchronous work) between **June 14–July 30, 2021**, primarily on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Once a student is accepted to join a professor's research group, the Ph.D. student mentor will discuss specific hours during which they will work together collaboratively in order to give the SHINE student family and research team a mutually agreed-upon schedule. This individualized agreement works well if students balance SHINE with summer school or a part-time job. The remote format of SHINE 2021 provides good flexibility for SHINE students and families, since not all work is synchronous.



## 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 unweighted 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 may 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 3/26 (early admit) or 4/23 (regular). These steps require planning and careful thought.**

- ✓✓ Two letters of recommendation must be received by the deadline, both from teachers who discuss your academic qualifications in STEM as well as

your readiness to participate independently and successfully on a world-class research team for seven full weeks over the summer.

It's a good idea to talking to your teachers now, well in advance of the firm 3/26 or 4/23 deadlines about your interest in **SHINE** so we receive their email recommendations in time. Teachers can email their letter to [K12STEM1@usc.edu](mailto:K12STEM1@usc.edu) with the subject heading SHINE20 Rec STUDENT LAST NAME\_FIRST NAME. **THIS IS THE STEP THAT SEEMS TO TAKE THE MOST TIME FOR APPLICATIONS TO BE COMPLETE. MUST BE RECEIVED BY 3/26 for early admit or 4/23 for regular admit.**

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; we 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 and specific projects where you would like to be placed. Total word count: 750 words. 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 uploaded to the application in pdf format.
- ✓ You will also need to upload a PDF of your Unofficial High School Transcript from Fall 2020. Again, we recommend you request copies now so this does not become a bottleneck in your application process.
- ✓ Additionally, please be prepared to submit online the \$35 application fee. If you need to send a check, let us know by emailing us at [K12STEM1@usc.edu](mailto:K12STEM1@usc.edu). During the COVID Work from Home orders, we can more easily handle electronic payments. **Secure online portal: <https://viterbipk12.usc.edu/payment-shine/>**
- ✓ Optional: We also recommend that you 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 March 26, 2021, to be qualified for either financial aid or the reduced early bird fee of \$5,100; Regular applications are due by April 23, 2021, for the regular fee of \$5,250. Once we receive all materials from the applicant (including teacher recommendations, which often take longer for teachers to send than applicants realize), we send the student's dossier on to the professor. If a professor is already committed for SHINE students or rejects an applicant, we then pass the applicant dossier to another professor until we find a good match. Then we extend the acceptance offer to the student and guardians, who then have a week to accept.

Notification of admission via email to the applicant and her/his legal guardian will be made after application deadlines, 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: a deposit of \$1,000 is due upon acceptance of USC's offer letter. The balance will due by deadline specified in USC's offer letter.

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

Apply now: [https://onboardingtempca1.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_4SoaHRTF4HKwGq1](https://onboardingtempca1.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4SoaHRTF4HKwGq1)

**Questions: Email us at [k12stem1@usc.edu](mailto:k12stem1@usc.edu)**