

The USC/CHLA Summer Oncology Research Fellowship (SORF) Program



Program Description

The NIH-supported Summer Oncology Research Fellowship (SORF) Program is for US medical students who desire a biomedical career that involves cancer research. SORF takes place at two main sites: **Children's Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA)** and the **Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center of Keck School of Medicine of USC**. It is a full time, on-site, 8-12 week program during May-August of summer vacation, usually between years 1-2 of medical school.

SORF immerses medical students in cutting-edge research within a team science framework. Students are matched 1:1 with mentors according to their preferences, interests and research experience.

Research projects are in oncology-related fields, including pediatric, adolescent and adult hematology-oncology, clinical, translational and laboratory research, bioinformatics, machine learning, biomedical engineering, computational biology, precision medicine, preventive medicine, population-based research, survivorship and many more.

SORFites also engage in a mandatory dynamic interactive curriculum of selected topics in hematology-oncology, career development, research communication, research skills and responsible conduct of research. They also visit centers of emerging sciences, participate in social and networking activities, interact with faculty, trainees and cancer survivors. Students further enhance their skills through a journal club, scientific reports, and presenting their research project in a poster and oral presentation.

SORFites are encouraged to continue their NIH-supported research remotely after the summer. They are also supported in presenting their results at scientific conferences, ultimately, compiling their data into a manuscript for publication. Many SORFites go on to successful academic medical careers involving cancer research and related disciplines, attesting to the efficacy of the program.

[SORF @ Children's Hospital Los Angeles](#)
and [SORF @ Keck School of Medicine](#)

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Application to SORF is online. The executive committee reviews and invites top applicants to the program. Accepted students indicate their preferred project/mentor choices from a list provided and are matched. They are then connected with their mentor, read background literature, conceptualize, submit a research proposal prior to starting the program, and are ready for their project upon arrival. Applicants with solid research experience and research aspirations in oncology and related fields are given special attention. We encourage applications from all interested students.

In summer 2026 the program will again be fully **in-person, on-site** at CHLA and at Keck/USC in Los Angeles, California.

During the program, students receive subsistence of \$600/week. Partial assistance with housing and travel to/from Los Angeles are provided to qualifying students. SORFites may continue support for additional research beyond the summer, to complete their projects and prepare them for presentation at scientific conferences and for publication. There is possibility to return for a second summer of research.

To Apply

Summer 2026 applications are accepted from Nov 1, 2025

Early application/admission deadline: Dec 7, 2025
11:59PM PST

- acceptance is in Jan 2026; early students have priority in choice of project

Regular application deadline: Jan 4, 2026, 11:59PM PST
- acceptance is in Feb 2026

Apply online at: [SORF 2026 Application](#)

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