

# The CATALYST Summer Training Program Guide

**Program Dates: June 1, 2026 - August 7, 2026**

## Important Dates

<b>November 17, 2025</b>	CATALYST application link launched
<b>January 14, 2026; 11:59pm CST</b>	Application deadline
<b>February 23, 2026</b>	Award notifications released
<b>March 4, 2026; 11:59 CST</b>	Signed offer letters due
<b>June 1, 2026</b>	Program start date
<b>August 7, 2026</b>	Program end date

## Programs and Eligibility

### **What are the different programs that reside under the CATALYST umbrella?**

There are over 21 unique programs that participate in the CATALYST summer training program. We encourage you to review the programs page to learn more about all of the wonderful opportunities that are available at MD Anderson.

### **Who is eligible for CATALYST?**

We have over 21 unique programs geared towards trainees at the high school, undergraduate and graduate levels. Please refer to the individual program pages for the unique eligibility requirements for each program. If you have any questions related to the eligibility of a specific program, please reach out directly to the Program Director listed on the program page.

**Are high school students eligible to apply?** While there are a few programs geared towards high school trainees, applicants must be 18 or older come the start of the program (June 1, 2026) to be eligible due to institutional youth protection policies.

## Program Dates

### **What are the dates for the 2026 CATALYST Summer Training Program?**

Most every program will begin June 1<sup>st</sup> and run through August 7<sup>th</sup>. Please consult with your prospective Program Director should your program operate on an alternate schedule.

### **I have obligations to my school which may prevent me from starting on time or requiring me to depart the program early. What should I do?**

Before applying, please reach out to your prospective Program Director as some programs do not provide flexibility and thus require their trainees to be present for the full 10 weeks. If your program does allow for exceptions, please note that your pay will be prorated to reflect days not worked. We are not able to accommodate requests to start earlier than June 1<sup>st</sup> or continue past August 7<sup>th</sup> to make up for lost time.

## Applying to CATALYST

### **What is the application period?**

Applications will be collected from November 17, 2025-January 14, 2026. All application materials, including letters

of recommendation, are due by 11:59pm CST on January 14, 2026. Incomplete applications will not be considered. We realize that letters of recommendation can be difficult to secure around the holidays so please carefully monitor the status of your letters, which will be submitted directly by your referees in the application portal, and prompt your referees as needed to ensure they are submitted before the deadline.

### **How do I apply?**

On November 17<sup>th</sup>, the application link to apply to the CATALYST program will go live to the main CATALYST page along with all of the program pages that reside under the CATALYST umbrella. Please visit our How to Apply and Application FAQ page for more information.

### **Can I apply to more than one program?**

All programs will use the same application link. In doing so, applicants may rank their top two programs (if applicable) to be considered for. If you are only wanting to apply to one program, you may rank the same program. Please **do not** submit multiple applications as each applicant may only be considered for up to two programs. Please carefully review the eligibility criteria of any program(s) that you are interested in before applying.

### **Who do I contact for technical difficulties with Slate (application system)?**

Please email [Discover\\_Support@mdanderson.org](mailto:Discover_Support@mdanderson.org).

### **What are the application requirements?**

In addition to providing personal information, all applicants must upload their official transcripts, CV or resume, a statement of research experience and areas of interest(s), and two letters of recommendation to be uploaded by your referees. Please carefully monitor these letters to ensure that they are submitted before the deadline. Incomplete applications will be purged.

**When will I find out if I have been accepted?** Notifications will be sent out February 23<sup>rd</sup> and trainees will have until March 4<sup>th</sup> to respond on whether they would like to accept their offer. Please note all application reviews (1st and 2nd choice) are considered complete after this time.

**I am still waiting to hear back from another program that I applied to, can I get an extension to respond to my MD Anderson offer?** Unfortunately, not as we are working with a tight timeline to process summer appointments. Applicants are encouraged to decide which program is more important. Please do not accept an offer from our program if you know you will accept another pending offer

## **Schedule**

### **How many hours per week are students expected to work during the summer program?**

Forty (40) hours per week, Monday-Friday, 8:00am – 5:00pm with 1 hour for lunch.

### **Is my schedule flexible?**

Students typically work 8am to 5pm. If accepted into the CATALYST summer program, we ask that you work with your respective Program Director and mentor to define your final working hours for the summer.

### **Will I need to use a time clock?**

No. The timekeeper of the mentor's department will keep record of all employee's time via a computer-based system, and all time cards will be submitted each week. Summer students will not be paid for missed days.

### **Will I receive overtime if I work evenings or on weekends?**

Trainees will not receive overtime pay for working late or weekends and are free to work after business hours if permission is granted from the faculty mentor.

### **Is it okay if I work part-time or take some classes during my summer fellowship?**

We do not recommend for trainees to take concurrent courses or other employment in conjunction with the CATALYST summer training program. If you are considering taking summer courses, you must contact your respective Program Director **before** enrolling in summer school. The summer program is an intensive 10-week program and does not allow flexibility to attend classes.

**My family takes a vacation every summer; will I be allowed to take this time off?**

No. Time off is usually not allowed. Please consult the individual program for their attendance policy.

**Pay & Benefits**

**How much will I be paid?**

All trainees will receive \$18/hour. For a full-time 10 -week program, students will receive a \$7,200 stipend, please note this amount is subject to federal and state deductions. The amount deducted in taxed depends on the designated allowances on the federal tax form completed by the student during the onboarding process.

**Aside from my stipend, will I receive any additional financial support?**

Please review the website(s) for the program(s) that you are interested as some programs provide funds for other expenses.

**Since Independence Day occurs during the summer program, will I receive holiday pay?**

No. If a holiday occurs on a work day, the campus will be closed, you will not work nor receive pay for that day.

**In addition to my stipend, will I receive a parking allowance or parking reimbursement?**

No. Trainees are responsible for covering the cost of their transportation and parking. Parking on campus can be secured for a nominal fee. Following orientation, trainees will be provided with information on how to sign up for a parking permit.

**Will I receive health insurance while employed as a summer trainee?**

No. Because this is a short-term fellowship, awardees of the MD Anderson CATALYST Summer Training are not benefits eligible. Summer students will not receive any type of health insurance (medical, dental, etc.), retirement benefits, life insurance, paid time off, or reimbursement for parking, transportation, or moving expenses.

**Housing**

**Is housing available?**

Housing is not provided; the trainee is responsible for obtaining their own housing for the duration of the program. The CATALYST team and respective program leaders will provide accepted students with various resources to identify housing options in and around the medical center.