Creating a Competitive RaMP Application

You are hopefully here because you are an undergraduate who is excited about the possibility of spending a year researching biomolecular structure and design with the Rosetta Commons RaMP Program. Yet, you may be asking yourself, "How do I stand out amongst many applicants?" This guide can help.

- **How do we evaluate candidates?**
    - We use a panel of faculty, graduate student mentors, and program alumni who read the applications, score them, and then discuss. This group also suggests the lab placements based on the submitted lab preferences and stated research interests.
    - Our application review criteria are: (1) potential for graduate school in computational biophysics; (2) potential/experience for scientific research; (3) potential/experience in computer programming and biophysics; (4a) motivation (essay); (4b) potential for growth as a scientist (as demonstrated in experiences, essays or letters); (5) strength of recommendations; (6) GPA, (7) match quality to an open project, and (8) contribution to diversifying our community.

- **Experience**
    - We are seeking the next generation of scientists and engineers for biomolecular structure prediction and design! We will look for experiences that prepare you for this area of research. We especially value people whose scientific interests resonate with ours and who might see our community as a promising home for their career path.
    - Some of the strongest applications have both biology/biophysics and coding/computing experience. In our interdisciplinary program, we expect that not everyone will have *both* bio and coding experience—that's ok! You should have a little experience in each (even if informal) and be motivated to expand your learning to both sides of the field.
    - Coding experience will give you an advantage, not just on your application. If you are selected for this program, coding experience will give you a leg up during our training week that we call "bootcamp.". Be sure to share about your coding experience in the Statement of Interest (ok if it's self-taught!).

        - How can you bolster your coding if you're a life science major?
            - Coursera offers an array of Python classes—our favorite is Python for Everybody, where courses 1-2 will give you the basics.
            - Don't be discouraged! Many people in research are self-taught in coding as they have picked up computational skills along the way. Rosetta Commons is computational biology; you can't have one without the other. The internship is one way to gain this experience before graduate school.
        - We also offer learning resources on our YouTube channel (some of this material is in the Bootcamp).
        - Take calculus 1 and 2 prior to starting the program in order to understand the language.

- **Resume/CV**
    - If you have research experience, list it on your resume.
    - If you have coding experience, list it on your resume.
        - If you are currently taking a coding class, list that as "in progress."
    - If you have presented a poster or have a publication, include that on your resume.
    - If you are active in leadership activities, include them.

- **Statement of Interest**
    - Tell us why the Rosetta RaMP program is right for you!
    - Detail your coding experience.
    - Share your prior experiences that have led you to be able to do this internship.
    - Detail your specific interest in biomolecular design—what problems interest you?
    - Do you plan to pursue a PhD after the program is finished?

- **Lab preferences**
    - Project descriptions are on our website.
    - Research our faculty members of interest and explain (in the Statement of Interest) why you want to work with them.
        - Review their lab websites (links)
        - Read their papers

    - We may use your selections to suggest related labs, for example, other enzyme design labs or other industry placements.

- **Letters of Recommendation (LoR)**
    - Ask faculty who have worked with you to write an LoR.
        - Ask them at least three weeks ahead of the application deadline (3/5/25).
    - Strong letters of recommendation outline your abilities as a researcher, leader, or team member, rather than just class participation.

- **GPA**
    - Our minimum GPA requirement is 3.25.
    - We accept unofficial transcripts.

- **Personal History**
    - In the Rosetta Commons, we value community building and inclusion! Please share ways that you have contributed to strong community and belonging, for example, by listing those leadership activities on your resume.