

Studio D3 Fellowship

The Fellowship Experience and How to Apply

Overview

3-year program for recent Ph.D.s in quantitative disciplines to explore complex biological questions using computational and theoretical methods at the Allen Institute to drive discovery.

Biology experience not necessary—we're seeking applicants with expertise in computer science, statistics, engineering, mathematics, physics, and other theoretical and quantitative fields.

Designed to provide freedom to explore novel computational research areas and questions of interest, taking advantage of the Allen Institute's scientific resources.

Mentorship from leading Allen Institute researchers and Affiliates. Fellows are hired as an Allen Institute employee with a starting salary of \$111,100 annually, immigration support, and benefits package.

The Fellowship Experience

The Fellowship is designed to immerse quantitative scientists in an intellectually vibrant, highly collaborative environment that advances data-driven discovery through interdisciplinary curiosity. Fellows work on biological questions with mathematical approaches that enhance the work of our accelerators to extract knowledge and uncover new principles of living systems. They engage deeply with Allen Institute scientific teams spanning Brain Science, Cell Science, Immunology, Neural Dynamics, Brain Health, and Synthetic Biology (as well as future accelerators), while embracing the concepts of Team Science and Open Science in their research practices. Through collaborative research, Fellows contribute their computational and theoretical expertise to tackling the most complex challenges in bioscience today, cultivating new ideas with the potential for broad, transformational impact. Importantly, the program is intentionally inclusive of non-traditional applicants—inviting individuals from diverse technical backgrounds who demonstrate strong cultural fit for team-oriented, integrative science and a drive to pursue bold ideas. Within the Studio D3 model, Fellows are given the freedom and support to explore creative approaches to research, leveraging shared resources, mentorship, and community to push the boundaries of computational biology and shape the future of scientific discovery.

Experience in the field you propose to pursue during the Fellowship is not required. The Fellowship has been purposefully designed to acquaint new Fellows in the first six month of their Fellowship with the Allen Institute's genomic, structural, and functional datasets and research questions of interest — working closely with their mentors at the Allen Institute to understand the challenges and opportunities in biology. The Allen Institute is known for systematized large-scale [data collection](#) including molecular, genomic, transcriptional, physiological, morphological, anatomical, and functional data from mice, non-human primates, and humans.

Introduction to the field begins with training in relevant scientific areas using Allen Institute resources and data as well as networking with leaders in both experimental and computational science at the Allen Institute. Fellows will then develop novel research projects which push the boundaries of both data and biology with independence in selection and focus of research direction.

Fellows are officially employed at the Allen Institute with a competitive salary (starting \$111,100 annually) and full benefits. Benefits include a generous 401k match, health insurance, dental insurance, relocation, and immigration support.

Within their first six months, Fellows will identify a mentor within the Allen Institute. Mentors work with Fellows to design computational research projects that the Fellows will execute for the remainder of their Fellowships. Mentors are there to guide and inform the Fellows' choice of research, but the research direction is up to the Fellow. Unlike other postdoctoral programs, where the mentor or PI may dictate project priorities, D3 Fellows have the freedom to pursue their own interests.

Fellows will not be alone. There is a growing peer community of Fellows, with three new Fellows accepted each year for the 3-year program, along with the growing Studio D3 community. Throughout the three years of the Fellowship, Fellows will be supported in developing a network in the computational biology field and sharing their progress with peers at conferences world-wide.

Collaborating across biology

The Allen Institute is unique in its ability to do systematic large-scale biological science at scale (see our existing [datasets and other resources](#)). We have invested in the infrastructure and pipelines needed to produce standardized, reproducible survey-styled data on biology's most complex systems. Since 2003, Allen Institute teams have generated large-scale, cutting-edge atlases and datasets to advance the field and our knowledge in brain science, immunology, cell and synthetic biology. Within the Institute, Studio D3 operates as a flexible, studio-style research environment rather than a traditional lab, bringing together theoretical and computational scientists to work on shared scientific challenges at the intersection of computation and biology. It is designed as a networked community that emphasizes creative, cross-disciplinary collaboration, where Fellows engage across the Allen Institute with mentors, experimental teams, collaborators, and external affiliates to identify and pursue high-value scientific opportunities. The model centers on integrating data, theory, and advanced computational methods—including AI/ML—to accelerate data-driven discovery, while providing shared infrastructure, training, and community programming (e.g., workshops, seminars, and collaborative working spaces) that enable rapid exploration and iteration of ideas.

Affiliates are external computational and theoretical Investigators who serve as active, integrated members of the Studio D3 community, bringing complementary expertise and perspectives into the

program. They engage with Fellows through mentorship committees, collaborative projects, and regular on-site visits, helping to expand the Institute's computational network while contributing to a culture of highly collaborative, cross-disciplinary science and advancing data-driven discovery.

In this way, Studio D3 functions both as a hub for cutting-edge research and as a training ground for the next generation of computational and theoretical biologists. Together, we provide quantitative scientists with the ideal opportunity and resources to mine for novel insights and discoveries to better understand our brain, our cells, and our immune system.

Eligibility Criteria

The Fellowship is appropriate for Ph.D.s in a quantitative field such as computer science, electrical engineering, physics, mathematics, or biology and who have a strong background in statistical, computational, machine learning, or other data science methods. Applicants must be a scientist with a Ph.D. or who will have completed their Ph.D. by the start of the Fellowship program. Ph.D. should have been awarded in the last 3 years. Up to three Fellows will be selected each year. International applicants are eligible to apply.

One goal of the Fellowship is to build a network of collaborators, as such, priority will be given to applicants who are not currently postdoctoral Fellows or scientists at the Allen Institute.

We believe high-quality science can only be produced when it includes different perspectives. We are building an environment of diversity and inclusion and encourage people from all backgrounds to apply for this Fellowship.

Application Instructions

Fill out the application and upload materials via Submittable (Fellowship online application platform).

Interested participants must upload the following to apply:

- *A curriculum vitae (CV)*
- Two (2) Letters of support from your mentor or other professors and scientists.
- A one-page personal statement from the applicant describing their history, activities, and interests as an individual (especially those outside of science) which may give the committee a greater sense of you as a person and your ability to simultaneously interact with and challenge traditional scientific fields.
- A two page research statement from the applicant describing their prior research, potential research interests (including tools they are familiar with), and how this fellowship aligns with their career goals.

- A one page mock research proposal on a biological question that interests you and how you would approach it with your skill set. You will not be held to this proposal should you be accepted nor will you be judged on biological knowledge you are not yet expected to have.
- Reviewer Selection – Select up to three Allen Institute research areas that align best with your research interests, for consideration when we select reviewers.

Application Window

Fill out the application and upload materials via Submittable (Fellowship online application platform)

- Applications will open on September 15, 2026
- The application window will close on December 1, 2026, at 11:59pm PDT

Applications will undergo multiple rounds of review. Finalists will be notified of their application status and will be invited to:

- Present on their research virtually – February 8th and 9th, 2027
- Partake in in-person interviews – March 8th and 9th, 2027
- Final decisions will be made in mid-March 2027.

Applicants will be informed of their application decisions via email.

Questions? Please reach out to D3Fellow@alleninstitute.org