

# Bridge to Science Internship Program

## Application Deadline

March 22, 2025. Applicants will be notified of acceptance into the program approximately 4 weeks after the application deadline

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Though the SENACYT Academic stays Program, we are looking for undergraduate or master's students who wish to complete their thesis during a paid 9-month internship at STRI.

Thanks to a generous donation, we are ALSO looking undergraduates from universities in Latin America who have completed coursework or post baccalaureates (recent graduates) to conduct a paid 9-month internship at STRI.

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## Program Details:

Duration: 9-month paid internship

Cohort Model: Includes a two-week orientation

Teaching Sessions during the Internship: Practical workshops will be organized to strengthen skills in research, data analysis, scientific writing, and professional development in the STEM field.

Program Dates: April to December 2025

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## Award

Our program offers a stipend to cover living expenses during the stay at STRI (currently \$1,250/month for up to 9 months).

Airfare to Panama or ground transportation for those coming from other provinces of Panama to our stations.

Medical or accident insurance in case the applicant does not have coverage.

Registration fee.

Teaching sessions with experts.

2025

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Smithsonian  
*Tropical Research Institute*

### Elegibility Criteria

#### For students applying to SENACYT Funding:

Open to undergraduate or master's students in fields such as biology, environmental sciences, or related disciplines from accredited Panamanian universities, with research areas aligned with those of STRI scientists.

Applicants must have completed all coursework, with only the thesis or final graduation requirements pending (a certified letter from the university is required). The thesis will be conducted during the program.

Full-time availability is mandatory.

A minimum academic index of 1.5 is required.

Basic English proficiency at A2 level or higher.

Important: Students must submit a copy of their final thesis and the defense certificate issued by their university to STRI and SENACYT upon program completion.

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#### For students or recent graduates applying to Private Funds:

Open to undergraduate students who have completed coursework or recent graduates (post-baccalaureates) in fields such as biology, environmental sciences, or related disciplines, with research areas aligned with those of STRI scientists.

Applicants must be currently enrolled in or have graduated within the past two years from an accredited university in Latin America (a certificate of enrollment or diploma is required).

Full-time availability is mandatory.

Applicants must provide either the minimum academic index required for successful graduation or an unofficial undergraduate transcript (with an explanation of the grading scheme for non-Panamanian universities).

Basic English proficiency at A2 level or higher.

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### Instructions for Applying in SOLAA

**Program Site URL:** <https://stri.si.edu/es/programas-academicos/pasantias>

*A complete application must include the following components:*

- ① Application through SOLAA  
(Smithsonian Online Academic Appointment System)
  - Access: <https://solaa.si.edu>
  - Select "New to SOLAA? Create Account Here" and complete the information to create an account.
  
- ② Program selection in SOLAA
  - Program Type: "Internship"
  - Unit of Interest: "Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute"
  - Program: "Bridge Internship Program: Puente a la Ciencia – Estancias Académicas"
  
- ③ Requirements to Apply for the Program

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

  - Essay/Motivation Letter:
    - A 600 to 800-word essay explaining why you wish to undertake the internship and how it aligns with your academic and professional goals.
    - Use these questions as a reference:
      - How do my academic background and previous experiences relate to my preparation for this internship, including any experience in tropical environments or how my training would allow me to adapt to this setting?
      - What do I hope to achieve through this internship, and how does it align with my academic and professional goals?
      - Which specific aspects of the STRI project interest me, and what do I hope to learn during the internship? If I am interested in more than one project, what is my order of preference and why?
  - Updated Curriculum Vitae (CV):
    - Must include completed studies and, if applicable, previous professional experience.
  - English Proficiency:
    - A basic to intermediate level of English is recommended to facilitate interaction with international colleagues at the institute.

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- Academic Transcripts:
  - Provide a copy of official academic transcripts indicating your academic performance.
  - For Panamanian students (funded by SENACYT): A minimum academic index of 1.5 is required.
  - For Latin American students (via Private Funds): They must present the minimum academic index required for graduation or an unofficial transcript (with an explanation of the grading system if coming from a non-Panamanian university).
- Carta de la universidad / University Letter:
  - Must certify your academic status and confirm that you have completed all coursework for your degree or master's program, with only the thesis or professional internship remaining. A certificate of enrollment or diploma showing the graduation date is also accepted.
- Academic Recommendation Letter(s):
  - Provide one or two letters of recommendation from individuals who can speak about your skills or knowledge relevant to the experience or skills required for the project you are applying for.
  - Professional references, such as university professors or advisors, are preferred.
- Online Application Form:
  - Complete the questionnaire section that assesses how the program will benefit your academic and professional goals.
- Descripción del proyecto de tesis / Thesis Project Description:
  - Not mandatory.
- Evaluation Questions
  - Explain the intersection between the project and your personal interests.
  - If you already have a thesis topic, describe how it aligns with the project of your interest. *(Clearly describe why you want to participate in this project and how your interests align with its objectives).*
  - How will this opportunity contribute to your professional development? *(Explain the benefits you expect to gain and provide concrete examples of how this experience will support your career).*
  - Have you had previous research opportunities in this field? *If not, how do you think the lack of opportunities has impacted your career? (Describe your situation).*
  - Do you believe your participation would help increase representation in science in Panama or Latin America? *(Describe how).*