**Application timeline**

**May-September**

* Research potential graduate programs, request info, ask your network
  + Try to refine your search as much as possible
* Study for/take GRE\*

**October**

* Finalize list of schools
  + Typical number might be 8-12, including reach and safety schools
  + Consider your geographical and other preferences / constraints
  + Identify professors/research of interest at each school
* Request official transcripts
* Request recommendations (at the latest, ideally you should give them about 2 months warning)
* Update C.V.
* Start Personal Statements/Essays (Unique or at least tailored for each program)
* Save $

**November**

* Send GRE Scores\* ($)
* Submit Recommendations
* Edit C.V. and Personal Statement/Essays
  + Take advantage of the CSHL Writing Resource Center

**December**

* Submit! ($)

**January**

* Interview Prep

**Common Questions**

**What considerations should you take when choosing a program?**

* Geographical Location
* Type of Program (MS, PhD, MD/PhD, Umbrella program)
* Field of Study
* Teaching Requirements
* Avg Time to graduate
* Stipend/Cost of living

**What is the most important part of the application?**

* Personal Statement
  + Tell a story. Don’t focus on the techniques that you learned, but rather the motivation of the questions that you were working on and how that shaped your interests in science.
* Letters of Recommendation

**Who should you ask for a recommendation?**

* Someone who can positively speak about your qualifications as a scientist and critical thinker

**What are you looking for in a grad school candidate?**

* Someone who has thoroughly researched the program and can identify why they are applying to their unique program specifically, and what they are able to contribute as a member of that community.
* Someone who knows why they are applying to graduate school and specifically what they hope to gain from the experience.

**Things I wish I knew when Applying to graduate school**

* If money is tight you can request a fee waiver for applications
* Depending on the funding source of the program, they may have limited spaces available for international students.

**Resources**

* Programs that no longer require GRE Scores #GRExit <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1MYcxZMhf97H5Uxr2Y7XndHn6eEC5oO8XWQi2PU5jLxQ/edit#gid=0>
* GRE score ranges for different schools

<https://magoosh.com/gre/2016/gre-scores-for-top-universities/>

* Tips for Updating your C.V. <https://ocs.fas.harvard.edu/files/ocs/files/undergrad_resumes_and_cover_letters.pdf>
* Avoiding classic application mistakes: <http://www.sciencemag.org/careers/2015/04/how-not-apply-grad-school>
* Podcast on graduate school applications and life:   
  <http://hellophd.com>  
  Specific episodes:
  + <http://hellophd.com/2018/09/101-hellophd-guide-to-grad-school-application-knowing-when-and-where-to-apply-with-dr-beth-bowman/>
  + <http://hellophd.com/2017/12/084-the-4-essential-parts-of-a-grad-school-application/>
  + <http://hellophd.com/2020/08/140-mailbag-do-i-need-more-experience-biology-vs-biomedical-et-al/>
  + <http://hellophd.com/2020/01/106-hellophd-guide-to-grad-school-applications-acing-your-interview-with-dr-beth-bowman-r/>
  + <http://hellophd.com/2019/10/102-hellophd-guide-to-grad-school-applications-crafting-the-perfect-personal-statement-r/>
  + <http://hellophd.com/2017/07/076-choose-research-focus-apply/>
* Blog about applying to / starting grad school   
  <https://vanderbiltbiomedg.com/>
* PhD stipends - see hundreds of student reported stipend amounts from a wide collection of universities and programs   
  <http://www.phdstipends.com/>
* Blog and resources about personal finance tailored to PhDs in training  
  <http://pfforphds.com/>