



# Caribbean Science Foundation

CARICOM Research Building, UWI Cave Hill Campus, Barbados, West Indies

Ph: 1.246.417.7493 • [www.caribbeanscience.org](http://www.caribbeanscience.org)

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## Student Program for Innovation in Science and Engineering (SPISE)

Program Dates: July 14 – Aug 12, 2018

REQUEST FOR LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION – Principal or Guidance Counselor

Letter of Recommendation deadline: **March 31, 2018**

### Program Description

SPISE is an intensive residential 4-week summer program in science and engineering, offered by the Caribbean Science Foundation for promising Caribbean high school students 16 and 17 years of age, and directed by Professor Cardinal Warde and Dr. Dinah Sah. The goal is to help address the low numbers of Caribbean students pursuing advanced degrees in science and engineering. This program is one of the Caribbean Science Foundation's initiatives with the long-term goal of helping to diversify the economies of the Region by stimulating more technology-based entrepreneurship within the Region. SPISE is hosted on the Cave Hill campus of the University of the West Indies, Barbados, and is a clone of the well-known MITES program at MIT for which Professor Warde also serves as the Faculty Director.

SPISE students are totally immersed (24/7) in university-level calculus, physics, biochemistry, entrepreneurship, Caribbean Unity studies, and hands-on projects in robotics, electronics/renewable energy and computer programming. The SPISE environment discourages rote learning and teaches students how to focus on understanding and applying the fundamentals so as to achieve mastery of the material. The objective is to help the student build self confidence in solving complex problems that they may never have encountered before.

The value of teamwork (learned in the hands-on projects) is yet another essential skill that is emphasized, along with proactive time-management skills. Instructors in the SPISE include university professors from the Caribbean and the Diaspora (including MIT), and senior management professionals from leading biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies in the Diaspora. The program culminates with student project competitions in which each team first gives an oral presentation of their hands-on project before demonstrating the workings of their project. These final competitions are open to the public.

The website of the Caribbean Science Foundation is <http://caribbeanscience.org> and more information about SPISE can be found at <http://caribbeanscience.org/spise/>.

### Content Guidelines for Letter of Recommendation

Your letter of recommendation is a critical component of your student's application. Please provide us with a thoughtful evaluation of your student's preparedness for the SPISE as follows:

1. Comment on the motivation of the student to attend the SPISE.
2. Comment on areas where the student needs to improve.
3. State the student's class ranking (and total number of students in the class), and academic grades if you have such information. Also comment on the student's performance relative to all other students you have interacted with over the years at this level.
4. State the historical percentage of students who go on to higher education from your school (2 - 4 year college or university).
5. Comment on the demographics of your student body.
6. Include a copy of the explanation of your school's grading scheme and a copy of your school's profile.
7. SPISE is a very demanding environment with high pace and pressure over 4 weeks. Most of the student's classmates will be among the top STEM students from their country. Students in SPISE must necessarily be emotionally strong and stable. Comment on how you anticipate the student would be able to cope with the pace, stress and pressure of the SPISE environment, particularly while living away from his/her parents/family, perhaps for the first time.
8. Provide your view of the student's potential for success at the university level, and in his/her chosen career.

### **Submission Guidelines for Letter of Recommendation**

Your letter should be written on school stationery, signed, dated, converted to a PDF file and submitted by e-mail as an attachment to [csfhdq@gmail.com](mailto:csfhdq@gmail.com) with the subject line "SPISE2018-LastNameOfStudent-(Prin-or-GC)Rec-YourLastName".

Your letter of recommendation should arrive at the CSF by **March 31, 2018**.

Should you have any questions about SPISE or the letter submission, please contact the CSF office:

**Email:** [csfhdq@gmail.com](mailto:csfhdq@gmail.com)

**Telephone:** 1-246-417-7493.

**The CSF thanks you for your time and effort!**