



Caribbean Science Foundation

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

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"Grooming the next generation of Caribbean science and engineering leaders"

Student Program for Innovation in Science and Engineering (SPISE)

Program Dates: July 5 – August 10, 2025

REQUEST FOR RECOMMENDATION – Science and Math Teachers

Recommendation Form deadline: **March 1, 2025**

Program Description

SPISE is an intensive residential 5-week summer program in science and engineering, offered annually since 2012 by the Caribbean Science Foundation (CSF) for promising Caribbean high school students approximately 16-18 years of age, and directed by Dr. Dinah Sah and Professor Cardinal Warde. 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 CSF'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, Barbados campus of the University of the West Indies, and is modeled after the well-known MITES program at MIT for which Professor Warde has served as the Faculty Director for 27 years.

SPISE students are totally immersed (24/7) in university-level calculus, physics, biochemistry, entrepreneurship, and hands-on projects in computer programming and robotics or electronics. 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 students build self-confidence in solving complex problems that they have not 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 companies in the Diaspora. The program culminates with student project competitions in which each team gives an oral presentation of their hands-on project and demonstrates the workings of their project. These final competitions are open to the public.

More information about the Caribbean Science Foundation and SPISE can be found at <https://caribbeanscience.org> and <https://caribbeanscience.org/spise/>, respectively.

Content Guidelines for Recommendation

Your recommendation is a critical component of your student's application and must be completed by filling out the 'SPISE 2025 Recommendation Form', linked in the next section. Please respond to the specific questions in the form to provide us with a detailed evaluation of your student's preparedness for the SPISE. These questions include:

1. How long you have known the student and in what capacity.
2. The student's performance relative to others in your class(es), including their ranking in your science (physics, chemistry, or biology) or math class as well as the total number of students in the class.
3. The student's performance relative to all other students you have taught over the years at this level in this subject.
4. Summarizing the concepts that the student will have learned in your course by the time the SPISE starts in July, and the student's proficiency with these concepts.
5. Assessing the student's academic excellence, intellectual promise, passion for the subject including going above and beyond the material taught, perseverance and proactive identification and use of resources, and timeliness.

6. Rating other attributes of the student: leadership qualities including active participation in class and communication skills, contribution to community including working with/helping other students, and honesty/integrity.
7. Addressing inconsistencies, if any, between the student's performance and course grades or test scores.
8. Commenting on areas where the student needs to improve.
9. How likely the student is to thrive at SPISE, which is a very demanding environment with high pace and pressure over 5 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, particularly while living away from parents/family, perhaps for the first time.
10. The student's potential for success at the university level and in their chosen career.

Submission Guidelines for Recommendation

The link to the 'SPISE 2025 Recommendation Form' can be found by [clicking here](#). Please note that if we need further clarity on the information submitted via the form, we may contact you at the email address you provide in the form. As a reminder, this form must be submitted by **March 1, 2025**.

Should you have any questions about the recommendation form or SPISE, please contact the CSF office by email at applications.csf@gmail.com.

The CSF thanks you for your time and effort!