

CCLP Wildfire Journalism Project Application Instructions

Program period: Tuesday, July 15 to Thursday, August 7, 2025

We will meet every Tuesday and Thursday. During Week 1, Week 3, and Week 4, students will meet on the USC campus, 9am-4pm. During Week 2, the program will take place on-site at the Pacific Palisades and Altadena, 11am-5pm. In addition, there are two Saturday listening sessions, scheduled from 9am-1pm. The program schedule is included below.

Application deadline: May 7, 2025

We expect to release decisions by the end of May.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Must be between 16 and 18 years old
- Open to only rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors
- Must be able to secure your own transportation to USC for all program days
- No prior journalism experience is required

Program Benefits:

- \$1,000 stipend, awarded upon successful completion of the program
- Free breakfast and/or lunch, depending on schedule
- Journalism training from USC professors and graduate and undergraduate students
- Contributions toward a digital community memory archive

Program Schedule:

Week 1

July 15: 9 am-4pm, USC

July 17: 9am-4pm, USC

- 8:30-9:00 a.m. – Optional breakfast (provided, open to parents/guardians)
- 9:00-12:00 p.m. – Session 1
- 12:00-1:00 p.m. – Lunch (provided)
- 1:00-2:30 p.m. – Session 2
- 2:30-4:00 p.m. – Session 3

Week 2

July 19 (Saturday): 9am-1pm, on-site community venue

July 22: 11am-5pm, Pacific Palisades
July 24: 11am-5pm, Altadena
July 26 (Saturday): 9am-1pm, on-site community venue

Tuesday/Thursday:

- 11:00-12:30 p.m. – Guided bus tour of fire-impacted areas
- 12:30-1:30 p.m. – Lunch (provided)
- 1:30-5:00 p.m. – Community listening session

Saturdays:

- 9:00-12:30 p.m. – Community listening session
- 12:30-1:00 p.m. – Lunch (provided, open to parents/guardians)

Week 3

July 29: 9am-4pm, USC
August 31: 9am-4pm, USC

- 8:30-9:00 a.m. – Optional breakfast (provided, open to parents/guardians)
- 9:00-12:00 p.m. – Session 1
- 12:00-1:00 p.m. – Lunch (provided)
- 1:00-2:30 p.m. – Session 2
- 2:30-4:00 p.m. – Session 3

Week 4

August 5: 9am-4pm, USC
August 7: 9am-4pm, USC

- 8:30-9:00 a.m. – Optional breakfast (provided, open to parents/guardians)
- 9:00-12:00 p.m. – Session 1
- 12:00-1:00 p.m. – Lunch (provided)
- 1:00-2:30 p.m. – Session 2
- 2:30-4:00 p.m. – Session 3

For all days scheduled at USC, students are responsible for their own transportation to campus. During Week 2, transportation will be provided from the USC campus to all on-site locations, and drop off will be back at USC.

Application Requirements:

1. Personal Essay

The devastating wildfires in Altadena and the Pacific Palisades have affected high school students in many different ways. The fires destroyed homes, schools, businesses, places of worship, and community centers. It also transformed communities, bringing people together under extraordinary circumstances but also causing mental health challenges and geographic displacement.

Please write a personal essay describing the impact of the fires on your life. In your essay, please explore your connection to the greater Altadena area or the Pacific Palisades and provide meaningful reflections on what the fires have meant to you. (350-750 words)

2. List of Extracurriculars

We do not ask for a resume/CV, but we would like you to describe your current extracurricular activities or community service involvement. Please only mention those that you have been involved in during high school.

For each activity, provide a) title of your role, b) description of your role, c) length of time you have been involved in this activity, d) the reason you enjoy this activity. Feel free to provide your answer in list or bullet form. (No word limit)

3. Short-Answer Responses

Why are you interested in participating in this program? In your response, please mention why you would like to engage with high school students from the other fire-impacted community. (150-250 words)

Do you have any journalism or media experience? If so, please describe. If not, please share why you are interested in learning these skills. (150-250 words)

Optional: Is there anything else you would like to share about yourself that gives us greater insight? (No word limit)

4. Letter of Recommendation

We ask that you submit one letter of recommendation with your application. You can choose a teacher, mentor, community leader, or other professional reference who knows you well and can comment on your academic achievement and/or civic engagement. **Please provide your writer with the link to the program's letter of recommendation form:**
https://usc.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3rbKsPAZd4SjyBY.

5. Program Questions

Do you have the ability to get to USC on each program date? (drive yourself, be driven/transported, or take public transportation) For visits to Altadena and the Pacific Palisades, we will provide transportation departing from USC.

Do you have any dietary restrictions we should be aware of? We will provide free breakfast and lunch on all program days except July 22 and July 24, when we have an 11 a.m. start time and will only be providing free lunch.

Can you commit to attending all dates listed in the program? The program schedule is listed above.