



2023 Sidney Mac Donald Russell Family Fellow

**Justin Lee, Ph.D. Candidate,
Metabolic Biology, Näär Lab**



Justin Lee is a Ph.D. candidate in metabolic biology through the Department of Nutritional Sciences and Toxicology at UC Berkeley. He received his B.A. in Molecular and Cell Biology from UC Berkeley, where he grew interested in understanding how our body systems interact and adapt to the environment around us. To explore this question, he decided to pursue his graduate studies with Prof. Anders Näär studying how nutrients, metabolites, and synthetic interventions affect our body's metabolic networks and contribute to health and clinical outcomes. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic caused a pivot in his research focus to apply his training in disease biology and molecular medicine to address the challenges of the pandemic.

His current research efforts involve the development of locked nucleic acid antisense oligonucleotide (LNA ASO)-based therapeutics that target conserved, regulatory regions of respiratory viruses, such as SARS-CoV-2. As a Sidney MacDonald Russell fellow, he hopes to expand his current studies to provide new insights and considerations for LNA ASOs as an emergent therapeutic class in response to potential future viral outbreaks. Besides science, Justin loves trying new eateries and cafes, attempting to cook, running, and dog spotting.