The Fulbright Scholarship

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Dr. Moore is available for one-on-one advising with prospective Fulbright applicants.

Dr. Moore will also read drafts of students’ Fulbright essays and provide feedback. Applicants should allow at least a few weeks for the feedback.

In the early fall, Dr. Moore will make arrangements for the committee interviews.
Workshop Overview

- Overview of the Fulbright awards and the preparation process and timeline
- Conceiving of a project idea & approaches to securing an in-country affiliation
- Strategies for selecting and fostering very strong recommenders and for securing top-tier letters of recommendation
- Writing excellent grant essays
- Preparing for the faculty committee interview (held in late September or early October)
What Is the U.S. Student Fulbright Program?

- The U.S. Government’s flagship educational and cultural exchange program
- Focus on recent U.S. college/university graduates and graduate students, young artists, and young professionals
- Funds most costs of full-time projects abroad, including research, study, and others (more details on a later slide)

Note: **Fulbright is a vast umbrella under which reside many unique specific awards.** Be sure to read both the general Fulbright information and the specific award description carefully.

- **Critical Language Enhancement Awards:** add-on only; adds funding for 3 to 6 months of study to add language proficiency prior to the Fulbright grant period; selected languages and locations only
Brief aside: other similar programs

- **DAAD** (a German government program) funds many different activities (study, research, internships, language training, and more) in Germany
- **The American-Scandinavian Foundation** also funds study, research, and creative arts projects in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and/or Sweden
- There are several specific programs that target the UK: **Rhodes, Marshall, Gates Cambridge**
- **Rotary Peace Fellowships** fund master’s degree in peace and conflict studies and international affairs
- More: see the [Cal Poly Scholarships webpage](https://scholarships.calpoly.edu/) and check out the section on post-graduation awards
Back to Fulbright: Are You Eligible?

- U.S. Citizens only (not permanent residents)
- Those with Bachelor’s degrees, equivalent training or professional experience by start of grant

  Note: Recipients may not have received a Ph.D. The Fulbright Scholar program is the one that is open to people with doctoral degrees and long-time professionals.

- Sufficient language ability as required by host country and in keeping with the Fulbright mission
- Good health; ability to undertake the project
All information about the program is on the Fulbright website: us.fulbrightonline.org

Grant Descriptions
Eligibility Requirements
Country Descriptions
Campus Advisor Info
IIE Contact Information
Online Application (Embark)
Grantee Directory
Statistics
Webinars and Tips
Contacts for Questions
Social Media Links
Grant Types

**Basic Grant Types**

- **Study/Research (1000+ awards):** first year of grad study, thesis or dissertation research, creative and performing arts (architecture, creative writing, dance, design/crafts, filmmaking, installation art, music, painting, printmaking, performance art, photography, sculpture, theatre arts, world music)

- **English Teaching Assistantship (700+):** assistant teach 20-30 hours per week, English & US culture; K-12 or university

- **Travel Grant (<10):** Italy, Germany or Hungary only; shorter term

- **Fulbright-Clinton Public Policy Fellowships (10-20)**

- **Fulbright-mtvU Fellowships (<10)**

- **Fulbright-National Geographic Digital Storytelling Fellowships (<10)**

**Special Fulbright Programs**

- Special offerings to limited countries in business, journalism, sciences, and public health (find these under Study/Research)

**Supplemental Grants**

- **Critical Language Enhancement Awards**
Grant Benefits

- Round-trip airfare
- Monthly stipend (for room, board, incidental costs – varies by location)
- Health insurance
- Benefits *may also include* (varies by country):
  - Dependent support
  - Research allowance
  - Tuition
  - Language lessons
  - Enhancement activities
The Fulbright Application is ONLY available online.

Visit “Applicants” on the website and follow the instructions for completing an application.

Currently enrolled students: You MUST apply through Cal Poly* and must therefore meet the campus deadline.

Students who have graduated from Cal Poly no more than three years before the deadline (and have not since attended another college) may apply through Cal Poly or at-large; it’s your choice.

*Exception: Applicants for Fulbright-mtvU awards will always apply directly to Fulbright. There is no campus process for these awards.
Deadlines: Main Programs

Campus Deadline

- Enrolled candidates submit applications to campus committee by campus deadline for review.

IIE Application Deadline

- Online submission deadline (Cal Poly does this for campus applicants)
- Campuses send enrolled students’ applications to IIE at deadline; at-large applicants submit directly to IIE
- Applications are processed at IIE and sent to National Screening Committee members
Selection Timeline

National Screening Committees  Nov/Dec
- Screening committees review applications for a given country/region. They recommend candidates for selection.
- Arts applications also have portfolio review.
- **Semi-finalists** usually notified by January 31.

Fulbright Commissions/Embassies  Mar-May
- The Fulbright Commissions and U.S. Embassies in the host countries/regions select principal and alternate **Finalists**.

J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FSB)  By Aug
- The presidentially-appointed FSB makes the final selection and names **Fulbright Students**
Overall Timeline

- Design Project, Seek Affiliations, Prepare App.: April-Sept
- Campus Deadline: Mid-Sept
- Faculty Committee Interviews: Late Sept./early Oct.
- Deadline (Cal Poly submits it): mid-October
- Screening Committees: Nov-Jan
- Commissions/Embassies: Mar-May
- Foreign Scholarship Board: Jun-Aug
Fulbright-mtvU Awards for 2016-17

Deadline: March 1, 2016 (5:00 pm EST)
Cycle opens in November 2015
Application Components

- Application form (online)
- Statement of Grant Purpose
- Personal Statement
- Three references
- Transcripts
- Language Evaluation (if necessary; varies by specific award selected)
- Affiliation letter for host country (not for ETAs or Clinton) – 1 minimum, 2 max
- Creative work portfolio (arts & NatGeo; mtvU only if creative project)
- Documentation & outreach plan (mtvU)
- Situational response essay (Clinton)
- Resume/publications list (NatGeo)
**Consider feasibility: research**

- How will the culture and politics of the host country affect your work?
- How do the resources of the host country support your project? Will you have access to the documents/equipment necessary for successful completion of your project?
- If employing methodological techniques, such as extensive interviewing and the use of questionnaires, how will you get/locate your subjects? Have you received approval for your questionnaire from your project supervisor?
- Have you received all of the necessary permissions from local authorities?
- Is your language facility adequate? If not, how will you accomplish your work?
- How realistic is it that your project can be completed in nine months’ time? **This is the #1 downfall of otherwise good proposals.**
**Consider feasibility: study**

- How will the culture and politics of the host institution affect your studies?
- What can be reasonably accomplished in one academic year? (Note: In most cases, completing a master’s degree is not possible.)
- How prepared are you to adapt to the teaching and assessment styles of the host culture? Will your learning style be compatible with the local system?
- Is your language facility adequate? If not, how will you accomplish your work?
Consider past projects!

> One other useful strategy is to read the project statements of past successful applicants. Doing so helps you see what kinds of projects have succeeded before, and how they were presented by the applicants.

> You could also look for projects similar to your own idea, and see if you can locate the current or past awardee. Fulbright alumni are usually very happy to help prospective future Fulbrighters.
Letters of Affiliation (all but ETA, Clinton)

- Carefully read country summary before requesting letter
- Connect with a host contact willing to advise/mentor you as you conduct your Fulbright project
- Identify an appropriate professional (or even two) at a university, laboratory, library, community organization
- Request a signed letter on institutional letterhead indicating the person’s support

*Note:* ETAs and Clinton fellows DO NOT make affiliations
Securing an affiliation

You can think of it as the first screening committee: the individual or institution must pre-vet your project idea (or study proposal) in order to decide whether or not they support the proposal.

Their approval is a signal to the selection committees that your project is feasible, timely, and of interest in the host-cultural setting.

Use existing networks

- Colleagues of your profs
- Professional/field networks
- Online communities/interest groups
- Other contacts through personal networks

Determine whether it is safe to “blind contact” a potential affiliate, or if you need a formal introduction. In some cultures, simply sending an email (as we would here) is fine; in others, a “blind contact” will go unanswered and is disrespectful.

- Don’t know? Ask a cultural expert!
Securing an affiliation: more tips

- Try not to “put all of your eggs in one basket,” especially in cultures in which the first reply may take three months’ time! Pursue multiple avenues of possible affiliations.

- If your project could use it, consider multiple affiliations. You will be able to upload two affiliation documents. For example: both an academic institution and another relevant agency, like an archive, an NGO, a clinic, etc.

- Be extremely modest and courteous, not direct and entitled. You are asking for a major favor, one you cannot really repay. You should comport yourself as such. Respect and gratitude go a long way in any culture.

- Do not expect rapid responses; the instant-answer culture is unique to North America. Most people still operate on timescales of several days to a few months, and that is normal!

- For study projects, a letter of acceptance ≠ a letter of affiliation and should NOT be submitted. You need a specific letter of affiliation from a prof, Dean, etc.
Securing an affiliation: format

- A formal letter on letterhead or official stationery is best.

- Where possible, the person should print, sign, and then scan and email the letter to you. You have to upload it into the online application yourself.

- They can also mail it to you, if they can do so early enough. (You might offer to pay the postage.)

- When all else fails, you can use what you can get but, with the lead time you have now, aim for the best scenario.
Letters of Recommendation

- You should be prepared to provide the prospective recommenders with a user-friendly and streamlined packet of resources to help them provide an effective recommendation (more on this packet in the next slide).

- If you have not asked in person (you really should!), the initial email request should not include the packet, but you should promise to provide the necessary supporting materials if they agree to provide the recommendation.

- Once you have a tentative agreement, send the formal email request, with the packet attached.

- Keep the text of the email request short and simple, and ask that she or he confirms with you by a certain date (allow at least one week for reply).

- The email method is good for both of you because it creates a written record of the agreed-upon tasks and schedule. (In fact, this rule is generally good, even beyond the specific context of scholarships.)
Recommender packet: what to include

- Bullet-point listing of what you hope the recommender can address (telling them the 3 or 4 topics that you hope they will address, not exactly what to say – e.g., “I am hoping that you might address the diverse types of research resources that I have used” and not: “Please mention that I am conversant with every major kind of resource used in our field.”)

- Project statement draft or outline, including all the pertinent details (where, when, why, how)
  - A clear description of your career/educational goals (if not in draft)

- Current resume or CV (consider different possible formats: achievements resume, academic CV, etc.)

- Also offer to provide work samples or other materials, if they feel they need them.

- That’s probably about it! Don’t overwhelm them with too many items, or they may procrastinate for fear of not having time to review everything you have provided.
What should the recommendation letter cover?

- Strong level of knowledge and potential for future growth in the chosen field;
- Ability to carry out research/project and think and write analytically;
- Emotional stability, maturity, motivation, and seriousness of purpose;
- Appropriate linguistic preparation and ability to adapt to a different cultural environment;
- A proposed project that is feasible and has merit; and
- Likelihood of making a favorable impression as a United States citizen abroad.

Recommender’s tip sheet available.
Questions to ask yourself while drafting it:

- Is it interesting and reader-friendly?
- Does it portray you as someone who is a self-starter, capable of succeeding individually?
- Does it portray you as someone deeply interested in intercultural cooperation, and in the destination location in particular?
- Does it maintain a theme, thread, or motif from the Project Statement?
- Does it demonstrate how you-the-person is connected to you-the-scholar (or the person who will do the project); does it connect your personal and intellectual lives?
- Does it unnecessarily repeat things included elsewhere in the application? ("Real estate” is limited!!)
The **Statement of Grant Purpose** is where you make the case for the project itself – that it is timely, worthy of funding, viable, and only possible at the proposed project site(s).

It resembles a grant proposal, though it also differs from that genre in important ways. You *are* “selling” something, though: if they choose your project, they are funding you to live and work abroad for one year in order to complete the project. They need to believe in the project (just like they need to believe in you).
Statement of Grant Purpose

Questions to ask yourself while drafting it:

- Is it persuasive, direct, concise, easy to read?
- Does it emphasize relevance and importance of the project all the way through?
- Is it viable? Is the timeline realistic?
- Are there clearly defined goals, outcomes, and objectives? How will you know if it “succeeds”?
- Have you contextualized the project within your field of study or the appropriate context?
- Is the case that the project must be undertaken at the proposed destination an airtight case?
- Do you demonstrate your desire to engage fully with the host culture and to meet general Fulbright objectives, including those beyond the project proper?
- Does it explain your long-term plans and how the Fulbright project is the next logical, organic step in that process?
Specific Tips for Graduating Seniors
Focus on pursuing a beginning-level graduate study

How can you show that the study at the specific site is necessary to achieve your objectives?

How will you balance formal course work and study, your individual research interests, and the cultural engagement mission? (Does this come through in your essays?)

Where is it all leading? Will you complete graduate studies in the US? (Note: The funding is intended for Americans who will use what they have learned abroad when back at home. Saying you plan to live abroad for good is the end of your eligibility.)
Balancing the Project and the Person

One challenge for graduate applicants is figuring out how to balance an intensive focus on the project itself (what it is, why it’s worthy of funding, timeliness, etc.) with making the case that you are the person to do it. (This is the general problem for academics, too, of course.)

To some extent, the two statements separate these issues, but projects are personal, so there is overlap.

Try to conceive of the whole proposal as one narrative: the story of a project and its almost perfectly matched scholar.
Once you know, talk about your affiliation

- Once it’s secured, you should include – in the most appropriate place in the narrative – mention of your affiliation institution, person(s), etc.

- List any specific resources that they have promised (e.g., lab space, library or archive access, etc.) but only if they do not mention them in the letter of affiliation.

- If you have multiple connections, it does not hurt to mention them, but don’t overdo it and don’t use too much space (this info also appears in the affiliation letter/s, so keep “real estate” in mind).

- All of this is part of the answer to “How?”
Why is there an interview?

IIE likes to get an “objective” assessment of your relative qualifications and preparedness to undertake the proposed Fulbright project.

Who is on the committee?

At Cal Poly, the committee consists of about 15 faculty and staff members, all of whom are internationally engaged in their research, teaching, or other work.
What Does the Interview “Look” Like?

- It will last about 15 to 20 minutes.
- Everyone on the specific subcommittee (consisting of 4-7 members) that interviews you will have read your entire application (including arts portfolios, if you share them with Dr. Moore; she cannot access the online system in which portfolios are submitted).
- It’s a little like a job interview. You will reply to questions in an intense, rapid-fire succession, and then you will leave and wait to hear the results.
- On arrival, you will wait outside the interview room until called inside.
What Kinds of Questions Are Asked?

Prepare for questions about:

- Your project (know your proposal inside and out)
- The academic context of your project, as appropriate for the type of award you’re seeking
- Language qualifications (with reference to the requirements of the specific award)
- Your host country, city, site, etc. (do your homework: know the reigning political party, current events, major issues, significant geographical and demographic facts)
- Viability of your project (HOW you will do it)
- Yourself (why you are qualified, how you came up with the idea, etc.)
- Evidence of maturity, motivation, and adaptability to a different cultural environment
Know the Fulbright program: its history and mission. Be prepared to articulate how your project augments the Fulbright mission.

To practice an effective and concise “pitch” for your project, prepare the “2-minute elevator speech.”

Know current US events – especially any relevant to your project. You may be asked how you will represent the US situation to your international colleagues while abroad.

If you are confused by a question, ask for clarification. A good strategy is: “I want to make sure I understand what you’re asking. Is it [fill in the blank]?”

Do not be ashamed to admit the limits of your knowledge. It’s fine to say something such as “I haven’t fully explored that particular set of issues yet, but I hope undertaking this project will allow me to delve into it.” It’s better to be honest than to over-reach or exaggerate your knowledge (pretending is often see-through!)
What If I’m Not on Campus for the Interview?

- Interviews generally take place the last week of September and/or first week of October.
- If you will be out-of-town, you may be interviewed by Skype or telephone.
- You MUST be available for an interview in some format. It is not optional.
- Instructions will be provided closer to the interview scheduling.
What About At-Large Applicants?

- If you will no longer be enrolled at Cal Poly after Summer Term 2015, you may decide to apply as an at-large applicant.

- At-large applicants apply directly to New York and are not interviewed. The application deadline is in October.

- Not having the interview is not supposed to hurt your chances, but a good interview should not hurt them.

- Alumni who have graduated in the past three years may apply through the Cal Poly as long as they have not subsequently attended another college or university.
Fulbright Interview resources

- [http://www.slideshare.net/mfeldyryza/fulbright-interview-questions](http://www.slideshare.net/mfeldyryza/fulbright-interview-questions)
- [http://drhyder.wordpress.com/2010/06/01/fb1/](http://drhyder.wordpress.com/2010/06/01/fb1/)
Fulbright Contact at Cal Poly

International Center, Building 52 – Room E32

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Other: Ask for help from your adviser(s) and committee member(s); ask Dr. Moore for contact ideas for cultural and regional experts