

# Fulbright @ NU



## WHAT IS FULBRIGHT AND SHOULD I APPLY?

### A GATEWAY TO INTERNATIONAL EXPOSURE

The Fulbright US Student Program supports research, training, and teaching in over 140 countries around the world. Fulbright brings students and scholars from foreign nations to the U.S. and sends U.S. students and scholars abroad. As the single largest funder of overseas academic mobility for U.S. citizens, this year Fulbright's U.S. Student Program will send over 2,200 US students abroad to carry out projects ranging from creative writing, to journalism, to linguistics, to nanotechnology, to anthropology, to ethnomusicology, and teaching.

*All students who value international contact and seek to broaden their scholarly horizons should apply for a Fulbright.*

## FULBRIGHT IS ...

### A PROGRAM FOR INTERNATIONALLY-MINDED SCHOLARS, ARTISTS, AND EDUCATORS

The Fulbright program rests upon **two** main pillars: scholarship and cultural exchange. First, Fulbright aims to strengthen the base of knowledge upon which all societies build, and second, it seeks to foster positive relations between nations through the exchange of young scholars dedicated to language acquisition and cultural understanding. The closer you and your project comes to fulfilling these twin goals, the better your chances.

**Types of projects** – The Fulbright US Student Program accepts applications for a variety of project types.

- **Study/Research Projects** are the most well-known. Study/Research projects consist of research or training (ex. musical instrument training or enrollment in a graduate program) and spring to mind readily when “Fulbright” arises in conversation. Language ability is a must.
- **English Teaching Assistantships**, are the most numerous projects and account for much of the growth in the Fulbright program over the past ten years. Successful ETA applicants demonstrate ability and commitment to teaching while (optional by country) proposing a scaled-down, side project. See individual country profiles for language requirement, if any.
- **Critical Language Enhancement (CLE) Awards** support advanced study in the following countries & languages: **Egypt**: Arabic (MSA & dialect), **India**: Bangla/Bengali, Hindi, Gujarati,

Marathi, and Urdu; **Indonesia:** Bahasa Indonesia; **Jordan:** Arabic (all dialects); **Morocco:** Arabic (MSA and Darija); **Taiwan:** Mandarin. All applicants working in these languages should apply.

- **Arts Awards** Available in multiple countries.
- **Business Awards** are available only to Finland, Ireland, Mexico, Spain, and Taiwan. These grants support business study and/or internships.
- **Journalism and Communications Awards** are available to Germany & Taiwan.
- **STEM and Public Health Awards** – Multiple countries.
- **Country Specific Awards** see Fulbright site.
- **Graduate Degree Grants** – Available in 33 countries. See individual country sites (NB: Fulbright rarely commits to complete funding for graduate degrees.)

## ***FULBRIGHT ISN'T ...***

### **A DEVELOPMENT AID ORGANIZATION**

**M**any valuable ways exist to engage with the world, Fulbright does not support them all. Fulbright will not fund social activism, community service, or development projects. All Fulbright applicants either propose a feasible, significant research question, argue for additional training, or seek to teach English. If you wish to work for an NGO that advocates for women's rights in sub-Saharan Africa, Fulbright is not for you. Many other worthy programs await your energy.

**In the world of prestigious fellowships, the Fulbright competition is among your most advantageous option.**

### **EASY ...**

Nationally approximately 17% of all applicants win an award. Northwestern's applicants perform better than this national average – typically greater than 22% find success. Nevertheless, fierce competition characterizes this award. The application process benefits applicants in many ways, but do not anticipate winning unless you engage seriously in the application process. Fulbright is a poor choice if your main goal is to have someone else pay for a year to party in another country.

## ***HOW DO I APPLY?***

### **START EARLY AND SEEK ADVICE FROM THE OFFICE OF FELLOWSHIPS**

**Y**ou apply through the Fulbright website ([us.fulbrightonline.org](http://us.fulbrightonline.org)), which is chock-a-block full of detailed, transparent information. Visit the site several times over the coming months to investigate the application process, locate specific requirements for your country, and read short blurbs on current and past Fulbright projects.

### **Eligibility**

- U.S. Citizen
- Hold a BA/BS **or** experience commensurate with project goals

- Be *sufficiently proficient* in the host country language to complete the project
- Be in good health

**What material completes an application package?**

- i. APPLICATION FORM
- ii. STATEMENT OF PROPOSED STUDY OR RESEARCH (two pages, single space)
- iii. PERSONAL STATEMENT (one-page, single space)
- iv. LETTER OF AFFILIATION FROM HOST COUNTRY (not required for **ETA** applicants and undergraduate applicants to Japan and Russia)
- v. LANGUAGE EVALUATION(S) completed by a language teacher or native speaker (not required for some teaching applicants and for applicants to English-speaking countries; strongly recommended for applicants to all non-English-speaking countries, even where English is an acceptable language)
- vi. REFERENCES (3 required)
- vii. SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL RECORD CARD (for Creative and Performing Arts applicants only)
- viii. TRANSCRIPTS from all post-secondary institutions attended

**RESOURCES AT NU**

**MANY, RICH, AND VARIED**

**Y***ou're in luck!* Beginning now and ending only when you receive the final word, the Office of Fellowships offers resources to answer your questions and guide your progress.

May Application Workshops – Provide detailed information on the application process. All potential applicants must attend one May application workshop.

FFA – Your Fulbright Faculty Advisor (FFA) is your intellectual guide through the application process. FFAs have experience working with Fulbright applicants and will offer substantive suggestions as you prepare and revise your application materials.

The Office of Fellowships – Answers your application related questions. If we don't know the answer, we will call the Fulbright office in NYC to find out!

Past Winning Proposals and Statements – The Office of Fellowships maintains binders full of winning essays from past Northwestern Fulbrighters. A limited selection available online!

NU Fulbright Canvas Site – Allows the Office of Fellowships to communicate with all applicants. In addition, we post handouts and flyers and maintain a discussion board. The discussion board is a hugely popular way to post questions, read questions posted by others, and benefit from the answers.

Fulbright Weekly Times – During July and August the Office of Fellowships publishes a weekly advice and guidance memo.

Application Review Panels – All applicants will participate in a review in September. This is your opportunity to receive direct feedback from a panel of three NU faculty. Past applicants cite this experience as instrumental not only in producing winning essays but also clarifying critical intellectual and historical context for their projects.

**Northwestern's Office of Fellowships provides comprehensive support to our applicants.**

## WHAT TO DO BEFORE SEPTEMBER?

### FILL THE GAPS!

**A**lthough some avenues to strengthen your application before October may be cut off (ex. -- gain native fluency in Zulu; take a three quarter sequence in anthropological field methods), you **can** do plenty to increase your odds. Engage your coursework with renewed vigor and develop class projects that feed into your Fulbright proposal. Further, take classes that show a strong commitment to your language, region, country, and topic.

*Two elements emerge as the perennial stumbling blocks for applicants:  
**language and the letter of affiliation.***

### Language

We cannot overemphasize (*but will try!*) the importance of **language** to a Fulbright application. As odd as it may sound, in the scope of a strong application package, creating a compelling project proposal represents only a minor difficulty. Each year a significant number of Fulbright applicants propose entirely worthy projects — good, solid projects that deserve support. However, the selectors ask of every worthy project: “Can this applicant achieve what s/he proposes?” In a depressing number of cases, weak language skills keep these applications from success.

The obvious solution to this problem is to take as much language as possible and be creative. Can you take courses outside Northwestern? Can you join a conversation group? Can you hire a tutor? Develop a clear, powerful plan to quickly bring your language skills to the level necessary to accomplish your project. You must convince the selectors that you are a person who figures out what needs to be done *and then goes out and does it*. A solid language acquisition plan will help immensely.

### Letter of Affiliation

A **letter of affiliation** (unnecessary for ETA applicants) comes from a resident in your target country. The letter of affiliation must communicate three things:

1. the writer knows you
2. the writer believes your project is feasible and has merit
3. the writer will offer reasonable, but concrete, aid to your project

**The letter of affiliation is the most common *impediment* to a complete application package!**

**L**amentably, applicants grossly underestimate the time required to obtain a letter of affiliation. You should begin **immediately** to develop contacts in your target country. Do not forget that individuals in other countries work on different — often radically different—timescales. What might seem like unforgivable sloth to you may be perfectly acceptable, alacritous even, to an individual in a

different country. Further, be mindful of the ebb and flow of work in other countries. Much of Europe, for example, takes holiday for the entire month of August. A Letter of Affiliation requested from your French contact in mid-August, will not arrive until mid-September, well past the internal deadline!

## HMMMM ... HOW DO I BEST USE MY TIME?

### THE NU FULBRIGHT APPLICATION TIMELINE

MARCH 31	COMPETITION OPENS! Online application becomes available to applicants
APRIL 30 UNTIL JUNE 7	MAY APPLICATION WORKSHOPS [STUDY/RESEARCH PROJECTS ONLY] Mandatory workshop for potential applicants Office of Fellowships assigns applicants to FFA and enrolls applicants on Canvas site
APRIL 30 UNTIL SEPT. 3	ADVISING PERIOD Applicants work with FFA to refine ideas and polish essays Applicants also rely upon their recommenders and faculty mentors, IIE program managers, Office of Fellowships staff, and overseas contacts
SEPT. 3 <sup>RD</sup> @ 12:00 NOON	<b>CAMPUS DEADLINE</b> <b>All applicants submit complete application to Office of Fellowships</b>
SEPT. 16 -- 20	APPLICATION REVIEW PERIOD Each applicant participates in a three-person application review panel
LATE SEPTEMBER	INTERVIEW FOLLOW-UP & FINAL REVISIONS Follow-up consultations with Office of Fellowships staff, Revise and polish application materials
BEFORE NATIONAL DEADLINE	ALMOST TO THE FINISH LINE! Pursue with vigor missing elements of your application!
<b>TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2024</b>	<b>NATIONAL DEADLINE!!</b> <b>CONGRATULATIONS!</b>

\* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \*

# Academic Candidate Checklist

## STARTING THE APPLICATION

- Contact the Fulbright Program Adviser at your school to discuss the campus application process (pertains only to candidates applying through a U.S. institution).
- Carefully review the program summary for the country to which you are applying.
- Draft a *Statement of Grant Purpose* that is feasible and culturally appropriate for the country of application.
- Identify a potential affiliation in the host country and make contact with an appropriate person there who might be able to serve as an adviser and who could write the *Affiliation Letter* for the Fulbright application. Provide the author of the affiliation letter with a copy of your *Statement of Grant Purpose*.
- Draft a Personal Statement that provides the screening committee members with a fuller picture of who you are and what has motivated you to pursue this Fulbright opportunity.
- Consult with professors and/or colleagues with background in the country to which you are applying or those who have expertise in the field of study of the proposed project.
- Solicit critiques on the draft *Statement of Grant Purpose* from professors, advisers, mentors, colleagues, etc., and make revisions as appropriate.
- Contact 3 individuals to write recommendations. These individuals should be those who can best speak to your ability to carry out the project being proposed. You should provide a copy of your *Statement of Grant Purpose* to each recommender.
- For candidates submitting Foreign Language Evaluations: Contact the professor or other professional foreign language instructor who will complete the Foreign Language Evaluation form for the application.
- Obtain transcripts from each post-secondary institution attended.

## BEFORE SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

- Make any necessary revisions based on feedback from the Campus Interview Committee (pertains only to candidates applying through a U.S. institution).
- Check for typos—misspellings, capitalization errors, grammatical mistakes, etc.
- Make sure that all of the required fields on the Biographical Data pages have been filled in, including the Project Title and Abstract of Proposal sections.
- Check to make sure that the *Statement of Grant Purpose*, the Personal Statement, and the transcripts have been uploaded into the correct sections of the application.
- Confirm that recommenders and language evaluators have submitted their documents.
- Preview the completed application in the Embark system.
- Print a copy of the application for your records.