

Tips for making your Fulbright application compelling and competitive

The Fulbright U.S. Student Program offers research, study and teaching opportunities in over 140 countries to recent graduates and graduate students. ASU's [Office of National Scholarship Advisement](#) is the first point of contact for graduate student Fulbright applicants. Here are five best practices to help you complete the application process successfully:



Language ability and country selection

Applicants should choose their country based on their language ability and overall fitness with the host country's requirements. For example, English is so widely spoken in Scandinavia that many countries there do not have a language requirement — good if you're not precisely bilingual. Further, an application for Fulbright to Scandinavia will face less competition than one to England or Australia — the most popular English-speaking Fulbright destinations.



Research proposal — complexity and voice

Applicants should have a simple, strong research and/or study proposal. Your content and style should reflect your growing expertise, as well as the fact that you've carefully thought through your plans for your time abroad. You know where you're going. You know what you're doing. You know how to explain it succinctly, competently, and persuasively.



Research proposal — not just feasible, but appealing

In addition to being feasible, a research proposal must appeal to the host government. This is not an opportunity for American students to go forth as experts demonstrating proper research and technique. Rather, this is an opportunity to learn from the host country as a student ambassador should, while also engaging in collaborative research and/or study. Make certain your materials reflect this attitude.



Fulbright ambassadors

As a Fulbright, you're an ambassador. The reviewers need to know that you understand this. In your materials, indicate that one of your primary interests is in getting to know the people of the local country. Relate your plan to doing so and your intended goals for that plan.



Letters of reference

Fulbright applications require three letters of reference, and they are crucial to your success. For graduate students, letters should be from academics who have worked closely with you — your faculty chair, committee members, etc. One letter can come from someone prominent in the community where you do most of your community engagement, if that person is of extraordinary significance within the given community. However, even in the area of community engagement, it's still best for an academic to speak to this area of your work, along with a complementary discussion of your academic achievements and skills.

Resources:

ONSA website:

onsa.asu.edu

Scholarship Search:

onsa.asu.edu/scholarships

Graduate College Distinguished Awards:

graduate.asu.edu/distinguished-awards

Getting started: Fulbright application process

Graduate students should apply through the ASU campus process and follow these steps in the order described. Students may also apply at large, but the only way to receive an official endorsement from ASU is to apply through the campus process. The endorsement from ASU is crucial to the success of your application.

1 I want to apply! What should I do before making my first appointment with a Fulbright advisor?

- Thoroughly review information in the “About” tab on the Fulbright U.S. Student website. Familiarize yourself with the general eligibility requirements and types of awards: us.fulbrightonline.org/about/fulbright-us-student-program.
- Check your eligibility for the Study/Research award. You can only apply to one type of award. Graduate students typically apply to the Study/Research award.
- Determine which countries interest you, read their descriptions, and make a short list (no more than five): us.fulbrightonline.org/countries/regions. While you may be interested in multiple countries, remember that ultimately, you can only choose ONE award and ONE country.

2 I did my research! How do I make an appointment?

- All Fulbright appointments can be scheduled via bass.barrett.asu.edu. For your first appointment, please be certain to bring your resume.
- Using the platform noted above, graduate students should schedule a meeting with Dr. Mox who is the ASU campus advisor for the Study/Research Fulbright award.
- Be prepared to discuss your program and country preferences. At this meeting, you will also discuss your general project ideas, potential recommenders and application mentors.

3 I've made an appointment, and I've chosen a program and a country! Now what?

- Open a Fulbright application at us.fulbrightonline.org/applicants. At the bottom of the left-hand menu, click Fulbright Online Application.
- Create an account, indicating that you are applying through ASU (not “at-large”). You will now be entered into the system and receive important updates from the Fulbright@ASU campus application program about the application process.
- Fill out the basic biographical information and as many of the short answers as possible. Note that when you put the contact information for your recommenders in the application, they will immediately receive an email asking them to upload their letters. You should wait to do this until you are sure they have enough information to write strong recommendations.
- Once you open a Fulbright Application and indicate ASU, you will be added to the ASU Fulbright Canvas and will gain access to helpful resources, example essays, and applicant discussion boards. At this point, you are now officially enrolled in the campus application system.
- You should maintain your contact with Dr. Mox, your Fulbright advisor, and contact Joshua Brooks (joshua.d.brooks@asu.edu), who heads the Office of Distinguished Graduate Fellowships, if you have any issues or concerns.