

Fulbright Grant

<http://www.fulbrightonline.org/us/home.html>

Deadline: national deadline: October 20, 2008; campus deadline: September 22, 2008

Fields of Study

Open. Graduate study at a foreign university. Certain countries sponsor programs in specific fields.

Description

The Fulbright Program was created by Congress in 1946 to foster mutual understanding among nations through educational and cultural exchange. The Fulbright Grants are funded by an annual appropriation to the Department of State, and are coordinated by the Institute for International Education (IIE). The Fulbright U.S. Student Program is now the largest U.S. exchange program offering opportunities for students, scholars and professionals to undertake international graduate study, advanced research, university teaching, and teaching in elementary and secondary schools worldwide. Currently, the U.S. Student Program awards approximately 1,100 grants annually in all fields of study and operates in over 140 countries worldwide.

Most Fulbright awards provide grants toward transportation, tuition, books, and living expenses for up to one academic year of study, research, or teaching assistantship experience in one foreign country. Projects may include university course work, independent library or field research, or professional training in the arts. Travel grants are available in a few countries to supplement other awards. Most Fulbright Grants are for academic research, but grants are also available in some countries for work in the creative and performing arts and for teaching opportunities in a number of countries, especially Korea, Taiwan, Argentina, France and Germany. Special opportunities in business are also available in Germany, Mexico, and Spain.

Criteria for Selection

Eligibility requirements include U.S. citizenship, bachelor's degree before the beginning of the grant, good health, and language proficiency sufficient to communicate with the people of the host country and to carry out the proposed study. Preference is given to applicants who have received the majority of their education at educational institutions in the United States. Graduating seniors, recent graduates, and graduate students up to the doctoral level are eligible to apply for the student program.

Graduating seniors and recent bachelor's degree graduates generally propose specific study projects for which they have had some undergraduate preparation. Master's and doctoral degree candidates must demonstrate capacity for independent study or research, plus a general knowledge of the history, culture and current events of the countries to which they are applying. Ordinarily, candidates may apply for one country only.

Selection is made on the basis of the applicant's academic or professional record, language preparation, the feasibility of the proposed study project, personal qualifications, the requirements of the programs in the host country, and other factors, which include the extent to which the candidate and the project will help to advance the program aim of promoting mutual understanding among nations.

Application Procedure

After reviewing the Fulbright website, confirming eligibility, and researching the host country and proposed program, applications are completed using the Embark Online Application form. Follow these links and directions to the Embark Online Application: <https://us.fulbrightonline.org/applynow.html>

Applicants create an account and begin working on the Embark Online Application directly. However, applicants from WPI should contact the WPI Fulbright Program Adviser, Professor Peter Hansen, for advice about their application essays. (Applicants at other institutions should contact their own FPA). A complete application must be submitted online by the **on-campus deadline of 22 September** to be considered for institutional endorsement from WPI and to meet the national deadline in October. Candidates should compose essay drafts and discuss them with Professor Hansen well before the deadline. The most important parts of the application are the following:

- A 500-word statement proposing plan of study or a research project. Considerable weight is given to this statement in the selection of candidates; it should therefore be as specific and well-defined as possible. The statement should include specific information concerning resources available in the host country and not available elsewhere (e.g., special collections, outstanding scholars, research teams, etc.). The project proposal is evaluated in terms of (a) its validity as a scholarly undertaking, and (b) its feasibility (e.g.: Can the project be completed in one year and in one country? Is the candidate's formal training adequate for the project? Might the project be politically or socially offensive to the host country?) For English Teaching Assistant (ETA) scholarships, the focus of this essay is on your preparation and plans for teaching.
- A 500-word curriculum vitae. This should be a "narrative statement giving a picture of yourself as an individual" rather than merely a factual autobiography. It should deal with personal history, family background, influences on intellectual development, special interests and abilities, career plans, life goals, etc.

- Three letters of recommendation, two of which should be from professors in the applicant's major field. (Note: Letters of recommendation must be submitted to the institutional representative by the on-campus deadline.)
- A transcript from each institution attended since graduation from high school.
- A language proficiency report to be completed by a professional language teacher.

Note: Both 500 word statements should be written specifically for the Fulbright application. It is inefficient and inadvisable to try to recycle statements written for other fellowship applications.

In addition to electronic submission, candidates must submit one hard copy of their application to WPI which will be mailed to the Fulbright program office before the national deadline.

After endorsement by WPI, all applications will be evaluated in a preliminary national screening, the results of which will be communicated by the end of January. Candidates who receive notification that their application was recommended for further consideration are often interviewed by a national selection committee over the telephone. Notification of the final decision usually takes place in April or May, but notification can come as late as June.

Additional Information

While graduating seniors are encouraged to apply to all countries, applications from recent graduates are particularly welcome to the following countries: Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Benin, Canada, China, Colombia, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Finland, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea, Kyrgyz Republic, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Ukraine, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vietnam. Statistics regarding the number of applications submitted in the previous year for each country are available from the Fulbright website. Most countries in western Europe are fiercely competitive and often most likely to select candidates who are already in a graduate program and demonstrate a compelling need to do research for a doctoral dissertation in that country. Opportunities for additional language training are available in these countries: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Israel, Korea, Morocco, Malaysia, Nepal, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand.

Graduating seniors are strongly encouraged to consider opportunities as an English Teaching Assistant (ETA). These awards are numerous in some countries such as Korea (75 awards) or Taiwan or Indonesia. In 2009-10, new Fulbright English Teaching Assistantships are available to Colombia, Macau, Nepal, Norway, Portugal and Vietnam.

For detailed information, check the Individual Country Summaries on the Fulbright website: http://us.fulbrightonline.org/thinking_country.html

The Fulbright website contains excellent advice on all aspects of the application process:

- http://us.fulbrightonline.org/thinking_applicant.html
- http://us.fulbrightonline.org/howtoapply_preparing.html
- http://us.fulbrightonline.org/howtoapply_tips.html

It is essential to begin the planning and application process early, planning during the summer after junior year for opportunities in the year after graduation.

In recent years, WPI has hosted Fulbright Scholars from Germany, Malaysia, and Romania, and a number of WPI faculty have received Fulbright grants. The Fulbright awards for faculty or for citizens of other countries are awarded in competitions that are held separately from Fulbright awards to recent graduates or graduate students.

Fulbright Scholars, US Student Program from WPI:

Virginia Ward '08, International Studies and Society, Technology & Policy, English Teaching Assistantship, Taiwan

WPI Faculty Fulbrighters by department and country visited:

Steven Bullock, Humanities and Arts, Japan
Mikhail Dimentberg, Mechanical Engineering, Germany
David Dollenmayer, Humanities and Arts, Germany
Michael Elmes, Management, New Zealand
Jeffrey Forgeng, Humanities and Arts, Iceland
Karen Lemone, Computer Science, Nepal
Konstantin Lurie, Mathematics, Denmark
Eric W. Overström, Biology and Biotechnology, Denmark
Kaveh Pahlavan, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Finland
Thomas Robertson, Humanities and Arts, Nepal
Elke Rudensteiner, Computer Science, USA/Germany
John Zeugner, Humanities and Arts, Japan

Please contact Professor Hansen for information about student applications for the Fulbright competition in the first instance.