

Strategies for Successful Fellowship Grants

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How Fellowships Differ from Research Grants

- Individual award, usually to full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty
- Restrictions/eligibility defined by award agency
- Duration/start date defined by award agency
- Award amount defined by award agency
- Full-time commitment to project

How fellowships differ, continued

- Application procedures, including references, nominations, mentors
- Proposal components
- Narrative style
- Funding ratios
- Prestige
- Career after-effects

Getting Started on Your Fellowship

- ❑ Identify a clearly defined research project lasting 6 to 12 months
- ❑ Plan a 12-18 month lead time
- ❑ Discuss your project with experts in the field: for advice, to identify potential reviewers, and to explore an invitation from another institution
- ❑ Conduct a thorough literature search

Early Stages in the Process

- Plan a timetable for the fellowship period
- Prepare an updated curriculum vitae
- Contact potential publishers and receive a written response
- Study successful fellowship applications
- Begin to contact reviewers
- Apply for sabbatical or leave

Finding Fellowship Opportunities

- Read academic publications for upcoming fellowship deadlines
- Consult your grants office early to learn of fellowship opportunities
- Consult colleagues
- Check bulletin boards
- Conduct a search for fellowships

When to Apply for a Fellowship

- When you are eligible for sabbatical
- When you are ready to finish a long-term research project
- When you are changing research focus
- When you are ready for change of pace or change of venue
- When you are invited to another institution
- When you are leaving administration and preparing to return to faculty ranks

Why apply for a fellowship?

- To provide reading and thinking time for a new project
- To assess your academic accomplishments relative to peers
- To experience academic life at another institution
- To draw back from daily grind and gain new perspective
- To try new teaching techniques or new courses
- To meet and interact with new colleagues
- To experience another country and culture as a resident, not a visitor

Writing the Fellowship Narrative

- Define the topic/category/research focus
- Explain why you are applying for this particular fellowship
- Show how your project fits a larger field and your own academic plan
- Describe your intended goals and outcomes for the fellowship period

Writing the narrative, continued

- Break your project into detailed steps and timelines
- Provide a proposed chapter outline
- Address any compliance issues and approvals, if relevant
- Describe any invitations or collaborative arrangements
- Explain your choice of venue

Writing the narrative, continued

- Describe and document your language skills, if relevant
- Describe any special features of your chosen venue (library, archives, labs)
- Describe benefits to your future research or teaching
- If a foreign project, describe benefits to that country and your own

Selecting Appropriate Referees

- Choose persons who know your recent work
- Guide the referee's focus
- Choose persons who can provide specific and positive information
- Select persons well-known, if possible
- Avoid all referees from same place
- Contact referees well in advance
- Have back-up referees

Selecting referees, continued

- Give the referee a copy of complete application package
- Give the referee your narrative
- Allow several weeks for the referee to write and submit the letter
- If possible, choose referee who had the same fellowship
- Give your referee complete instructions on submitting the letter/form
- Thank referee and share outcome

Accepting Award and Beginning Fellowship Activity

- Sign and return any required forms
- Notify department, college of grant
- Make financial arrangements
- Communicate with fellowship venue
- Maintain contact with funding agency
- Complete medical and insurance arrangements
- Arrange shipping of textbooks, research materials, personal effects

Examples of Fellowships

- ❑ American Council of Learned Societies
- ❑ American Philosophical Society
- ❑ Council for International Exchange of Scholars (Fulbright)
- ❑ National Endowment for the Humanities: Summer and Academic
- ❑ National Institute of Peace
- ❑ Resident Fellowship in Ethics: Center for the Study of Professional Military Ethics: U.S Naval Academy
- ❑ Modeling Interdisciplinary Inquiry: Postdoctoral Program in the Humanities and Social Sciences: Washington University in St. Louis

More examples of fellowships

- ❑ Newberry Library Resident Fellowships
- ❑ NIH Postdoctoral Fellowships
- ❑ Social Science Research Council
- ❑ Woodrow Wilson International Center: Fellowships in Humanities and Social Sciences
- ❑ Columbia University: The Italian Academy for Advanced Studies in America
- ❑ Council of America Overseas Research Centers: Multi-Country Research Fellowship Program

- ❑ And many more

Final Tips and Comments

- Do apply for more than one fellowship at the same time
- Follow instructions precisely
- Send the package by special mail
- Keep complete copies of everything
- Keep trying
- Go for it! A fellowship puts you in very distinguished company and may change your academic career

Thanks

For Questions and Follow-up

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