

DOs and DON'Ts for Prospective Fulbright Applicants

The following advice has been passed on from former grantees and review committees and can assist the scholar in preparing a successful Fulbright application.

What you SHOULD do:

DO print a clear and complete project statement that introduces you professionally to your colleagues in the United States. The application should be free of grammatical and spelling errors.

DO make sure that your qualifications and expertise match the objectives in your project statement. You should be able to show that you are qualified to accomplish what you are proposing to do.

DO emphasize key points in the first paragraph of the proposal. Academic reviewers examine many Fulbright applications, and having to search for the main points of the proposed activity is not helpful. You should use the rest of the proposal to support your statements in the opening paragraphs.

DO express what you can bring to the program clearly and succinctly. The best applications are those that reflect the individual and his/her situation. You should think of the basic questions that need to be answered: Why apply for a Fulbright award to come to the United States? If selected, what will I do, and how will I do it? What preparations have I made to complete the project? What can I contribute to the Fulbright Program? What will the results of my participation be?

DO emphasize how your project will benefit the host institution or scholars in your field both in your country and in the United States. Address in your project statement the ways in which you will utilize the experience upon your return. What is the likely impact of your experience abroad? To whom? How will you use what you learned upon your return, professionally and at the home institution?

DO try to make a connection between your past experience and what you are preparing to do if you receive an award. Explain the project's significance and its importance to the field. Focus on what can be reasonably accomplished during the period of the grant.

DO treat the application as a unitary whole, with all parts reinforcing the project statement. The flow should be orderly: the candidate's capabilities are listed in the application, further documented in the resume or curriculum vitae, and confirmed in the references. Use the project statement to make the parts interact by referring to items in the resume or research bibliography. Without being redundant or simplistic, you should make it easier for the reviewer to find the key pieces of information you wish to convey.

DO choose your references carefully and contact them early. The letters of recommendation need to accompany the application as it could otherwise be weakened by an insufficient number of

references. Make sure the references are sent to the American Embassy - Skopje.

What you SHOULD NOT do:

DO NOT exceed the page limit of the application proposal by including irrelevant or extraneous material that may divert attention.

DO NOT use excessive jargon; keep your proposal simple and straightforward so that an educated reader from another discipline can understand it.

DO NOT be vague in describing your previous work or in laying out the nature of your proposed Fulbright activity. A frequent failing in applications is that the proposal is underdeveloped or too imprecise to give reviewers a clear sense of the endeavor.

DO NOT assume that your suitability for the endeavor is based upon past experience, your scholarship is self-evident, or the project's requirements will be understood by reviewers.

DO NOT stress how a Fulbright grant will benefit only you or your career. Remember that the program is intended to foster mutual understanding between cultures and nations.

DO NOT ask someone for a letter of reference unless the person is well acquainted with your qualifications. A pro forma letter from a well-known scholar, a contact abroad, or a prominent government official will carry less weight than a realistic assessment of your abilities from someone who knows you and your work well.

DO NOT include any documents or supporting materials that are not in English.