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Fellowships

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Cornell University

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Fellowships

Students interested in fellowships should consult the Fellowships Web site at career.cornell.edu/paths/fellowships/prestigious/competitions/index.cfm for further information, including links to on-line listings of competitions.

Well-known awards are described in the back of this booklet; generally students need very high GPAs to be competitive for these awards. Some awards require that students' applications be endorsed by Cornell before going forward to the national competition; these awards will have campus deadlines weeks or months earlier than the national deadline. Details of the selection criteria and application process are available at career.cornell.edu/paths/fellowships/prestigious/index.cfm.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a fellowship?

A fellowship (often called a scholarship) provides money (usually toward tuition) to individuals pursuing study or research. Awards are granted on a competitive basis and are usually not based on financial need.

What kind of fellowships are available?

Fellowships may support

- study at a specified level (undergraduate, graduate, postdoctorate)
- study in a given field or subject area
- travel to a particular country or region
- specific projects within a given field

What is involved in the application process?

Application requirements vary but fellowship applications generally require

- a college transcript
- a personal statement and/or project proposal or plan of study
- a list of academic research and/or honors
- a list of extracurricular activities
- three or more letters of recommendation
- a personal interview

What do I need to find out before I apply?

Each fellowship is founded with a specific purpose in mind. Make sure the goal and intent of the fellowships you are considering match your interests and plans. Verify that you meet the fellowship's eligibility requirements; these are non-negotiable requirements such as age, degree completed, GPA minimum, and citizenship. Talk with your faculty advisors or the fellowship coordinator about whether you meet the fellowship's selection criteria; these are criteria such as "academic excellence," "leadership potential" and "dedication to public service."

When should I start looking for fellowship opportunities?

Plan to look for fellowships at least a year before you wish to receive funding. If the fellowship requires endorsement by Cornell, contact the fellowship coordinator at least three months before the campus deadline.

When are applications due?

For graduate fellowships, applications are usually due the fall semester of your senior year. In general, expect to apply during the fall of the year preceding the year you wish to receive funding.

How do I find out about fellowships that might be right for me?

In addition to checking the Web site listed above, consult the Cornell Career Services (CCS) library in 103 Barnes Hall for print resources and the CCS library links at <http://www.career.cornell.edu/resources/links.cfm>.

Cornell's Graduate School maintains a database for fellowships and research grants, searchable by field, citizenship, and other criteria at www.gradschool.cornell.edu/fellowships.

Cornell's Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies lists sources of funding for students at <http://einaudi.cornell.edu/funding>.

Undergraduates can look for research funding at www.research.cornell.edu/undergrad/Funding.html, which includes links to college offices that oversee undergraduate research, as well as off-campus resources.

Undergraduate and graduate students as well as alumni can search for fellowships at ProFellow, a commercial site that maintains a searchable database and offers advice at <https://www.profellow.com>.

The British Council offers information on funding study in the United Kingdom at <http://www.educationuk.org/global/articles/scholarships-financial-support/>.

Michigan State University offers a large database searchable by subject, academic level, and population group at <http://staff.lib.msu.edu/harris23/grants/3subject.htm>.

Large searchable databases may help your search if you use them wisely: FastWeb at <http://www.fastweb.com/> and FinAid at www.finaid.org/scholarships/.

The Application Process

Fellowship applications are comprised of several parts: your academic record, a personal statement explaining how the fellowship fits your personal and professional goals, and letters of recommendation. Some applications require a project proposal or separate plan of study.

General Advice

Begin early, and think about the entire picture you want to create for the selection committee as you work on each part of the application. No matter which fellowship you are applying for, the application is designed to provide the selection committee with a comprehensive picture of your plans and qualifications. Your letters of recommendation, written statements, and academic record should all work together to create a strong composite picture.

Speak with one or more faculty advisors about your plans well ahead of the deadlines. The faculty members and deans who know you best can often provide invaluable advice and support through the long application process.

The Personal Statement

What it needs to do

- clarify who you are, where you are going, and how you plan to get there
- interest the readers
- stand out from the crowd
- make the readers want to meet you in person

What it can address

- an issue or experience that you feel strongly about, or that has shaped your life
- a significant accomplishment or contribution you have made to your field or community
- why this fellowship is right for you and how it fits in with your future goals

What you should avoid

- melodramatic or self-congratulatory statements
- vague, abstract ideals
- laundry lists of achievements, a prose version of your résumé
- jargon and specialized vocabulary
- generalizations about the scholarship or proposed program

How to start developing ideas

- write down two or three experiences you feel have shaped who you are
- write down one or two problems you have faced and how you solved them
- look for patterns -- what values keep popping up? what interests, skills, and strengths?
- what are the most important points about you that you want the committee to know?

The writing process

- start four to six weeks before the deadline so you have ample time for revisions; you should plan on writing three drafts at a minimum
- ask one person who knows you well if it accurately expresses who you are
- ask at least one faculty member to critique your essay
- request a critique from Cornell's Writing Walk-In Service (www.arts.cornell.edu/knight_institute/walkin/walkin.htm)

The Project Proposal or Plan of Study

What it is

- a concrete plan of study or research, sometimes including a budget and/or timetable
- an academic proposal describing your goals
- a description of how the facilities and/or experts at the particular program you have chosen would provide you with the means for achieving those goals
- an elaboration of how qualified you are to pursue those goals
- a statement which clearly links your academic plan of study with your personal and professional future

Shaping your project

- talk to people who have studied in the programs or countries that interest you, professors in your field of interest, people who have pursued a similar project or program of study, and previous fellowship recipients
- make sure your plans are well-researched and show knowledge of current activity in the field
- confirm that your plans make sense and can be accomplished in the time frame you have established; this means contacting professors or principal investigators in labs

Letters of Recommendation

What recommenders need to do

- be able to speak about you and your work in some detail, from personal experience
- be able to give concrete examples of times you showed your strongest qualities
- be able to write that you are among the best they have seen in x (your field, your major, your organization, as a student leader, as a TA, etc.)

How to choose recommenders

- ask potential recommenders who know the qualities you will emphasize on the application; for graduate study fellowships, choose faculty who know you both academically and personally
- don't ask people to write for you simply because they are "big names," well-known in the field, or high-ranking in the department; if someone doesn't know you well, the recommendation will not be a strong addition to your file

Talking to potential recommenders

- make an appointment with each recommender you are considering; talk with him or her in person if at all possible
- tell the recommender what the fellowship is looking for and that you are considering applying; ask if they think you would make a strong candidate
- ask what the recommender believes are your strengths and weaknesses
- address any questions the recommender may have about your qualifications or the fellowship *before* the letter gets written

Once you choose your recommenders

- give them at least four weeks to write the recommendations
- provide them with a résumé or curriculum vitae and a copy of your personal statement and proposal
- write a thank you note and keep them informed of your progress in the competition, be it successful or not

Selected Prestigious Fellowships

If you have a GPA of 3.5 or higher, you may be eligible for one or more prestigious fellowships. In addition to an outstanding academic record, prestigious fellowship applicants should have made their mark in one or more other ways. Substantial intellectual or creative projects, solid evidence of leadership or public service, and strong, detailed letters of recommendation are essential to compete for these awards. Some of these fellowships require official endorsement from Cornell (see the asterisked entries in "Competitions," below), which entails a campus selection process.

Please note: Students applying for the Marshall, Mitchell, and Rhodes scholarships should contact the Fellowship Coordinator no later than the end of the spring semester preceding the fall of the year they will apply.

The Competitions

For detailed information on how to apply for a specific award, see the "Prestigious Fellowships" section of the Fellowships Web site at <http://www.career.cornell.edu/paths/fellowships/prestigious/competitions/index.cfm>.

BEINECKE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP *

Each year Cornell may nominate one junior with a superior record of intellectual ability, scholastic achievement, and personal promise, as well as demonstrated financial need, for the Beinecke Scholarship. Funding is granted for graduate study. Students planning to attend graduate school in the arts, humanities, and social sciences are eligible.

Campus Deadline: January 27, 2016. Contact the Fellowship Coordinator, btf1@cornell.edu.

CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT JUNIOR FELLOWS PROGRAM *

The Junior Fellows Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace offers a one-year paid internship in Washington, D.C., working on endowment research projects such as non-proliferation, democracy building, international economics, migration, and Russian and Eurasian Studies. Applicants must be graduating seniors or students who have graduated during the last academic year provided they have not begun graduate studies.

Campus Deadline: December 2, 2015. Contact the Fellowship Coordinator, btf1@cornell.edu.

WINSTON CHURCHILL FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP *

The award provides for a year of graduate work in engineering, mathematics, or science at Churchill College, Cambridge University. Applicants should have excellent academic records and strong research experience. They should also possess independence, initiative, and adaptability. **Campus Deadline: October 7, 2015.** Contact the Fellowship Coordinator, btf1@cornell.edu.

FULBRIGHT SCHOLARSHIP

The Fulbright U.S. Student Program provides grants for individually designed study or research or for English Teaching Assistantships. The program gives recent graduates, master's candidates, doctoral candidates, and young professionals opportunities for personal development through an international experience, while allowing them to engage in cultural exchange through direct contact with a cross section of individuals in the host country. Applications are welcome from all fields of study. Registered students must apply through the university. Alumni are encouraged to apply through Cornell but are free to apply as at-large candidates. **Campus Deadline: September 2, 2015.** Contact Elizabeth Edmondson, fulbright@einaudi.cornell.edu.

GATES CAMBRIDGE SCHOLARSHIP

The Gates Cambridge Scholarship supports one to four years of post-baccalaureate study in any field at the University of Cambridge. *Students must first apply directly for admission to Cambridge and make a separate application for the scholarship. Applicants must demonstrate exceptional academic achievement, potential for scholarly development, and a commitment to use their education for the common good. Citizens from any country other than the United Kingdom are eligible. ***Foundation Deadline for U.S. citizens: October 14, 2015. Foundation Deadline for non-U.S. citizens: December 2, 2015.**

BARRY M. GOLDWATER SCHOLARSHIP *

The Goldwater Scholarship fosters excellence in science and mathematics at the undergraduate level. Sophomores are eligible for two years of support; juniors are eligible for one. U.S. citizens who have demonstrated outstanding potential for and commitment to a career in mathematics, the natural sciences, and some fields of engineering may apply. Students' ultimate educational goal should be the Ph.D. **Campus Deadline: January 6, 2016.** Contact the Fellowship Coordinator, btf1@cornell.edu.

HERTZ FOUNDATION APPLIED SCIENCE FELLOWSHIPS

The Hertz Foundation Fellowship is designed to foster the graduate-level studies of students of the applied physical, biological and engineering sciences who wish to pursue a Ph.D. and seem likely to become leaders in scientific and technological advances, exemplars of teaching skills in the applied physical sciences, and key contributors to the technological capability on which the well-being of the U.S. depends. The award provides a handsome stipend for nine months, plus a cost-of-education allowance paid to the graduate educational institution in lieu of tuition and fees. The fellowship is renewable and may be held only at tenable universities. **Foundation Deadline: October 30, 2015.** Contact the College of Engineering Dean's Office, Engineering_Dean@cornell.edu.

LUCE SCHOLARS PROGRAM *

The award provides for a year's experience in Asia in an internship arranged individually for each Scholar, based on his or her specific interests, background, and qualifications. The program is designed to give young leaders with no prior experience of Asia a chance to become acquainted with Asia and their Asian counterparts. Applicants must be under 30 years of age, be able to show clear evidence of leadership in their chosen field, and may NOT have had significant exposure to Asia. **Campus Deadline: October 5, 2015.** Contact the Fellowship Coordinator, btf1@cornell.edu.

JAMES MADISON GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS

The James Madison Memorial Fellowship Foundation offers \$24,000 fellowships to individuals desiring to become outstanding teachers of the American Constitution at the secondary school level. Fellowship applicants compete only against other applicants from the states of their legal residence. Generally, one Fellowship per state is awarded each year. **Deadline: March 4, 2016.**

MARSHALL SCHOLARSHIP *

The Marshall Scholarship funds one to two years of study at a university of choice in the United Kingdom. Selection committees look for distinction of intellect and character. Preference is given to candidates who combine high academic ability with the capacity to play an active part in the life of the university they choose to attend, and to those who display the potential to make a significant contribution to society. Applicants must have a minimum 3.7 GPA and be U.S. citizens who hold a bachelor's degree by the time the scholarship year begins. **Campus Deadline: August 10, 2015.** Contact the Fellowship Coordinator, btf1@cornell.edu.

GEORGE J. MITCHELL SCHOLARSHIP *

The Mitchell Scholarship supports one year of graduate study in any field at an institution of higher learning in Ireland, including the seven universities in the Republic of Ireland and the two universities in Northern Ireland. Applicants must be U.S. citizens under the age of 30 with a record of intellectual distinction, leadership, extra-curricular activity, and service to others. **Campus Deadline: August 10, 2015.** Contact the Fellowship Coordinator, btf1@cornell.edu.

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION (NSF) GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

NSF Graduate Fellowships offer three years of support for advanced study in the mathematical, physical, biological, engineering, and behavioral and social sciences, including the history of science and the philosophy of science, and to research-based Ph.D. degrees in science education at an accredited U.S. institution. Fellows receive a \$32,000 annual stipend plus a \$12,000 cost-of-education allowance paid to the graduate educational institution in lieu of tuition and fees. **Application Deadlines** are determined by field of study, ranging from late October to early November. Contact the Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs, Gradacad_assoc_dean@cornell.edu.

RHODES SCHOLARSHIP *

U.S. citizens between the ages of 18 and 24 who will hold the bachelor's degree before embarking on the scholarship. Citizens of Australia, Bermuda, Canada, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Jamaica and The Commonwealth Caribbean, Kenya, New Zealand, Pakistan, People's Republic of China, Southern Africa (including South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, and Swaziland), UAE, Zambia, and Zimbabwe may also be eligible to apply to their country's competition. **Campus Deadline: August 10, 2015.** Contact the Fellowship Coordinator, btf1@cornell.edu.

HARRY S. TRUMAN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM *

The Truman Scholarship awards funding to juniors with outstanding leadership potential who plan to attend graduate school in preparation for a career in the government or public service. Scholars receive funds for graduate study. In addition, they participate in leadership development programs and have special opportunities for internships and employment with the federal government. **Campus Deadline: December 3, 2015.** Contact the Fellowship Coordinator, btf1@cornell.edu.

MORRIS K. UDALL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM *

The Morris K. Udall Scholarship Program was created to honor Congressman Morris K. Udall and his legacy of public service. Awards are made to outstanding sophomores and juniors who fall into one of two groups: 1) those who intend to pursue careers in environmental public policy; and 2) Native American and Alaska Native students who intend to pursue careers in health care or tribal public policy. The scholarship covers eligible expenses up to a maximum of \$5,000. Applicants must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents and have a minimum GPA of 3.0. **Campus Deadline: February 17, 2016.** Contact the Fellowship Coordinator, btf1@cornell.edu.

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