

Connecting Research,  
Policy and Practice

# Five Basic Tips on Applying for Graduate Fellowships

Katina Stapleton, Program Officer, National Center for Education Research



# “Every Free Dollar is a Good Dollar”

*The Secret To Successful Scholarship Searches & Applications*

# 5 Basic Tips

- ✓ *Have A Clear Goal*
- ✓ *Identify Resources*
- ✓ *Get Organized*
- ✓ *Make Submission  
Plan*
- ✓ *Submit Application  
Successfully*

# # 1: Have a Clear Goal



# What Kind of Funding Do You Need?

- ☐ Tuition
- ☐ Full Ride (Tuition, Stipend, Benefits)
- ☐ Teaching Assistantship
- ☐ Research Assistantship
- ☐ Research Grant
- ☐ Dissertation Fellowship
- ☐ Travel Grant
- ☐ Summer Fellowship
- ☐ Other

# # 2: Identify Resources

re-sound-  
loud: resounding  
tory. —re-sound-  
**re-source** (rē'sōrs)  
n. 1. Something  
library is a valuable  
drawn upon when  
difficult or trying  
means of copy-  
1 means

# Online Searches





## Keyword Internet Search

**Homepage - NSF Graduate Research Fellowships Program (GRFP)**  
[www.nsfgrfp.org/](http://www.nsfgrfp.org/) ▾

The National Science Foundation's **Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP)** helps ensure the vitality of the human resource base of science and ...

**Boren Awards: Scholarships and Fellowships for undergraduate and ...**  
[www.borenawards.org/boren\\_fellowship](http://www.borenawards.org/boren_fellowship) ▾

Boren **Fellowships** provide up to \$30,000 to U.S. **graduate students** to add an important international and language component to their **graduate** education ...

**The Graduate Fellowship Award - Hertz Foundation**  
[www.hertzfoundation.org/dx/fellowships/fellowshipaward.aspx](http://www.hertzfoundation.org/dx/fellowships/fellowshipaward.aspx) ▾

The Hertz Foundation provides unique financial and **fellowship** support to the nation's most remarkable **PhD students** in the physical biological, and engineering ...

**Fellowships Database | Cornell Graduate School**  
[www.gradschool.cornell.edu](http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu) ▾ Costs and Funding ▾ Fellowships ▾

Deadline, Award, Discipline, Demographic, Degree: Fall, ABE **Fellowship**, Arts & Humanities, Social Sciences. Fall, Academy of Sciences Blavatnik Awards for ...

**Graduate Student Fellowships - North Carolina State University**  
[www.ncsu.edu](http://www.ncsu.edu) ▾ Home ▾ Financial-support ▾

Nationally Competitive **Graduate Fellowships**. Below is a listing of a number of nationally competitive fellowships arranged by application deadline. If you have ...

**Graduate Student Assistantships and Fellowships - George ...**  
[www.gwu.edu/~fellows/](http://www.gwu.edu/~fellows/) ▾

Welcome to the The Office of **Graduate Student Assistantships and Fellowships!** The Office of **Graduate Student Assistantships and Fellowships (OGSAF)** ...

**NDSEG - National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate ...**  
[ndseg.asee.org/](http://ndseg.asee.org/) ▾

National Defense Science and Engineering **Graduate (NDSEG) Fellowships** are awarded to applicants who will pursue a doctoral degree in, or closely related to ...

**STEM Resources for Graduate Students - Pathways to Science**  
[www.pathwaystoscience.org/Grad.asp](http://www.pathwaystoscience.org/Grad.asp) ▾

Resources for **students** pursuing **graduate** studies in the STEM fields, including **fellowship** opportunities and mentoring programs.

## Database Search

### Funding ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jump to: [ Conferences : Calls for Papers : Publications : Programs : Funding : Websites ]  
 Quick Search:  **FIND IT!** **MAKE** on   
 Search what? ☒ Funding only ☐ All announcements

There are **196 active** announcements.  
 ing to find an old one? [Click here](#) for an archive of past announcements.

Items 1-30: **1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Next)**

Announcements sorted by: EventDate (if any) ▾	Announcement ID
<a href="#">Schusterman Graduate Student Fellowships in Israel Studies</a> <i>new!</i> Massachusetts, United States	20816
<a href="#">Summer Institute for Israel Studies 2014</a> <i>new!</i> Date 2014-01-21	20816
<a href="#">Full PhD Fellowships in Political Science, Public Policy, and International Relations, 2014/2015</a> Hungary	20796
<a href="#">Graduate Scholarships in Sociology and Social Anthropology, 2014-2015</a> Hungary	20796
<a href="#">Graduate Scholarships in Public Policy, 2014-2015</a> Hungary	20796
<a href="#">Graduate Scholarships in Political Science, 2014-2015</a> Hungary	20796
<a href="#">Interested in Pursuing a Master's Degree in Public Policy at a U.S. Accredited University in Europe?</a> Hungary Date 2014-01-23	20796
<a href="#">Graduate Scholarships in Philosophy, 2014-2015</a> Hungary	20796

## Fellowship Lists

- NSF GRFP National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program
- Newberry Library Long-Term Fellowships
- APS Franklin Research Grants
- APLP Asia Pacific Leadership Program Fellowship
- Berlin Program for Advanced German and European Studies
- SSRC Eurasia Program Fellowships Competition
- VFH Virginia Foundation Fellowships
- AISLS Dissertation Planning Grant
- Pembroke Postdoctoral Fellowships
- William Randolph Hearst Endowed Fellowship for Minority Students
- TAF Asia Development Fellows program
- IHS Hayek Fund
- Saul Kagan Claims Conference Fellowship for Advanced Shoah Studies
- Dissertation-Completion Fellowship in American Religion and Politics
- Schusterman Graduate Fellowships in Israel Studies

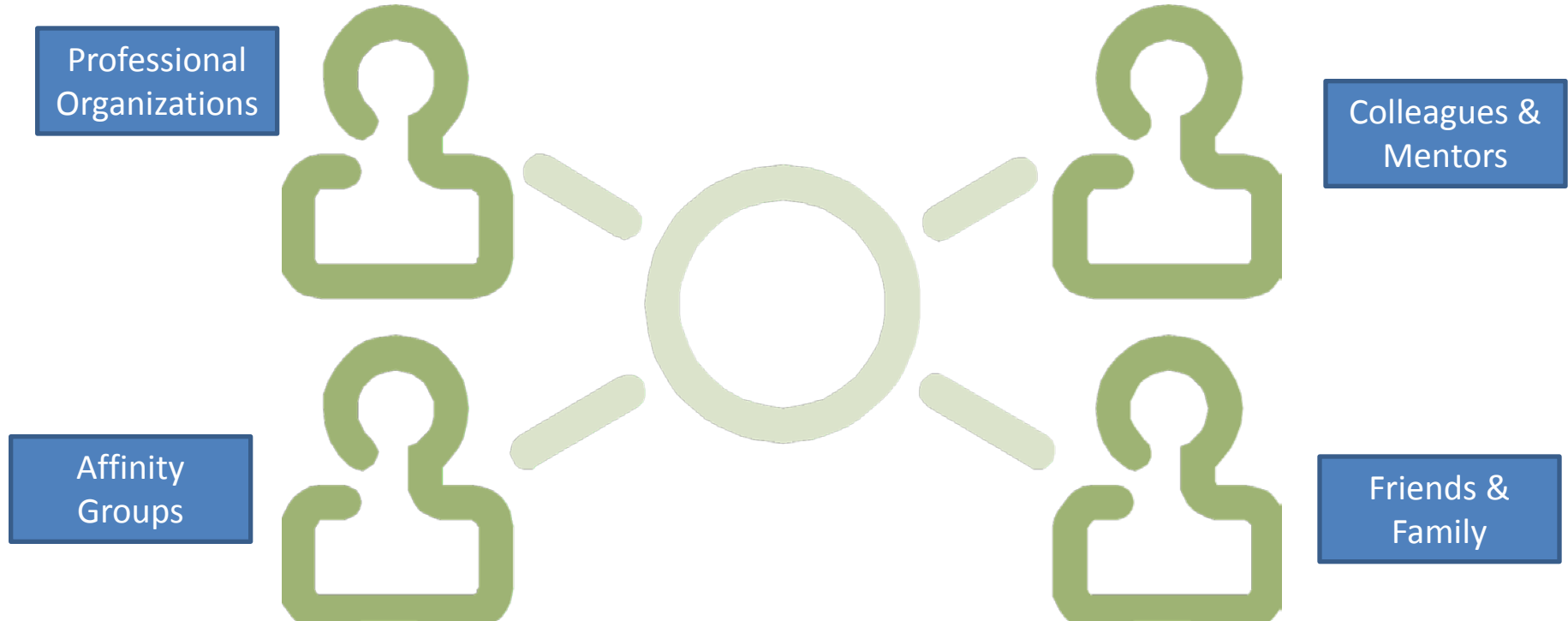




# Campus Resources

- Department
- Graduate School
- Career Center

# Personal Network



# #3: Get Organized



# Create a Filing System

Hard Copy



Electronic



Organize by  
Funding  
Opportunity

For each Funding Opportunity

# Identify Requirements

## Am I Eligible?

Fellowship Program: (1) citizenship, (2) graduate plan of study degree requirements, and (3) field of study. Applicants are advised to read the entire program solicitation carefully to be sure that the requirements are interpreted properly.

Applicants must self-certify that they are eligible to receive the Fellowship.

Categories of applicants that are ineligible:

- Those who do not hold United States citizenship, national, or permanent resident status by the application deadline.
- Those who were previously awarded a Fellowship from the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program and accepted it.
- Those who have declined the offer of the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship and did not notify NSF or those who did not respond by the published deadline for accepting the Fellowship.
- Those who have earned any graduate or professional degree by August 1, 2013, **except** 1) applicants who have completed a joint BS/MS program and have not completed any further graduate study outside the joint program or 2) applicants who are requesting eligibility consideration due to an extenuating circumstance (see Section IV.2).
- Current NSF employees

## What should my application include?

### APPLICATION

There are no application forms. Please submit seven (7) packets containing the following, in order:

- a detailed resume;
- a personal statement explaining how the Congressional Fellowship relates to your professional goals (around 500 words);
- the names and contact information for three professional references who have agreed to write letters of recommendation; and
- a sample of your best writing (one published or unpublished manuscript).

All materials must be collated on three-hole punched paper. Grouped materials will not be accepted. Applications may be clipped, but no report covers, please.

### RECOMMENDATION LETTERS

Applicants are required to submit three (3) letters of recommendation. Letters should be addressed to the CFP Selection Committee and sent to the applicant. Letters by e-mail and fax will not be accepted.

## When is the Deadline?

### DEADLINE

Applications must be postmarked by **December 1**.

*Ask as many (relevant) people as you can about these fellowships, especially those who have won them, in order to get as many sample points as possible. Gather as much information and feedback as possible before submitting your application to give yourself the best possible shot. Don't just depend on your gut intuition."*

Philip Guo, NSF Fellow

For Each Funding Opportunity

# Do Your Homework



- **How Competitive is the Fellowship?**
- **How Do You Compare to Previous Recipients?**
- **What Can You Do to Improve Your Prospects?**

The background of the slide is a close-up, slightly blurred image of a calendar page. The calendar is printed on aged, yellowish paper. At the top, the year '1979' is partially visible. Below it, the letters 'S' and 'M' are printed, likely representing Sunday and Monday. The numbers 4, 5, 6, 12, 13, 20, 21, 22, 28, 29, and 30 are scattered across the page, indicating dates. A red circular mark is drawn around the number 22. A solid green horizontal bar spans the width of the slide, positioned over the top half of the calendar image.

# #4 Make a Submission Plan

Leave sufficient time  
to complete all tasks



For Each Funding Opportunity

# Break Down Tasks

**RECOMMENDATION**  
There are no application forms. Please submit seven (7) packets containing the following, in order:

- a detailed resume;
- a personal statement explaining how the Congressional Fellowship relates to your professional goals (around 500 words);
- the names and contact information for three professional references who have agreed to write letters of recommendation; and
- a sample of your best writing (one published or unpublished manuscript).

All materials must be collated on three-hole punched paper. Grouped materials will not be accepted. Applications may be clipped, but no report covers, please.

**RECOMMENDATION LETTERS**  
Applicants are required to submit three (3) letters of recommendation. Letters should be addressed to the CFP Selection Committee and sent to the applicant. Letters by e-mail and fax will not be accepted.

**Due Date: December 1**

- Sept. 1** Update Resume
- Sept. 15** Identify References  
Draft Personal Statement
- Sept. 30** Finalize Personal Statement
- Oct. 1** Send Statement to References  
Identify Writing Sample
- Oct. 15** Confirm reference letters
- Oct. 30** Start assembling package
- Nov. 15** Submit application (by mail)

# # 5 Submit Application Successfully

Avoid Common Mistakes

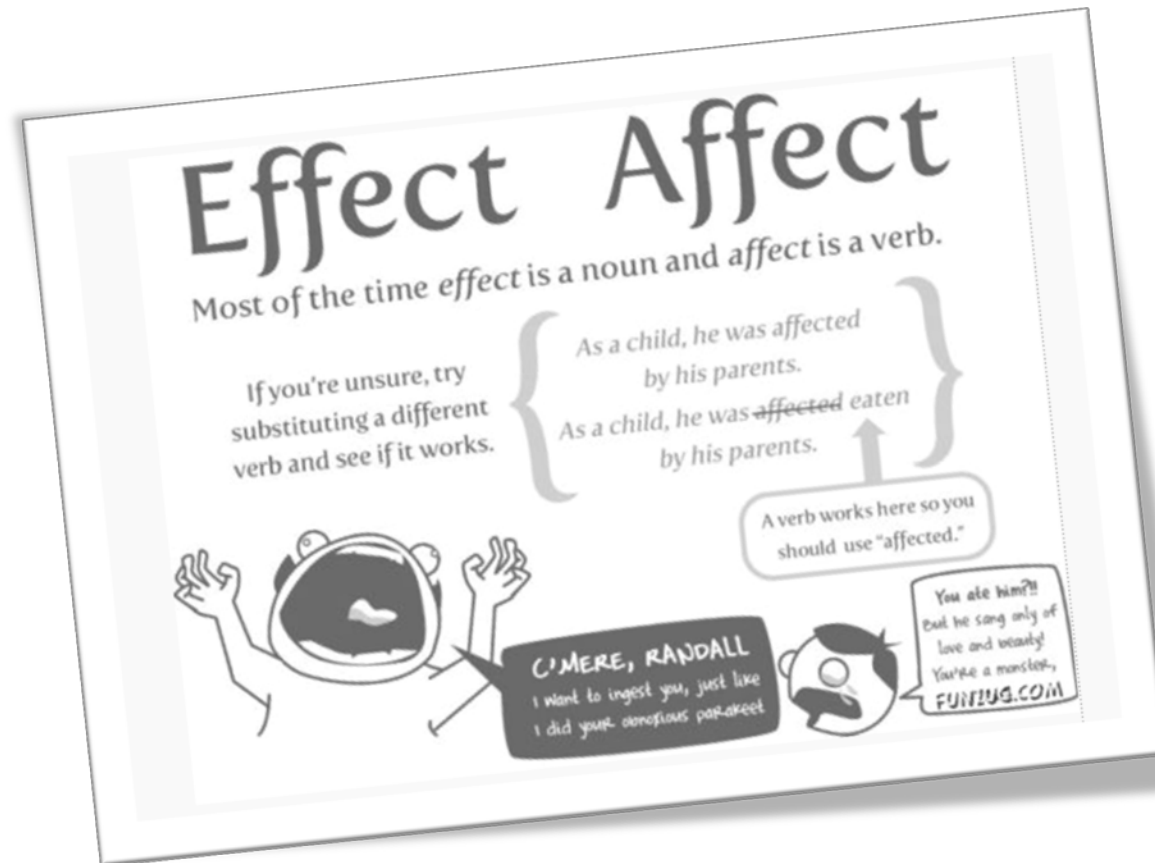


# You are Not . . .

- Eligible
- Qualified
- A “Good Fit”



# Poor Grammar/Spelling



Avoidable Mistake

# Boring



Avoidable Mistake

# Incomplete Application



**Missing  
Element**

Avoidable Mistake

# Missed Deadline





# Review: 5 Basic Tips

- ✓ *Have A Clear Goal*
- ✓ *Identify Resources*
- ✓ *Get Organized*
- ✓ *Make Submission  
Plan*
- ✓ *Submit Application  
Successfully*

# Any Questions?



Email: [Katina.Stapleton@ed.gov](mailto:Katina.Stapleton@ed.gov)