

External Graduate Fellowships

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Overview of workshop

- **Introduction to fellowships**
- **Searching for fellowship opportunities**
- **Developing a graduate fellowship proposal**



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What is a fellowship?

A merit-based award for the purpose
of conducting scholarly activity
(*e.g.*, research, teaching, *etc.*)



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Who awards fellowships?

- **Universities**
- **Government agencies**
- **Private foundations and other organizations**



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Types of fellowships

- **Comprehensive, multi-year awards**
- **Short-term/special purpose awards**
- **International experiences**



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Why apply for a fellowship?

- **Individual benefits**
 - *financial independence*
 - *prestige*
- **Institutional benefits**
 - *increases graduate student capacity*
 - *contributes to stature of university*



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You don't get if you don't ask

- Apply for none, get none
- Apply for one, maybe get zero
- Apply for several, maybe get one

It gets easier to write other applications after completing the first!



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Searching for fellowships

- Go to www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool
- Select “Funding your Education” tab
- Select “Graduate & Postdoctoral Fellowships” button
- Select “External Fellowships & Grants” from the menu
 - “Resources” submenu provides general web based resources in one convenient location for you
 - “Search for opportunities” -> TTU & External Databases



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TTU & External Databases

- **TTU Database**
 - Simple and Advanced searches of fellowship opportunities from a TTU developed database
- **Other Databases**
 - **COS Pivot – Every TTU student may create a Pivot account for free.**
 - Funding menu has 1) text searchable field and 2) advanced search menu
 - Create a profile for notice of opportunities
 - **Grants.gov – All US federal opportunities must be posted in the this database. Use “search grants” with keywords “fellowship” and “scholarship” to view active opportunities**
 - **The Foundation Center is another website for fellowships**
 - **Institute of International Education – Funding for US Study – From “area of study” select your programmatic area for opportunities**



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Examples of Multi-Year Fellowships

- **Abel Wolman Fellowship - American Water Works Association**
- **Amelia Earhart Fellowship - Zonta International**
- **American Academy of Arts & Sciences - Postdoctoral Fellow and Visiting Scholars Program**
- **American Association of University Women (AAUW) American Fellowships**
- **American Cancer Society**
- **American Council of Learned Societies**
- **American Indian Graduate Center**
- **American Philosophical Society**



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Examples of Multi-Year Fellowships

- American Psychological Association
- American Society for Engineering Education
- American Sociological Association
- AT&T Laboratories
- Bullitt Foundation- Bullitt Environmental Fellowship
- Clark Foundation-Investment in Community Graduate Fellowship
- Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation
- Dwight David Eisenhower Transportation Fellowship Program
- Fanny and John Hertz Graduate Fellowships



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Examples of Multi-Year Fellowships

- Ford Foundation Pre-doctoral and Dissertation Fellowships
- Institute for Humane Studies
- Jacob K. Javits Fellowships Program
- Knowles Science Teaching Fellowship
- Leaky Foundation Research-Baldwin Fellowships
- Link Foundation Fellowships
- L'Oréal USA Fellowships for Women in Science Program
- Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship
- Microsoft Research Student Fellowship
- NASA Space Technology Research Fellowship Program



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Examples of Multi-Year Fellowships

- National Gallery of Art
- National Institutes of Health- Ruth Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA)
- National Physical Sciences Consortium Graduate Fellowships in the Physical Sciences MS Engineering Fellowship Program
- National Research Council/The National Academies - Research Associateship Program
- National Science Foundation-Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GFRP)
- Organization of American States (OAS)
- Social Science Research Council



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Examples of Multi-Year Fellowships

- **Soros Foundation**
- **Spencer Foundation**
- **United Negro College Fund and Merck Foundation Science Initiative Graduate Science Research Dissertation Fellowships**
- **US Department of Agriculture-Food and Agricultural Sciences National Needs Graduate and Postgraduate Fellowship (NNF) Grants Program**
- **US Department of Defense-National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate Fellowship**



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Examples of Multi-Year Fellowships

- **US Department of Defense-Science, Mathematics and Research for Transformation (SMART) Scholarship for Service Program**
- **US Department of Energy-Computational Science Graduate Fellowship**
- **U.S. Department of Energy-National Nuclear Security Administration Stewardship Science Graduate Fellowship**
- **U.S. Department of Energy-Science Graduate Student Research Program (SCGSR)**
- **Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation**
- **World Wildlife Fund Fellowships**



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Significant STEM Fellowships

- National Science Foundation-Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GFRP)
- DOD SMART (Science, Mathematics & Research for Transformation) Fellowships, <http://smart.asee.org>
- DOD National Defense Science & Engineering Fellowship, <http://www.asee.org/ndseg>
- National Physical Science Consortium, <http://www.npsc.org>
- DOE Computational Science Graduate Fellowship, <http://www.krellinst.org/csgf>
- DOE NNSA Stewardship Science Graduate Fellowship <http://www.krellinst.org/ssgf>
- The Hertz Foundation; <http://www.hertzfoundation.org>
- The National GEM Consortium for underrepresented groups; <http://www.gemfellowship.org>



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National Institutes of Health Fellowships

- Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) programs, <http://grants.nih.gov/training/nrsa.htm>
 - For individuals with or working on a research doctorate
 - For individuals with or working on a health-professional doctorate



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Keys to success

- Target to audience
- Compelling proposal
- Convincing evidence of your qualifications
- Strong letters of support
- Have an involved faculty advisor/mentor



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Preparation before you begin

- Carefully study all descriptive material
- List goals of program to which you are applying
- List characteristics of a successful candidate
- List goals of your project
- List experience you have had, courses you have taken, and personality traits, *etc.* that qualify you to carry out the project to be proposed
- Cultivate relationships with potential recommenders



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Guiding principles

- Be honest with yourself. Can you meet the objectives of the program?
- Spend time on the application.
- Follow all instructions explicitly; pay attention to criteria
- Do some homework. Contact individuals who have been successful in past competitions.
- Be clear and concise.
- **Proof read!** Proposal should be free from all spelling, grammatical, and logic errors.
- Have your application critically **reviewed** by colleagues and a faculty mentor.
- Submit by deadline. **NO EXCUSES!**



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Target to audience

- Describe project in a manner that demonstrates how it meets the goals of the funding entity.
- Describe yourself in a manner that fits the criteria set forth as characteristic of successful applicants.
- Is the proposal understandable by an educated lay person?
- Will the reader know that you understand the broader context of the project? Have you answered the “So what” question?



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Packaging and content



Packaging and content are both essential for developing a compelling proposal



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Packaging

- Write clearly
- Be concise (more is not better)
 - simple declarative sentences
 - write to general audience; avoid jargon
 - fluid progression of ideas
- Don't just rely on your spell checker. Use a friend to proof!
- Avoid ambiguity
- Avoid logic errors
- Use clean, simple format
 - clear hierarchy of headings (kept to minimum)
 - simple paragraph formatting



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Content keys

- **Novel**
- **Significant**
- **Focused**



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Basic elements of proposal

- **Follow fellowship guidelines if specified!**
- **General elements should include**
 - **Project summary**
 - **Introduction**
 - **Background**
 - **Objectives**
 - **Methods**
 - **Outcomes**
 - **Project site (if applicable)**
 - **Qualifications**



Project Summary

Briefly introduce (write this section last)...

- Yourself - one or two characteristics
(*e.g.*, biology major; spent semester doing field work in Alaska)
- General question/problem area
(*e.g.*, deforestation in Latin America)
- Specific objectives
(*e.g.*, compare economic development opportunities available to indigenous communities in rain forests of Brazil, Columbia, and Venezuela and their connection to deforestation in Latin America)



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Project Summary - *continued*

- **Methodology**

(e.g., visit three sites, one in each in Brazil, Columbia, and Venezuela, in which forests are being cleared for farming or other economic purpose and interview developers, government officials, and residents. Also photograph process and affected individuals)

- **Outcomes**

(e.g., produce journal article documenting, with excerpts of interviews and photographs, the forces behind deforestation and its effects on local cultures)

- **Broader Impact**



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Introduction

This is a concise orientation to the project.

- **Motivate the reviewers – why is the research/project important?**
- **Provide a clear statement of the major goals of the research/project/training as a whole.**
- **Link need for funding and the proposed work/training/project to the sponsor's intent of the fellowship (= target to audience).**



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Background

- Develop the theoretical framework for the project through a scholarly review of the literature.
- Articulate the rationale and significance of the project.
- Demonstrate the feasibility of the project.
- Demonstrate that you know what has been done using literature citations (*page restrictions often limit what you can include, so be selective*).



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Objectives

- Place objectives (immediate) in context of goals (ultimate)
- List objectives in no more than 1-2 sentences.
- Don't confuse objectives (ends) with methods (means).
- A good objective indicates what will be done and when (consider putting in phases) it will be done.



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Objectives - *continued*

Your objectives should be...

- Specific (what precisely will be done)
- Immediate (indicate time frame during which problem/work schedule will be addressed)
- Measurable
- Practical
- Logical
- Evaluable



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Methods

- **Indicate how your system/approach will reveal novel insight into problem**
- **Indicate what specific approaches will be used and why**
- **Indicate, if applicable, what means will be taken to validate proposed approaches**
- **Identify potential pitfalls and describe alternative approaches**



Outcomes

- **How will you know if your questions are answered?**
(= measurable indicators)
- **What will you have to show for your effort?**
(= products)
- **How will the results impact your field, society?**



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Project Site/Itinerary

Some fellowships require you to specify the institution at which you will conduct your project

- What do you know about the institution?
- Why is it an ideal location to conduct your project?
- Are there specific individuals with whom you wish to work? Have you made contact with the individual? Are your objectives consistent with those of your proposed host/mentor?
- Will you have access to needed facilities/equipment?



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Qualifications

- It is important to include statements about your qualifications in the proposal itself.
- Demonstrate that you have the knowledge, experience, skills, and interest to conduct the project.
- If no specific instructions are given, address the following:
 - How does the project/training fit in with your long-term goals?
 - Indicate special background/skills or preparatory work (*e.g.*, language/skills to be mastered, previous fieldwork/practice, *etc.*)
 - Capacity of the proposed training environment to contribute to the successful completion of the project
 - Other evidence of promise to carry out project successfully



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Final considerations

Does your application...

- **Clearly articulate who you are?**
- **Describe your goals and objectives?**
- **Lead logically to measurement of objectives?**
- **Establish your credibility/interest in the project topic area?**
- **Convince an expert, not necessarily in your area, that you should be given money to perform the proposed research?**



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Letters of reference

- **Soliciting effective letters of reference**
 - Someone who knows of your abilities/potential
 - Provide them with a summary of your experience and abilities as well as a resume/CV
 - Explain any discrepancies or challenges in your resume
 - Ask for a “strong” letter of reference



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Letters of Reference

- Ask early (it takes time to write an effective letter of reference)
- Make sure they know the reason for the reference letter (*i.e.*, the specific fellowship opportunity) and the deadline
- Bug them politely (we are all busy)



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Graduate School Notification

- TTU requires the Graduate School to track all external fellowship and scholarship applications
- From the “Funding your Education” tab under “External Fellowships & Grants” there is a “Submit & Follow-up” menu
 - You will be asked to login using your eRaider ID and password
 - Complete the requested information at least 1 week prior to fellowship/scholarship deadline
 - You will receive notification from Graduate School that it is ok for you to submit the application
 - If you don’t receive notification from Graduate School by the due date, submit your application.



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