Middlebury’s Fulbright Application Guidance

General Information

Deadlines and Notifications for Seniors and Alumni Applying through Middlebury College
Note: See the Fulbright Applicant Checklist at http://go.middlebury.edu/fulbrightchecklist for more deadline details and requirements.

- **April 15: Middlebury Preliminary Application Deadline.** This is a flexible, non-binding deadline. Applications received by this date receive feedback from Dean Gates first. Plan to submit by July 1 at the latest. After that date, begin the Fulbright online application and email fellowships@middlebury.edu about your interest.

- **August 15: Intent to Apply Deadline.** THIS IS A HARD DEADLINE. If you want to ensure receiving feedback on your draft essays and application before the internal deadline in September, you must send in your materials by this date. You can still apply after this deadline, but you may not be able to get timely feedback on your application.

- **Middlebury Internal Deadline: Early September (noon on 9/14/20)** THIS IS A HARD DEADLINE. Your online application should be complete (recommendations, letters of affiliation if required, and essays proofed and polished. Please submit even if items are missing and notify fellowships@middlebury.edu about expected receipt dates.

- **Campus interviews** will be scheduled in late September/early October. Applicants (alumni or seniors) who are off campus can participate via Skype or phone.

- **Fulbright Foundation Deadline: Early October (TBA).** The fellowships office submits your application on your behalf and will do so in advance of this deadline. THIS IS A HARD DEADLINE.

- **Late January:** candidates receive notification of status. Semi-finalists will advance to the country-level review.

- **March-April:** Countries notify candidates of their status.

Eligibility and Application Instructions

- Must be a US citizen. If you are a dual citizen and applying to a country for which you have citizenship, there may be restrictions on your application to that country. See the country page for specific information.

- Preference to students who have received the majority of their higher education at a US institution.

- Preference for candidates who have not resided or studied in the country to which they are applying for more than six months. Study abroad or military duty is not disqualifying.

- Applicants must hold a BA or the equivalent degree before the beginning date of the grant. Applicants may not hold a doctoral degree at the time of application.

- Appropriate foreign language proficiency if required.

- Good health. Grantees will be required to submit a satisfactory Certificate of Health from a physician.

- Seniors/super-seniors MUST apply through Middlebury. Alumni of the undergraduate college may apply through Middlebury (strongly encouraged) or At-Large.

- You may start the Fulbright Foundation’s online application after you decide which grant/country you plan to apply for. See the application link under important URLs. The application opens in early April.
• If you need advice in selecting a grant type/country, indicate this on your Middlebury preliminary application so Dean Gates can help before you start Fulbright’s online application.

• We will register you for the fellowships blog (go/fellowshipsblog)—so please pay attention to notifications from the blog or plan to check it periodically.

Important URLs

http://go.middlebury.edu/fulbright for Middlebury page with fellowships description.

https://us.fulbrightonline.org/ main Fulbright student website. Find country information, application components, recorded webinars, competition statistics, and a link to the online application (in applicants’ section).

http://sites.middlebury.edu/sfas/tag/fulbright/ for Fulbright updates on the Middlebury Fellowships blog.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Research Grants

Confirm whether your research proposal requires IRB approval. See http://go.middlebury.edu/irb for guidance (generally human subjects). You DO NOT need IRB approval to submit the Fulbright application in September. If your project needs IRB review, it will be discussed in your October interview. If you are selected as a semi-finalist in January, you must go through the approval process (if needed) so that when you do receive the grant, you will have a safe and vetted research proposal and methodology. If you believe your research proposal may require IRB review, you should note this in your proposal.

Section Guidance for Completing Fulbright’s Online Application

When completing the Fulbright online application, please pay attention to the following items, where we often get questions!

Preliminary Questions

• Choose your grant type (either Study/Research or ETA for our applicants). You will only see the forms needed for this grant type. If you need to change your grant type, you can do so in this section.

Award Information

• Apply through Middlebury College
• Add award details (e.g. country). The award summary at the bottom will tell you whether foreign language is required for this award.

Program Information

• Abstract/Summary of Proposal: pay attention to this and make it a compelling and strong summary. State clearly and concisely (as relevant) what you will do, why you will do it, with whom you will work.
• Host Country Engagement: you will expand upon this in one of the essays. Describe clearly how you will engage in your host community outside of your project. Give specific ideas. Draw upon your interests. If you’re proposing an ETA, think about things you could do in many different locations. This engagement is critical to the Fulbright program.
• Plans Upon Return to US: Give your best understanding of what you think you’ll be doing upon return. It’s also fine to include potential future plans that may connect well or build from the Fulbright experience.

• For Statement of Grant Purpose (SGP) and Personal Statement (PS), pay close attention to document format requirements and content instructions here, in the Application Components section of the Fulbright website and in Middlebury’s Essay Guidance at go/Fulbright.

Affiliation Letters (study/research applicants only)
For study grants, these are not necessary (technically your offer of admission is your letter of affiliation, but that won’t be available at this date) but it can be helpful.
Give yourself ample time for this process (2-3 months). Depending on the country and your connections, affiliations can take a few months to arrange. August is generally a difficult month to get responses from academic institutions in particular. Letters should be on university or organization letterhead and signed by an authorized sponsor for the affiliation. Email correspondence is not acceptable, but you can receive a letter as a scanned document to upload to your application. All letters of affiliation must be in English. If your letter is written in another language, there must be a translation provided in addition to the original. You can provide that translation, since this is not confidential, and you upload that letter.

Common questions about affiliation letters:

Who makes a good affiliation? Refer to the country specific information about this. You want to find someone who’s academic area/professional work is aligned with your project, who can be of help to you and in many cases, provide access to resources from that organization/university. A majority of Fulbrighters will affiliate with universities, although in some countries it is possible to affiliate with other types of organizations, such as research institutes or government ministries. Make sure your proposed affiliation is acceptable for your country and appropriate for your project. You may have up to three affiliation letters, but this depends on the project. One letter is all that is required.

How to find potential affiliations?
1. Talk with your faculty advisors at Middlebury or directors and advisors from schools abroad about suggestions they have or connections they may be willing to facilitate.
2. Research where good work is being done on this topic in your proposed country.
3. Look at who is publishing interesting research in this area.
4. Reach out to Fulbright Scholars in your proposed country for suggestions (https://www.cies.org/fulbright-scholars). This is a list of academics who are/have recently spent time at institutions in the US. Both the scholar and the US host may be helpful in identifying potentially good affiliation contacts in your proposed country.
5. Organizations you have worked with (in country and in US) may also have connections. Inquire!

How to ask for a letter of affiliation? In most cases, this is done via email. Write a brief email introducing yourself, that you’re applying for a Fulbright grant, your project, ask whether they would be willing to let you affiliate with them and explain what you hope they may be able to provide. If this is person has not worked with Fulbright before, you should explain that the affiliate host does not provide any financial support to you but may provide the ability to audit courses, access archives, labs or libraries, participate in research conversations, or be part of a research group—really anything that will support your project. It is fine to send out a few requests at once. Some people may be slower to respond than others. Some may not agree to help you. Keep your request short and attach a current resume. The letter they provide should confirm that you will be able to affiliate with this organization and describe ways in which they provide resources or assistance to you for your project. Make
sure the affiliate understands your project and it’s great if they can speak positively in support of your project and the importance of this work.

A sample request email might be along these lines:

Dear Professor Watson,
My name is Rosalind Franklin and I am currently applying for a Fulbright Grant to pursue research on the molecular structure of DNA. I am an undergraduate and have been pursuing this work through research this past summer and continue this fall in my senior thesis. In particular, I am exploring the hypothesis that this is a double helix structure. [I have included a very brief summary of my project below—optional if you are that far along and you are not sharing research proposals that might be sensitive.]

Your work with X-ray diffraction has been an inspiration to me. I was particularly interested in your recent article, “Novel techniques for structural analysis” in Radical Thoughts Scientists Have. I would very much like to affiliate with your current research group at the University of Santiago during my Fulbright year. I have attached a current resume so that you can gain a better sense of my research experiences and background.

I would very much like to discuss with you the possibility of an affiliation with your university and lab for my Fulbright research. I would be glad to also share with you a more detailed version of my proposed research project.

Sincerely,
Rosalind Franklin ‘19

Obviously, you would tailor the email to your project—this should just give you an idea of what kinds of information you might include. If another faculty member recommended them to you, you would include that. Note that in some countries, email is not an effective way of communicating this. You may need to work through networks of people and sometimes others will need to facilitate the introduction for you. Identifying a strong affiliation and getting that letter can take a few months, so make sure you start this process early enough.

Academic Information
Follow the instructions here. If your study abroad program resulted in fewer than 12 credits, enter that information in the Experience Abroad section. This program information will also be reflected in your Middlebury transcript.

Transcript Upload
Unofficial transcripts are fine at this stage, but for those candidates who confirm they intend to apply on August 15, we will order a well-formatted transcript from the Registrar’s office and send to you to upload. Otherwise, choose a transcript format, that lists your courses in chronological order in a concise format and contains the necessary elements on an official transcript (courses, grades by semester, overall GPA, major, etc.). Check your transcripts for accuracy—majors, minors, etc.—and submit any changes to the registrar by August 15. If your study abroad grades are not yet reflected on your transcript on Aug 15, email us at fellowships@middlebury.edu. Note that any drop/adds after the start of the semester will not be reflected in the transcript and that is ok. If there are significant concerns about that, talk with us. If you require transcripts from additional
colleges/universities, you will need to obtain those. We will provide Fulbright with any additional necessary Middlebury transcripts for applicants who ultimately receive and accept grant awards.

**Professional Information**
Record your professional work experience. This includes internships, both paid and unpaid, and research experiences.

**Awards and Achievements**
- You have character limits here. Look at the samples provided in the application. Make the description of the item understandable to a reader unfamiliar with the organization (e.g. a cappella group vs. Mamajamas). You want the reader to be able to figure out as well as possible what this is.
- For awards/honors, unless very significant, do not list high school items.

**Experience Abroad**
It does not disadvantage applicants to have spent time in the host country through vacation, internships, volunteering, study abroad, etc. Where this does become problematic is when you have lived extensively or currently live in the country you are now applying to. Study abroad can be entered in this section.

**Language Self-Evaluation**
If the host country requires knowledge of a language, you must include this form. If you have language ability for more than one language that is relevant for this country/project, include self-evaluations for each. If the country does not require language knowledge, but you have some, include the self-evaluation. You will need to have a foreign language evaluation done for each language you include here.

**Recommenders and Language Evaluators**
Review the section instructions and email fellowships@middlebury.edu if you have questions. Please confirm recommender choices with fellowships advisors BEFORE registering them in the online application. You should provide a minimum of three weeks advance notice for these requests and for recommenders, share a copy of your proposal, transcript and resume. Given the timing of the application cycle, we recommend you talk with potential recommenders in the spring or early summer to make sure this is on their radar. If you are not sure about who to ask, talk with Dean Gates. Language evaluations can be conducted in the spring, summer or early fall. Make sure your recommenders and language evaluators know that their letters are due by Middlebury’s internal deadline (not the Fulbright deadline in October!). If they will have difficulty meeting this deadline, contact fellowships@middlebury.edu.

**Recommenders**
All recommendations must be in English. If your letter is written in another language, there must be a translation provided in addition to the original. Since recommendation letters are confidential your recommender must obtain that translation (and not from you!) and upload both documents him/herself.

**For ETA applicants:** typically, you will have a mixture of faculty and non-faculty recommenders, who know you well and can speak to your academic and teaching/teaching-related experiences. Recommenders fill out a form (as opposed to a letter) with short answers to these questions:
1. Based on your observation of and experience with the applicant, comment on their ability to overcome challenges. (120 words)
2. In your view, how has this applicant demonstrated qualities associated with teaching or mentoring? (120 words)
3. Based on your observation, how might the applicant interact with students, faculty, and community members, among others, in an unfamiliar or unstructured situation or in a different cultural environment? (120 words)
4. What kind of impression, in your view, would the applicant make as a representative of the United States abroad? (120 words)
5. Please comment on any other factors which you believe may have a bearing on the applicant's potential to have a successful experience abroad as a Fulbright ETA (comments regarding academic and/or personal experience, maturity, adaptability, and flexibility are welcome). (120 words)

These questions may help you in choosing recommenders.

**For study/research applicants:** you want recommendations from people who are best able to speak to your ability to carry about the proposed project or graduate study program successfully. Ideally these are people who can speak to your qualifications to do this work, have taught/supervised you in a relevant capacity, and in the case of academic projects, can speak to the importance of the proposed research and why the selected host country is important for that work. Having people who know you reasonably well is important, but this is not a character reference. The recommender should also be able to comment knowledgeably about you, your preparation, and success with this work. Typically, applicants have a mix of faculty and outside recommenders—much of this depends on the project (research vs. graduate study, type of research project) and whether you are a current student or alum. Study abroad faculty are also often used—and those letters can provide meaningful insight into your cross-cultural experiences and adaptation.

**Foreign Language Evaluators**
The foreign language evaluation form is needed if you have completed a self-evaluation for a language. You need someone with the appropriate academic credentials (MA, PhD) who teaches the language at the university level to complete this form, usually a Middlebury faculty member. You can arrange a conversation over phone or Skype to do the evaluation. If the language isn’t taught at Middlebury, you will need to find a qualified evaluator. Talk with Dean Gates if you can’t identify an evaluator. You should provide a minimum of three weeks advance notice for this request and share a copy of your proposal and resume with your evaluator. But again, given the timing of the application cycle, we recommend you talk with potential evaluators in the spring or early summer to be sure this is on their radar. Most often, this is done through a brief oral interview in early/mid-September, but you need to arrange this with the evaluator.

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