

## **THE PROCESS OF APPLYING FOR THE FULBRIGHT AT STANFORD: The Campus and National Deadlines and the Campus Interview**

This handout is the third of three handouts that are important in the application process for the **Fulbright Scholarships**. The three handouts are:

1. Should I Apply?
2. Developing a Strong Application – Guide for the Stanford Fulbright Applicant
3. **The Process of Applying for the Fulbright at Stanford**

### **Contents:**

- The Online Application
- The Campus Deadline
- The Campus Interviews
- The National Screening
- Last Thoughts

Important Notice: If you are enrolled at Stanford you **MUST** apply through the Overseas Resource Center. If you are a Stanford alumni, you are **ELIGIBLE**, and **ENCOURAGED** to apply through the Overseas Resource Center. The process is the same for enrolled students and alumni.

### **THE ONLINE APPLICATION**

1. Fill out the Fulbright Pre-Application Form:  
<http://web.stanford.edu/dept/icenter/orc/forms/FulbrightPre-AppForm.fb>
2. Create an Account. Beginning March 31, 2015, go to <http://us.fulbrightonline.org/applynow.html>, scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on “US FULBRIGHT APPLICATION ONLINE”. *PLEASE CREATE AN ACCOUNT AND FILL IN THE BASIC INFORMATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!* Do not submit your application until you are ready. Please email Diane Murk at [dmurk@stanford.edu](mailto:dmurk@stanford.edu) if you have any questions about the online application.

### **THE CAMPUS DEADLINE: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2015**

The Campus Deadline is a **FINAL** deadline. Unless there are serious errors, you will not be able to revise your application after this point. For the Campus Deadline, please do the following:

1. Proofread your online application
2. Print out your online application (see checklist on next page).
3. **Submit your online application (through the Embark Fulbright site)! THIS IS CRUCIAL!**
4. Fill out a Stanford Cover Sheet (available at the [ORC Fulbright webpage](#))
5. Place the cover sheet on top of the printed application, double check nothing is missing (see checklist on next page). We need **ONE PAPER COPY** to be submitted to our office.
6. Bring this packet or mail it to the ORC. We *must* receive both the online application and hard copy by **Sept. 22 at 5:00PM!** If you are out of town, please plan accordingly.

7. Once you have submitted, starting September 23, you may sign up for an interview time slot. (More details via email.)

**Application Checklist (please organize in this order):**

Stanford Cover Sheet	
Pages 1-5	Basic Data
Page 6	Statement of Grant Purpose (project proposal)
Pages 7 & 8	Letter(s) of Affiliation*
Page 9	Personal Statement
Form 7	Language Background Report*
Form 7A	Critical Language Enhancement Award Supplementary Form*
Form 11	Creative and Performing Arts Supplementary Form*
Unnumbered	Transcript(s) – last 3 sections of online application

\*where appropriate

**Mailing Address:**

ATTN: Diane Murk  
Overseas Resource Center  
Bechtel International Center  
584 Capistrano Way  
Stanford, CA 94305-8549  
(Stanford MC: 8245)

Please make sure you remind your recommenders that their letters are due on the campus deadline. Fulbright *requires* that recommendation letters be **submitted online**. Please make sure you have entered your recommenders' information in the online application system. This will generate an email to them with a username and password, which allows them to upload their letters. Recommenders do not submit hard copies.

It is your responsibility to make sure that all of your letters of references and foreign language evaluation(s) are uploaded by the campus deadline. **Please do not call the ORC to ask about the completeness of your application.** You can check on the Fulbright Embark system to see if letters of recommendation and language evaluations have been uploaded and submitted.

IF YOU ARE NOT ATTENDING A CAMPUS INTERVIEW YOU STILL NEED TO SUBMIT YOUR FULBRIGHT APPLICATION ONLINE AND SUBMIT ONE HARD PAPER COPY TO THE ORC.

**THE CAMPUS INTERVIEW**

**2015 Fulbright Campus Interview Dates:** Sept. 25, 28, 29, 30, Oct. 2, 5, 6, 7

**What is the purpose of the campus interview?**

The purpose of the campus interview is to provide additional information about your candidacy to the National Screening Committee. The interviews are your only chance to articulate, in person, your reasons for wanting to study or conduct research abroad. Each Stanford applicant will be interviewed individually for 15-20 minutes by a panel (3-4 members) of the Stanford Fulbright Panel. Panelists may question students on contacts they have made overseas, academic preparation for the study, knowledge of the host country, and language training.

### **How does the panel evaluate applicants?**

The panel's rating of your application is based on an evaluation of your complete application—essays, transcripts, letters of reference, language evaluation(s), and the campus interview. A panel of the Stanford Screening Committee will assess the content and feasibility of your proposal, your language preparation, your knowledge of the host country, etc., and then complete the Campus Committee Evaluation Form. The panel will rate your candidacy and decide to endorse or not endorse your application. The campus interview is NOT a mechanism for disqualifying applicants, but it is a mechanism for rating—not ranking—the applicants. Your rating will not be disclosed to you at any time, nor will you be given feedback regarding the confidential Campus Committee Evaluation Form.

PLEASE NOTE: No one is eliminated from the competition at the campus level. Stanford is asked by IIE to forward all applications submitted, regardless of the rating given by the campus committee.

### **What is the makeup of the panel?**

Stanford receives over 70 applications a year for the Fulbright Scholarship. While we do have a large number of faculty and staff who serve as committee members, it is not always possible to be interviewed by someone in your field. Committee members have often had years of experience in working with Fulbright applications, and they are very aware of what makes a good application. In addition, your application at the national level will not only be read by people specifically in your academic field, but by others who have knowledge of the country or area where you wish to go.

### **What if the panel members are not in my field of study?**

Please do not worry if your campus interview panel is made up of faculty and staff from outside your area of study. In fact, one of the key concepts of the Fulbright is to be able to articulate your proposal to a “lay” audience. Those applicants who can do this well are themselves often successful applicants. Conversely, a committee of specialists in your field can make for a very argumentative interview. As far as we can tell, there is no correlation between the make-up of the campus committee and the final results.

Please be aware that the campus interview is meant to support your application and is not the deciding factor in your application. The interview and evaluation is meant to give the National Screening Committee as much information to work with as possible, and is, thus, very important. The campus level interviews will be your only interview through the Fulbright process, except in a few cases (e.g., the performing arts).

### **What if I will be away from campus during the fall quarter?**

If you will be away from campus during the fall quarter, please notify Diane Murk immediately. Most students who apply for the Fulbright at Stanford have a campus interview. When the applicant cannot make it back to campus for the interview, the individual's application will be “paper screened” by a campus screening committee. In other words, the committee will read and discuss your application, and provide a rating based on your complete, written file. If you have a legitimate reason for missing the campus interview (e.g., studying abroad) and your application is “paper screened,” you will not be disadvantaged. However, if it is possible for you to interview (if you are planning a visit for other purposes), we recommend that you do so. We may be able to offer Skype interviews for those students abroad.

## TIPS FOR A BETTER INTERVIEW

- **Be yourself!** If you are not, it is likely you will not have a great interview. Do not forget, however, that you are being interviewed in a formal situation. To quote one scholarship winner, “My feeling on interviews is that attitude is everything. It is important to project your vitality and energy—[no scholarship] committee wants to give its money to some blah who’s going to mope around all day.”
- **Dress code:** Dress in a manner that will make you feel comfortable, but do not dress too informally.
- **Theme:** Go into the interview with a general “theme” in mind. Try to make connections between your responses so that your overall interview has cogency to it.
- **Don’t worry about being nervous.** Everyone is. The interviewers want to challenge you, but they certainly will not be confrontational.
- **Language Ability:** IIE places great emphasis on the feasibility of your proposal when evaluating each application. For this reason, they stress the importance of foreign language skills if you are going to a country where the native language is not English. The interviewers may ask you questions in the language of your country. Always reply in the language in which you are asked a question, even if it is to ask the committee member to repeat the question. The committee is not so much looking for fluency, but more for your potential to communicate in the language.
- **Know something about the country to which you are applying.** Familiarize yourself with current events, politics, literature, cultural events and what is going on in your field in that country. Some interviews will not go into these subjects with much depth, but some will.
- **Know something about what is going on in the US** (especially issues relevant to what you study). Read a paper that reports on international news as well as national news.
- **Reread your application** (including your transcript) before going into the interview. Interviewers may ask you about any and all parts of your application, and you need to be prepared to talk about any statement you have made. It is so easy to forget a seemingly insignificant point you may have made, and it is quite embarrassing to draw a blank on your own writing. When you reread the application, try to examine what some of the ramifications of each sentence might be and how it might be interpreted by an outside reader. Read each paragraph and try to think of one possible question the interviewers might ask—then completely and concisely answer all of your own questions. Consider having a friend read your essay and comment or question you on points he or she finds particularly interesting or unusual.
- **Body language is important!** Don’t slouch. Eye contact is important; look your interviewers in the eye. It is good to firmly clasp your hands in your lap, especially if they are shaking.
- **Do not be afraid to state your opinions and argue them.** As long as you are able to support your opinions, and do so without becoming angry or defensive, you will do fine. Some interviewers are curious to know how you will react in a situation where your beliefs are being questioned. The same interviewer who presses you to the wall about your thoughts on a particular matter may agree with you completely, so don’t waffle for the sake of agreement. Just be straightforward and stand by your convictions.
- **Channel your nervous energy into enthusiasm.** Be genuinely enthusiastic about the scholarship and the opportunities they can afford you. Be positive and don’t hesitate to let them know you really want the scholarship.

- **Unsure of a question?** If you are unsure of what a question is getting at, you can do one of two things: Take a definite line on what you thought the question was, or ask politely and briefly for clarification. Some applicants, when asked an especially tough question, request clarification in order to gain a little time to think. It's not a good idea to risk this tactic more than once in an interview, because you may wind up looking like you don't understand anything.
- **Do not rush your answers.** Don't babble on about nothing as you rack your brain for an answer. Consider each question and provide a thoughtful answer. Don't be verbose. If an interviewer wants more information, he or she will ask for it.
- **Feel free to say "I don't know."** The interview should be approached as a conversation, not as an oral exam. Never go into an interview worried about failing on one question—everybody does.
- **Know something about the origin and intent of the Fulbright.** Read the Fulbright US Student Program Handbook or their website for this information.
- **How you enter and exit is important.** Smile at everyone when you come in and leave time for a casual or humorous comment or two at the beginning. Let them set the pace. Thank them and make a polite exit when they indicate the interview is over, but don't rush out the door.
- **Don't analyze the interview afterwards by wondering "WHAT IF?"** Many applicants dwell on less-than-articulate answers and pregnant pauses and do not realize that their interviews went quite well.

We will end our interview advice on the point we started out with: **BE YOURSELF!** Remember that the panel is looking forward to meeting you and will enjoy interviewing you.

## NATIONAL SCREENING PROCESS

### IIE Fulbright Scholarship National Deadline: October 13, 2015

After the campus process, Fulbright applications are screened in two stages. Applications will first be reviewed by a nationally appointed committee in the United States. Except in a few cases (e.g., performing arts, Russia and UK short-listed applicants), you will not be asked for any further interviews. The Institute of International Education (IIE) will notify you via email on January 31, 2015 whether or not you have passed national screenings. If you pass (that is, are "recommended"), your application will be sent to the supervising agency in the country to which you are applying, and the final decisions will be made. (In recent years, almost one half of all Stanford applicants have passed the national screening process. Of those that are recommended, usually 20+ Stanford students are awarded Fulbright grants each year.)

You will receive final notification from IIE anywhere from mid-March to late June. Alternates sometimes receive notification as late as July or August. There is no standard timeline by which country committees make their decisions—every year can be different. **Please contact the ORC when you receive official notification, as we are often not informed until a later date.**

## LAST THOUGHTS

- Make this scholarship application a priority and manage your time well!

*The Overseas Resource Center*  
*Stanford University*

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- Get everything in on time. You should make every effort to have a completed application by the time of the campus deadline. In some case, supplementary materials may be submitted late. Check with FPA. Incomplete applications will reflect poorly on you at the campus and national levels.
- Any questions? Before contacting the ORC, please reread the ORC Fulbright guides #2 and #3 and also visit Fulbright's FAQs page: [http://us.fulbrightonline.org/howtoapply\\_appfaqs.html](http://us.fulbrightonline.org/howtoapply_appfaqs.html). If your question still hasn't been answered, *then* send us an email. ☺

Good luck!