

RESEARCHERS APPLYING FOR A FULBRIGHT STUDENT AWARD

(Suggestions received from the Institute of International Education New York)

a. Profile of Visiting Student Researchers

Candidates interested to apply for research grants are usually students enrolled in a PhD program in Romanian universities or in European academic centers. The proposed research project should be directly related to the completion of their PhD paper upon their return to the home country.

If this link to study back home is not made in a candidate's research proposal, U.S. professors will be reluctant to consider an affiliation. U.S. departments or professors who agree to consider applicants for a research affiliation will expect to see this connection clearly established in the candidate's application, especially in the statement of their research objective.

Visiting Fulbright student researchers normally return to their home university immediately after their grant period in the U.S. They are expected to complete their research project within that period.

Research proposals submitted by applicants planning to start a Ph.D. program in the U.S. cannot be considered.

b. Statement of Study Objectives

All visiting student researchers need to present a detailed and clearly articulated research objective. A vague, undefined statement of research interests is not sufficient. U.S. professors will be looking for a match with their research, as well as indicators that an applicant is advanced in their field and can be relied upon to be a motivated self-starter. U.S. professors will not be willing to commit time to work with a researcher who is not advanced in their field and whose proposal is rudimentary. Mid-PhD applicants should present their dissertation topic in detail, confirm how the research will contribute to the completion of the dissertation and explain why the research needs to be completed in the U.S.

c. Preferences

It is recommended that all research applicants thoroughly explore their preferred affiliations in advance of the completion of their Fulbright online application and indicate their preferences in that document. Any additions or changes to their preferences can only be considered in the earliest stages of the placement process, before professors at their original preferences have been contacted. It is recommended that applicants conduct comprehensive analysis of where the research most relevant to their interests is being conducted in the U.S. That research will often be taking place at schools that might not be well known to an applicant, but it is important to make this the primary consideration when deciding on preferences.

Applicants should state the reasons for their preferences in their online application and indicate a particular professor or professors they would like to work with. This information is very helpful in determining the most appropriate affiliation. If an applicant has been in contact with a professor, department or laboratory and has received expression of interest in an affiliation, they should include a copy of the communication in their application. While this information is helpful, prior communication with a professor or a letter of invitation is not required.