# Pomona College Fulbright Handbook

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FULBRIGHT APPLICATION TIMELINE
Pomona College

| Spring and Early Summer | Decide whether you would like to pursue a Research, Study, or ETA grant. Visit the Fulbright U.S. Student Program webpage ([http://us.fulbrightonline.org/](http://us.fulbrightonline.org/)) and use the Countries tab to explore countries that interest you, making sure that they offer the kind of award you would like to pursue. Pay special attention to the requirements listed in the “Language,” “Candidate profile,” and “Affiliation” sections of each country’s page. You can also review application statistics for each country at [http://us.fulbrightonline.org/statistics](http://us.fulbrightonline.org/statistics).

If you are pursuing an ETA, seek out opportunities to gain teaching or tutoring experience before the fall.

If you are pursuing a research grant, begin exploring possible affiliations. Affiliation requirements vary by country, so read your country description carefully. Students in the past have successfully obtained affiliations through their professors, through their own experience studying abroad, or by cold-emailing faculty or organizations they find online.

Consider meeting with Jennifer Locke ([jennifer.locke@pomona.edu](mailto:jennifer.locke@pomona.edu)) in person or over Skype to discuss your plans. |
| June | Aim to have your country and type of grant decided by June (this is not required, but very helpful!). **Complete and submit the Preliminary Application by June 30, 2017.**

Choose three recommenders who can attest to your ability to carry out your project or teach effectively. Ask these three people if they would be willing to write for you, and send each of them the instructions on this page ([http://www.pomona.edu/administration/career-development/graduate-fellowships/preparing-your-applications/fulbright-recommendation.aspx](http://www.pomona.edu/administration/career-development/graduate-fellowships/preparing-your-applications/fulbright-recommendation.aspx)).

After submitting your Preliminary Application, you will be assigned a faculty or staff Fulbright advisor. |
| July-August | Review the application tips at [http://us.fulbrightonline.org/applicants/application-tips](http://us.fulbrightonline.org/applicants/application-tips) for detailed advice from Fulbright about constructing applications.

Draft your two essays. Incorporate any feedback you receive from your Fulbright advisor (you should receive an email from him or her by mid-August).

If you are pursuing a research grant, ask for an affiliation letter. |
| Late August-September | Send your essay drafts, even if they are incomplete, to your recommendation writers no later than the first day of classes, August 30. Also by August 30, enter your recommenders’ email addresses in Embark.

Your recommenders must upload their letter (research/study grant) or recommendation form (ETA) to Embark by **September 18** in order for them to be reviewed by your interview date. |
If you need a Language Evaluation Form completed by a foreign language instructor, ask for an evaluation by August 30. As soon as they agree, enter the instructor’s email address on Embark.

Attend Fulbright Write-ins if you can. Seek out feedback on your essays from your Fulbright advisor, the CDO, the Writing Center, and/or other professors. Revise both essays carefully.

Complete a draft of your Fulbright Embark application—including uploading your essays, transcripts, and unofficial letter of affiliation (if applicable) to Embark by September 18, 2017. Make sure that you hit “submit.” I will unsubmit your application by September 25th so that you can make final revisions.

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<th>September 25 or 26</th>
<th>Interview with an on-campus committee. Use any feedback they might provide to revise your application one last time.</th>
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<td>October 2</td>
<td>Submit your application to Embark. This will give the Fulbright committee a few days to review your application and point out any missing components before the final national deadline.</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 6</td>
<td>National Fulbright deadline</td>
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Campus website: [http://www.pomona.edu/administration/career-development/graduate-fellowships/applying-through-pomona/all/fulbright.aspx](http://www.pomona.edu/administration/career-development/graduate-fellowships/applying-through-pomona/all/fulbright.aspx)

Fulbright website: [http://us.fulbrightonline.org/](http://us.fulbrightonline.org/)

Questions?

Contact Jennifer Locke at jennifer.locke@pomona.edu
Advice for Choosing Type of Grant/Country

**Research, study, or ETA (English Teaching Assistantship?)**
When choosing your type of grant, examine your qualifications, interests, and long-term goals carefully. Many people are qualified to apply to multiple types of grants, but you need to choose just one. Some people believe that an ETA is “easier” to get, but that’s not true—competition levels are about equal (and, in some countries, competition is steeper for ETA grants). Below are some characteristics of an ideal applicant for each type of grant:

**Research grant:** A research grant applicant should be clearly qualified to complete his or her proposed research project. Applicants often have previous research experience in a similar area or using similar techniques, but they can also draw on relevant experiences they have had in coursework, internships, or activities. A research grant applicant should also have very clear reasons for conducting this research in another country—maybe this country has a historical archive, biological site, particular lab, or research institute that would enhance the proposed research. Finally, research grant applicants need sufficient language skills to complete their projects, which sometimes means having advanced foreign language skills (depending on the field of study).

**Study grant:** Fewer countries offer study grants than offer research or ETA grants, so the first step in applying to this type of grant is finding an available grant in a country of interest. Study grant applicants must be able to secure admission to the graduate program they hope to fund, so it’s important to meet any department entrance requirements (including, sometimes, GRE scores, course prerequisites, and/or language skills). Applicants must also have compelling reasons for studying a topic abroad instead of at a U.S. university.

**English Teaching Assistantship (ETA) grant:** ETA applicants must have a genuine desire to teach English and to lead cross-cultural conversations. Some countries (but not all) require previous teaching or tutoring experience, and some require competency in the native language (specific requirements are detailed in each country’s page). All ETA-granting countries look for maturity and flexibility in applicants, since applicants do not have any control over where they will be placed in the country. ETA applicants should also have very clear reasons for working in a particular country—this is more important than in the research or study grant application, where an applicant has to justify being at a particular institution or organization.

**Choosing Your Country**
Applicants also ask for advice about choosing a country. Here are some points to consider:

**What you should consider first:** For a research or study grant, the most important thing to think about is where you might affiliate or apply to study. Use a combination of internet research and networking to find leads (see “Advice for Securing Affiliations”). For an ETA grant, it’s most important to go to a country that you have a genuine interest in. Is there a specific region where you would like to travel? Do you want to return to someplace you’ve been, or go somewhere
new? Is there a particular culture that fascinates you? Make a list of your top countries after some reflection.

Use the country pages carefully: Once you’ve identified countries that interest you, use the countries tab at http://us.fulbrightonline.org/ to read the requirements. Do you meet all academic and language requirements? Do you have the requisite experience? Are you a good match for the kind of candidate they are seeking? You may have to adjust your initial list based on this information.

Using statistics: At the top right of the Fulbright page, you’ll notice a small link to “Statistics.” Here you can see how many people applied for the number of available slots in each country for the last few years. These should give you a general sense of which countries are more competitive than others. While there are some clear trends (Eurasia is much less competitive than English-speaking countries, e.g.), note that in many countries the competition varies from year to year. Because of this, you should take the statistics with a grain of salt and use them to decide between countries only when you are otherwise equally interested in them. It’s much more important to find a country you’re passionate about than one that’s “easy” to apply to.
Advice for Securing Affiliations (Research Grants Only)

If you are applying for a research grant, you will need to find your own affiliation, or organization to host your research. Depending on the country, this affiliation could be a university, NGO, research institution, library, or other organization. You will then need to identify a specific person within this organization who would be willing to write a letter of affiliation on your behalf.

Rules for choosing affiliations:

Rules vary by country: Eligible affiliation organizations vary by country. For example, some countries only allow you to affiliate with a university. Visit the countries tab at http://us.fulbrightonline.org/, choose a country’s Fulbright/Research Study Grants section, and read the “Affiliation” paragraph carefully to learn what rules each country has.

Choosing non-university affiliations: If a country allows you to affiliate with organizations outside of higher education, make sure that the organization is local. International organizations are not acceptable affiliations. You need to find an organization that is managed and operated within the country.

Advice for finding possible affiliations:

Once you are aware of the affiliation restrictions involved with the country of your choice, you may wonder how to begin to find affiliations that will work for your project. Below are three methods with which Pomona students have had success:

Using contacts from study abroad or other travel: Some students will have already met professors or other professionals abroad that could be potential affiliations. You could ask these contacts if they would be willing to host your project or to put you in touch with people who might be able to host it.

Networking with academics or other professionals in the U.S.: Ask people who know your research or work well (your advisors or lab supervisors, e.g.) if they have any contacts in the countries that interest you that might be promising leads. Follow these leads, making sure to mention the person who gave you their contact information.

Cold emailing: Use internet searches and bibliographies to identify scholars or other professionals in the country of your choice, and then email them directly. This method can take some patience (many people simply won’t return cold emails), but it has been successful!

Advice for contacting affiliations:

When you email a possible affiliation for the first time, make sure you include the following information:
- an introduction to yourself and your qualifications for the research (attach a resume or CV)
- a brief explanation of what the Fulbright is and what you would be asking of them; note that you will not need funding, but that you will need access to resources you need for your research as well as appropriate research supervision or mentorship
- clear reasons for why this person/organization in particular would be a terrific affiliation for your project; demonstrate that you are familiar with their research

Notes on the affiliation letter:
Read the “Affiliation Letter” section of http://us.fulbrightonline.org/applicants/application-tips/academic carefully for details about requesting and uploading a letter of affiliation.
Online Application Instructions

Fulbright uses an online system called Embark for its applications. The application usually opens for registration in late spring. Start your Embark application early so that you become familiar with its components. To register, go to us.fulbrightonline.org, go to the “Applicants” tab, and select “Embark Online Application.” You can save your responses for further editing until you hit the “Submit” button.

Most of the Embark application is straightforward, but below are some tips to review:

Preliminary Questions Page:
Question 2: If you are a senior or an alum applying through Pomona, please select “Yes” under the question, “Are you applying through your home institution?”

Question 3: If you are applying to a non-English speaking country, it is a good idea to select the first option for this question (that you will need one Form 7 and/or one FLE). These forms are required if a foreign language is required for your grant, and are optional (but highly recommended!) if a foreign language is not required. Even if you don’t know the language in the country, you can use an FLE (or language self-evaluation form) to describe how you can begin to learn the language before starting the grant.

Application Page 1:
Take your time with question 14b and 14c. You will probably want to answer these after you have written your essays. We have heard from selection committees that these paragraphs help them to remember what they like about particular candidates and their projects. After a reviewer has read dozens of applications, he or she might go back to these paragraphs to jog their memory and remind themselves of the quality of each application. Edit these ruthlessly, and make sure you include your most essential information!

Essay Upload Pages:
Carefully follow the formatting instructions listed in Embark. Save your documents as PDFs rather than Word docs—they are more likely to upload correctly.

Transcript Upload Page:
Note that an unofficial transcript is fine at this stage. (If you are selected as a finalist, you will be asked to send an official transcript to the Fulbright commission in January.) Download yours from the Portal and upload it on this page. If you have other college credits not listed (from a non-Pomona study abroad or a previous institution, e.g.), you will need to upload an additional transcript.
Advice on Writing Essays

**Personal Statement Tips**
The personal statement needs to connect your story to the Fulbright opportunity you hope to obtain. You need to include your relevant qualifications and experiences that would enable you to carry out the project or effectively teach, such as key college courses, research projects, travel experiences, service experiences, tutoring work, etc. You should also make your motivation for pursuing your Fulbright project or ETA program clear, and connect your proposed Fulbright work to your specific future goals.

Write confidently about a possible future trajectory you could take after the Fulbright. It’s fine if you have multiple future plans in mind, but communicate clearly how the Fulbright could lead to success in these plans. The selection committee will not hold you to these plans (they realize people change their minds!), but they want to invest in someone who will use the Fulbright opportunity wisely.

The best statements are memorable and tell a consistent story. Cut out any sentences that are either irrelevant to your Fulbright experience or too generic—if a dozen other candidates could write the same sentence, you should delete it from your essay. You don’t need to tell the Fulbright committee what it already knows (e.g., that international education is important or that the Fulbright award is a terrific opportunity)—instead, concentrate your efforts on expressing what makes you the perfect candidate for the Fulbright program.

Before you write this essay, be sure to read the description of the Personal Statement in the “Application Components” and “Application Tips” pages carefully (both pages are under the “Applicant” tab on us.fulbrightonline.org).

**Statement of Grant Purpose Tips**
These essays will differ based on type of grant:

**Research Grants:**
The goal of this statement is to show that your research is feasible and compelling. You will need to explain your research in a way that shows your expertise while also keeping your language accessible to people outside of your disciplinary field.

Walter Jackson, the 2014-2015 U.S. Student Fulbright Program Director, suggests starting with a “lead” paragraph that functions as an abstract of the whole. This “lead” paragraph can be 2-3 sentences that explain the who, what, where, when, why, and how of your grant, including (if possible) details of your affiliation.

The Fulbright website provides the following list of 20 questions that a research Statement of Grant Purpose should address. You should answer all of these in your application (but not necessarily in this order):

1. With whom do you propose to work?
2. What do you propose to do?
3. What is innovative about the research?
4. What are the specific research goals and methodologies?
5. What is important or significant about the project?
6. What contribution will the project make toward the Fulbright goal of promoting cultural exchange and mutual understanding?
7. When will you carry out the project? Include a rough timeline.
8. Where do you propose to conduct your study or research? Why was this location(s) chosen?
9. Why do you want to undertake this project?
10. Why does the project have to be conducted in the country of application?
11. How will your project help further your academic or professional development?
12. How will you engage with the host country community? Give specific ideas for civic engagement.
13. What are your qualifications for carrying out this project?
14. How will the culture and politics of the host country impact the work?
15. Will the resources of the host country support the project?
16. Have you developed a connection with a potential adviser in the host country who has knowledge of the research topic and access to other appropriate contacts in the field?
17. Do you have the requisite academic/field-specific background to undertake the proposed research?
18. Do you have sufficient language skills for the project being proposed and to serve the basic purposes of the Fulbright Program? If not, how will you accomplish these goals? You should consider that, even if a country indicates that English will be sufficient for carrying out the proposed project, for purposes of Community Engagement, at least a basic level of language skill should be obtained prior to leaving the United States for the host country.
19. What are your plans for improving your language skills, if they are not adequate at the time of application?
20. Are there any possible feasibility concerns that the project could provoke?

NOTE: Questions 11, 13, 18, and 19 could also be answered in other portions of the application (the Personal Statement and language forms). I would advise using space as efficiently as possible and not repeating any information across portions of the application. Think strategically about where to place each piece of information.

NOTE: Don’t ignore Question 12. It’s important to include at least a short paragraph detailing how you would get involved with the local community outside of your research. Students in the past have talked about volunteering, participating in athletics or the arts, joining a club, and other activities. Think about what you do now—how could that translate to an activity during your Fulbright year?

Study Grants:
The goal of this statement is to show that you are a good fit for the graduate program to which you are applying.

The Fulbright website provides a list of 6 questions that a study grant Statement of Grant Purpose should address. You should answer all of these in your application (but not necessarily in this order):

1. Why do you want to pursue the proposed program in the country to which you are applying?
2. What are your reasons for selecting a particular institution?
3. Do you have the requisite academic/field-specific background to undertake the proposed program?
4. Why do you want to gain a better understanding of the peoples and cultures of your host country? Please demonstrate a commitment to the community through volunteer and extra-curricular activity.
5. Do you have sufficient language skills to successfully complete the program?
6. Do you have the flexibility and dynamism necessary for active involvement in the host country?

NOTE: Questions 3, 5, and 6 could also be answered in other portions of the application (the Personal Statement and language forms). I would advise using space as efficiently as possible and not repeating any information across portions of the application. Think strategically about where to place each piece of information.

ETA Grants:
The goal of this statement is to demonstrate your passion for teaching English in your chosen country and the skills and ideas you would bring to the classroom and community. Note that your application should not be location-specific within the country—countries place applicants in particular schools, and candidates do not usually get to choose in which location they will serve. Your proposed activities should be general enough to work anywhere in the country.

Before you write this essay, read the country page very carefully. The country page will usually describe what each country is looking for in its applicants and what kind of work they expect the teaching assistant to do. If they hope that participants will complete a side research project or help teach additional subjects, mention how you fit these requirements in your essay! Because of this, a successful essay for one country might look very different than an essay for another country.

The Fulbright website provides the following list of 7 questions that a Statement of Grant Purpose should address:

1. Why do you wish to undertake an ETA opportunity?
2. Why are you applying to this specific country?
3. What do you bring to the classroom that will enrich the learning experience of English language learners overseas?
4. What specific ideas do you have for engaging with students and helping them to learn English?
5. What specific qualifications, training, or experiences do you have to prepare you to serve as an ETA?
6. How do you expect to benefit from the assignment?
7. What plans do you have for civic engagement outside the classroom?

NOTE: Question 6 could also be answered in the Personal Statement. I would advise using space as efficiently as possible and not repeating any information across portions of the application. Think strategically about where to place each piece of information.
Where to get help on your essays:
There are many people you can go to for help with your Fulbright essays, including:
- Fulbright faculty or staff advisors
- Other faculty members
- CDO counselors
- Writing Partners
- Friends

If you can, plan to attend one or more of the Fulbright Write-Ins in September. Held at various locations around campus, these write-ins provide a space for working on your drafts and getting constructive feedback from peers and advisors.
FAQ: Asking for Recommendations

**How many references will I need?**
Each applicant will need three references for the standard application. Any country that requires or highly recommends knowledge of a foreign language will also require one Form 7 language evaluation, which should be completed by a language professor (or, if one is not available, by a native speaker). If a foreign language is not required, but you have some knowledge of the native language, you also have the option of asking a professor to complete a Form 7 (which is a good idea!).

Note that the same professor could complete a standard reference and a language reference for you, but that that professor would need to use two different email addresses in order for Embark to process both types of recommendations.

**Whom should I ask to write for me?**
Fulbright says only that you should ask the people who can best describe your ability to carry out your proposed work. For research grants, focus on asking professors or researchers who have seen your research work in classes, labs, or independent settings. ETA applicants should review the questions on the Sample ETA Reference Form (available at http://www.us.fulbrightonline.org/instructions-for-eta-reference-writers) and ask people who could answer them well for you (could be: professors, those who have seen you teach or tutor, work or club supervisors, etc.). Those of you who have studied or worked abroad might consider asking someone from abroad to write a reference explaining your ability to work well in an international setting.

**I'm applying for a research or study grant. What kind of references do I need?**
You’ll need standard letters of recommendation commenting on the topics listed on http://us.fulbrightonline.org/instructions-for-reference-writers. These letters should be signed (electronic signatures are fine) and on official department or organization letterhead.

**I'm applying for an ETA. What kind of references do I need?**
Your letter writers will need to fill out a form (NOT write a standard letter). The Sample ETA Reference Form is available at the link above.

**Where/how do my writers submit their references?**
By September 1st, you will need to enter your recommenders’ email addresses into your Embark application. This will trigger an email to your recommenders and provide them with a link to upload or complete their recommendations.

**Embark is asking me to put a due date in the system. Is that the internal deadline or the national deadline?**
It’s the internal deadline (9/18/17). The system won’t prevent recommenders from submitting later than that date, but it will remind them that they should get it in by then.

**When are references due?**
All references—including language evaluations—are due by 5pm on September 18th.
But isn’t that before the national deadline?
Yes. Pomona needs the references by the 18th in order to facilitate the on-campus evaluation process. Interview committee members will review the references before the campus interviews and use them to help complete your campus evaluation. We can access these recommendations once you submit your Embark application (you might want to submit after 5pm in order to ensure that all of your recommendations are in).

One of my recommendations might come in after the internal deadline. Will this disqualify me from the competition?
No, but it might make it more difficult for your advisor to write a strong Campus Committee Evaluation for you. We want as many recommendations in by the internal deadline as possible in order to give you the most complete evaluation that we can.

How can I help my reference writers?

1) Send them this link: [http://www.pomona.edu/administration/career-development/graduate-fellowships/preparing-your-applications/fulbright-recommendation.aspx](http://www.pomona.edu/administration/career-development/graduate-fellowships/preparing-your-applications/fulbright-recommendation.aspx)
2) Fill out their email addresses on your Embark application by September 1st.
3) Make sure that they have drafts of your Personal Statement and Statement of Grant Purpose by September 1st.
When are the on-campus interviews?
They will be held during the afternoons and early evenings of September 25th and 26th.

What are the interviews like?
They are 20 minutes long, with three or four faculty and/or staff members. You will be asked to talk about your proposal and your qualifications. The committee will be evaluating your fit for the Fulbright as well as providing you with any feedback they may have on your writing.

Do you eliminate applicants at the interview round?
No. We complete a Campus Committee Evaluation for you based on your written application and interview. Every candidate who completes his or her application will go to the national competition.

What happens after the interview?
You will have one week to revise your essay and finalize your Embark application by the October 2nd Pomona final deadline.

Why does Pomona have a final deadline that’s earlier than the national deadline?
We ask you to submit your application by the 2nd (instead of by the 6th) so that the committee can double check that all parts of your application are complete and contact any faculty members whose recommendations are not yet in. The Embark site sometimes has technical glitches close to the deadline, and sometimes students or recommenders have trouble uploading documents, so we’d like to have a few buffer days to deal with any last-minute problems that arise. That being said, if you discover between October 2nd and the 6th that you made a mistake on your application and need to re-upload something, feel free to contact Jennifer Locke; she can help you get it fixed in the system.
Additional Resources

**Websites**
Pomona’s Fulbright Page  
http://www.pomona.edu/administration/career-development/graduate-fellowships/applying-through-pomona/all/fulbright.aspx

U.S. Fulbright Student Program  
http://www.us.fulbrightonline.org/

Fulbright Tutorials:  
http://www.us.fulbrightonline.org/tutorials

Fulbright Webinars:  
http://www.us.fulbrightonline.org/applicants/information-sessions

**Books**