

# FELLOWSHIPS, SCHOLARSHIPS, AND AWARDS

## WHAT IS A FELLOWSHIP?

- A *fellowship* is a university or foundation sponsored program that offers students an opportunity for advanced study or research in their field of interest. Fellowships are highly competitive, require a time commitment equal to, if not greater than, an internship, and usually grant stipends to support students in their academic pursuits.

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF APPLYING FOR A FELLOWSHIP?

- **Opportunity** – Fellowship programs offer unparalleled opportunities to work closely with scholars in your academic field of interest and to build lasting professional and personal relationships. Fellows collaborate on academic research, co-author academic articles, policy studies, or other academic research papers, and participate in specialized courses and lectures.
- **Prestige** – Fellowships distinguish you from your peers and have the potential to launch your career in academia or in the corporate or nonprofit sector. A fellowship is impressive on your résumé as a mark of outstanding achievement and can boost your marketability in whatever career field you pursue. Fellowship awards build confidence as well.
- **Financial Gain** – Fellowships offer financial support for tuition and, in some cases, provides you with academic grants to undertake your own research.
- **Practice** – The application process for fellowships is a valuable learning experience. Regardless of whether you receive the fellowship award, you will gain a competitive edge in completing your application, managing your time, interviewing, networking, and developing your self-brand.

## WHAT IS A SCHOLARSHIP?

- A *scholarship* is a monetary award given to students based on academic merit, community service, financial need or all. Scholarships are highly competitive and require the candidate to demonstrate academic excellence and good character through a written and oral application process.

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF APPLYING FOR A SCHOLARSHIP?

- **Recognition** – Some scholarships command thousands of applicants. Recognition as a scholarship recipient provides you with the confidence to pursue other goals and to acknowledge your own potential early in your academic career.
- **Distinguish Your Achievements** – Scholarship recipients stand out among faculty, recruiters, and peers! Scholarship awards can provide you with a competitive edge in applying for other special opportunity awards, graduate school, or employment. It can help motivate you to achieve your career goals and build your confidence.
- **Financial Support** -Scholarships often pay for tuition, supplies, and housing so that you can concentrate on your studies instead of trying to balance those responsibilities with one or two part-time jobs. There are two scholarship categories.
  - **Need based scholarships** take into account student’s financial need. Need-based scholarship awards are applied directly to student’s tuition bills.
  - **Academic merit scholarships** do not require students to use the award solely for tuition. Academic merit scholarships are applied to other expenses at the student’s discretion, such as housing or other living expenses. This important distinction can affect your decision to apply.
- **Make you more competitive** – Scholarships can make it easier for your résumé to stand out among corporate and nonprofit recruiters when launching a job search. Whether your goal is graduate school or full time employment, nothing gives you more of a “competitive edge” among your peers and recruiters than a scholarship.

## QUALIFYING FOR SCHOLARSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP AWARD OPPORTUNITIES

Each scholarship and fellowship has its own eligibility criteria. Different scholarships and fellowships reward different forms of achievement. Some have special criteria, such as ethnicity, cultural background, specific academic

major, or career aspirations. In general, scholarship and fellowship sponsoring organizations consider students who can meet the following criteria:

- Academic success, i.e. competitive GPA (generally over 3.5)
- History of community service/volunteerism
- History of leadership/involvement in campus activities
- Extensive research experience (for most science-related awards)
- Strong written and oral communication skills
- Proven critical thinking and problem-solving ability
- Financial need

When considering the application process for a scholarship or fellowship, it is critical to review the general and specific requirements carefully to ensure you qualify. We encourage you to consult with the Faculty, Fellowship and Scholarship Advisors, or Career Specialists in making an informed decision about your scholarship and fellowship application process.

**Caution:** Never respond to requests for personal information (social security number, credit card number) or “processing fees” when researching scholarships, fellowships, internships, or special academic opportunities. Such requests can be “scams” – eliciting money or information for purposes other than assisting you with researching all of these academic opportunities. Always consult with faculty, advisors or career specialists before considering these requests.

## THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Most scholarships and fellowships have websites where you can apply directly. Some fellowship programs require an official nomination by your college or university as part of the application process. In such cases, speak to the Dean of Academic Affairs or Department Chairperson in your academic major to identify the “nominating official”.

Most scholarship and fellowship programs request the following general criteria and application materials:

- **Completed Application**
  - identifying data and basic information
- **College Transcript**
  - official transcript requested and mailed directly from the registrar
- **Letters of Recommendation**
  - requested from faculty members on official stationery or email
- **Personal Statement or Statement of Purpose**
  - crafted and edited in response to the questions posed in the application
- **Writing Sample**
  - example of your best academic writing from your courses

## **TIME MANAGEMENT**

Managing your time from your initial research of different scholarships or fellowship straight through submission of the application can “make or break” your success in securing an award.

Reviewing the application requirements, constructing your personal statement, securing letters of recommendation or other supplementary materials (nomination letters, official transcripts, forms of identification) should all be planned well in advance of the deadline date. It takes a great deal of time to compile all the requested materials for an application as well as to ensure the final application is accurate, well edited, and visually pleasing.

To guarantee your application is submitted in a timely manner, use the “helpful hint” of establishing a deadline of six weeks before the official deadline stated in the fellowship or scholarship program application materials. Create a checklist for yourself and monitor your progress in completing the application tasks regularly. Most importantly, work closely and collaboratively with Faculty, Fellowship and Scholarship Advisors or Career Specialists who will not only provide technical assistance and support, but will follow up with you to ensure you are meeting your self-imposed deadlines for the completion of your application.

## **COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

For more information about the CSI Scholarship Program or other external scholarship or fellowship opportunities, click the link below

<https://www.csi.cuny.edu/about-csi/president-leadership/administration/office-institutional-advancement-and-external-affairs/fellowships-scholarships>