

The Office of Graduate Fellowships and Awards

# Fellowship and Grant Writing in the Humanities

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THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY | THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

# Funding Opportunities

There are many awards and fellowships for graduate students in the humanities and interpretive social sciences.

There are awards to fund general graduate study, thesis/dissertation research, dissertation writing, research grants, language training, travel awards, and residential fellowships.



# Some Examples

## Common/major humanities awards

### Institute for Humane Studies

- Provides funding for various activities stages of study for grad students doing research on classical liberal ideas, including individual freedom, rule of law, and civil society

### Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Innovation Fellowship

- Support emerging scholars as they advance bold and innovative research in the humanities and interpretive social sciences
- The program seeks to expand the range of research methodologies, formats, and areas of inquiry traditionally considered suitable for the dissertation, with a particular focus on supporting scholars who can build a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable academy.



# Some Examples

## Common/major humanities awards, cont.

### Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship

- Provides up to \$30,000 for 12 months of dissertation writing
- For research focused on religious or ethical concerns
- “Dissertations appropriate to the Newcombe Fellowship competition might explore the ethical implications of foreign policy, the values influencing political decision...and religious or ethical issues reflected in history or literature.”

### Woodrow Wilson Dissertation Fellowship in Women’s Studies

- Provides \$5,000 to be used for expenses related to dissertation completion, such as research travel, data collection, or supplies.
- Eligible proposals from applicants in the humanities and social sciences will have as a central focus on the study of women and/or gender.



# Some Examples

Awards Humanities/Social Science Students Sometimes Ignore:

## Ford Predoctoral Fellowship

- Provides three years of funding (\$27,000/year) for students enrolled in research-based doctoral program
- Program aims to increase the diversity of the nation's college and university faculties by increasing their ethnic and racial diversity, maximize the educational benefits of diversity, and increase the number of professors who can and will use diversity as a resource for enriching the education of all students.

## **National Science Foundation opportunities**

- NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program includes social sciences as eligible fields; humanities researchers using SS methods are eligible, too. (A historian won an NSF GRFP in 2022!)
- NSF also has a Science and Technology Studies (STS) program that includes graduate funding.



# Some Examples

Some awards provide funding for language study

## Boren Fellowship

- Provides up to \$30,000 for 25-52 weeks (or up to \$12,500 for 12-24 weeks) of overseas language study
- Requires commitment to public service/government employment and fast-tracks applicant for such a career
- For masters and doctoral students

## Critical Language Scholarship

- Provides funding for 8-10 weeks of overseas intensive language study in one of 15 “Critical Languages”
- For masters and doctoral students



# Some Examples

## Funding to Study Abroad

### Chateaubriand Fellowship Program

- For doctoral students to spend 4 to 9 months conducting research in France
- Self-directed research in partnership with French institution/affiliation

### American Institute of Indian Studies Junior Fellowship

- Funds up to 11 months of dissertation research in India

### Fulbright U.S. Student Program

- Provides opportunity to conduct self-directed research in academic or creative arts field, to enroll in graduate studies, or to teach English in more than 140 countries
- Program is focused on cultural exchange and person-to-person ambassadorship
- Grant lengths can vary from 6 months to more than a year
- Students from any discipline or degree program can be eligible



# Some Examples

## Identity-based/Demographic Awards

### AAUW and PEO Fellowships and Awards

- Both AAUW and PEO provide multiple awards for women/people who identify as women pursuing graduate degrees
- Both have award programs for U.S. Citizens, International Students, and continuing education

### Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowship for New Americans

- Provides up to \$90,000 over two years for “New Americans,” defined as immigrants or the children of immigrants (U.S. Citizens, naturalized citizens, permanent residents, DACA, refugees/asylees)
- Open to wide range of disciplines/degree programs





# Some Examples

## Residential fellowships (long- and short-term)

### Carter G. Woodson Institute Pre-Doctoral Fellowship

- Two-year residential fellowship at the Woodson Institute at the University of Virginia
- Focused on African American and African studies
- Provides \$24,000/year plus health insurance, access to collections and community of scholars at the Institute/University

### Huntington Library Short-Term Fellowships

- Provides 1-5 months of residency at the Huntington Library, with a monthly stipend of \$3,500
- Access to library's wide-ranging collections and to the community of scholars in residence.



# Some Examples

## Phillips Fund for Native American Research

- Provides, on average, \$3,000 for research related to Native American linguistics, ethnohistory, and the history of studies of Native Americans, in the continental United States and Canada.
- Can fund research for MA Theses or PhD Dissertations

## Wenner-Gren Foundation Dissertation Fieldwork Grant

- Provides up to \$25,000 for Anthropology fieldwork related to dissertation research
- “The Foundation particularly welcomes proposals that integrate two or more subfields and pioneer new approaches and ideas.”

## Kress Foundation History of Art Institutional Fellowship

- Provides two-year (\$30,000/year) residential fellowship at one of six art history research centers in Europe (Florence, Leiden, London, Munich, Paris, and Rome)



# Application Cycles

External fellowships and awards often have **an 8-to-12-month timeline** from application submission to funds disbursement.

- *They are rarely a good source for immediate funding!*
- Generally, the bigger and more competitive the award, the longer the timeline.
- Some smaller awards (\$500-\$3,000) may have multiple/rolling deadlines and may disburse on a quicker timeline, but **this is an exception, not the rule.**



# Typical Application Cycle

Example timelines:

## **The Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship**

- Submission deadline: Early December 2022
- Award notification: Spring 2023
- Funds disbursement: Fall 2023
- **Elapsed time: ~8 months**

## **Fulbright U.S. Student Awards**

- Campus submission deadline: August 25, 2022
- Fulbright deadline: October 7, 2022
- Award notification: March-June 2023
- Grants would start in Fall 2023 or Spring 2024 depending on country
- **Elapsed time: ~12-18 months**



# Planning

## **Think about the application holistically**

Many applications will require multiple written components as well as an application form. You want to minimize redundancy across the application components. Use redundancy for emphasis.

## **Think about cohesion across the application**

Everyone has more experiences, more qualifications, more to their story than could ever fit into one application. Be strategic about what you include, so that each experience/topic relates to the others and is relevant to the specific award.

# Tone and Style

- Your application is a public document meant to persuade strangers. Tone and style send important messages to readers about your personality, your maturity and seriousness, and your level of preparation.
- Despite being called a personal statement, you don't need to feel compelled to share intimate details or to relate experiences you'd rather not share publicly.

# Tone and Style

## General “Best Practices”:

### **Avoid creative, funny, or cute approaches.**

Reviewers have seen them before, and they’re rarely as cute or funny as you think they are. This is a place to show that you can follow directions and present information clearly.

### **Avoid platitudes.**

Don’t tell the reviewers how prestigious the award is—they already know that. Don’t tell them how honored you’d be to win—submitting the application is evidence enough of your desire to win!

# Tone and Style

## General “Best Practices”:

**Keep it positive:** Be affirming of yourself and your experiences

- Bad: “I didn’t really know what I wanted to do in undergrad, so I bounced around between majors and then settled on engineering because I had enough credits to graduate.”
- Good: “I took a wide range of courses and explored many topics during my undergraduate education, which helped me hone my interests and find my home in Mechanical Engineering.”



# Tone and Style

## General “Best Practices”:

**Don’t be arrogant:** It’ll come off as immaturity or naivete

Don’t oversell your claims. Don’t put down other applicants. Avoid saying your work will “revolutionize the field.” Avoid setting lofty and unattainable goals. Be respectful and reasonable in your pitch.

- If you’re asking for a year of funding, don’t describe ten years of work. (Of, if you’re applying for a \$2,000 grant, don’t describe \$20,000 worth of research.)
- Reviewers generally need to know that your project is **feasible** and that you have **measurable outcomes**.

# Tone and Style

## General “Best Practices”:

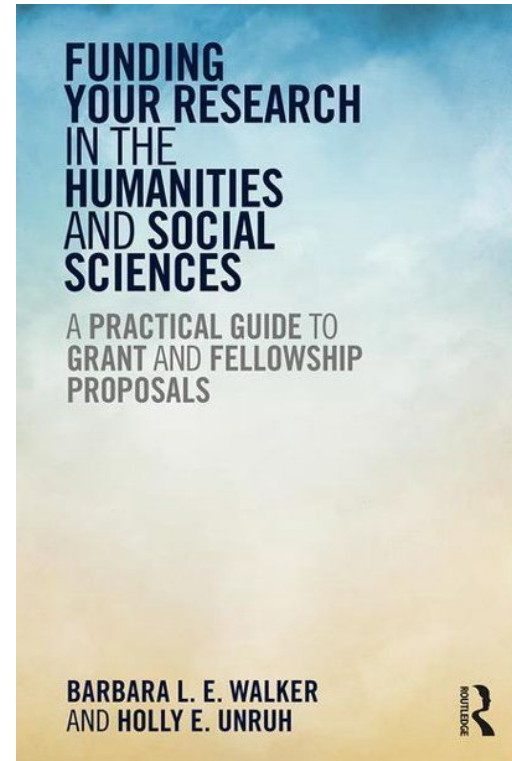
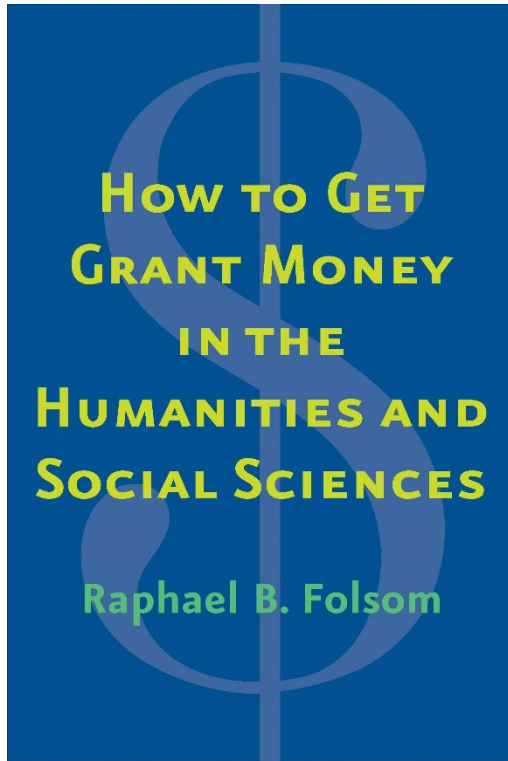
### **Be kind to your reader!**

Think about things like paragraph length, what the text looks like on the page, whether your narrative is disjointed/hard to follow. Remember, they’re reading stacks of similar documents.

### **Make it easy to find information!**

Stick to the general order in the prompt—it’s what they expect. Use strong topic sentences and consider boldfacing key points, so that readers can skim. Reviewers may want to return to your essay for a quick refresher.

# Resources:



# Resources

John A. Dutton, *Writing Personal Statements Online*: <https://www.e-education.psu.edu/writingpersonalstatementsonline/>

<https://writingcenter.uagc.edu/writing-clearly-concisely>

<https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/conciseness-handout/>

<https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/style/>

<https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/guides/writing-concisely>

<https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/guides/advice-for-writing-personal-statements>

<https://writing.wisc.edu/handbook/assignments/grants-2/>

<https://gwc.gsrc.ucla.edu/workshop-videos/grant-hum-soc-sci>

<https://gwc.gsrc.ucla.edu/resources/writing-fellowship-and-grant-proposals>

Ford Predoctoral Fellowship materials: <https://www.heidiwaite.com/post/ford-foundation-predoctoral-fellowship>

# Today's Panelists



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