

Application Timeline for IIE Fulbright Student Awards (Fall 2020 Applications for 2021-2022 Grants)

Following is a suggested timeline for prospective Fulbright applicants who work well with structure and prefer mini-deadlines and goals throughout the application process. This timeline applies to both the English Teaching Assistant and Open Study/Research awards. **If you are beginning the process after some of these dates have passed, don't panic.** Use the list to keep yourself organized as you work through at a pace that makes sense for you and allows you to meet the MSU and national deadlines. You can jump around in the timeline as well; you do not necessarily have to complete these tasks in the order listed.

*"One of the best things about the Fulbright program is that you can propose to do anything; the only limiting factor is your imagination. Unfortunately, one of the worst things about the Fulbright program is that you can propose to do anything."
- Former Fulbrighter*

The Fulbright application process is lengthy; applicants are encouraged to engage in reflection and thoughtful conversations with faculty mentors, advisers, colleagues, and peers throughout the process. It can (and should) take months to compile a high-quality, competitive application.

Familiarize yourself with the [MSU Fulbright website](#) and [IIE Fulbright US Student Program website](#). The MSU site provides campus-specific information, dates, resources, and contacts. The IIE site provides comprehensive information on every aspect of the program.

Monthly or As Needed

- Visit the [IIE Fulbright US Student Program website](#) regularly for updates and helpful information throughout the process.
- Check for [upcoming IIE webinars](#) on pertinent topics (e.g., award types, geographic regions, specific applicant demographics).
- Check for [recorded IIE webinars](#) you may have missed to see if there are new recordings that would be useful to watch.
- Contact MSU Fulbright Adviser with any questions (see [MSU Fulbright website](#) for office hours and contact information).

Spring Semester

February/March

- Familiarize yourself with Fulbright basics by watching the 10-minute [General Overview to the Fulbright U.S. Student Program](#), then the video for whichever program you plan to pursue (Open Study/Research, Arts Study/Research, or English Teaching Assistant).
- Read [IIE's "Getting Started" page](#) to confirm your eligibility for the program and learn about the different award types.
- Begin reviewing [available countries](#). Note that country offerings may vary slightly from awards posted when the competition opens in late March/early April.

April

- When the new competition opens in late March/early April, [create an account with IIE](#) to begin your application (selecting MSU as your institution links your application to the Fulbright Adviser on campus).
- Continue to research [possible host countries](#) on the IIE website.
- Research [Fulbright Alumni Ambassadors](#) to see if there are Ambassadors who worked in countries you are interested in or who did projects related to your ideas. Reach out to them for input if you like.

Summer Semester through National Deadline

May

- Finalize the host country to which you will apply.
- Finalize the award type for which you will apply (e.g., ETA, open study/research, any sub-types).
- Begin drafting your Personal Statement.
- Begin drafting your Statement of Grant Purpose.
- Identify your three references; contact them to ask if they are willing to provide a written letter of recommendation.
 - Communicate with references to let them know when you plan to share your draft Statements. They can refer to these in writing their letters so their recommendations align with your project. You should also direct them to the appropriate link for instructions:
 - [Instructions for English Teaching Assistant \(ETA\) Recommendation Writers](#)
 - [Instructions for Study/Research Recommendation Writers](#)
 - Think about people who can address not only your academic background but also your experiences outside of academia. If two references are academic, try to include a third who knows you from a job, volunteer position, or other setting.
 - Ask when they will be available to complete the reference and use the online application system to invite them at that time so it is easy for them to find the unique link to your application.
- If required for your proposed host country, identify an instructor to conduct a language evaluation. As with your other references, ask when they will be available to do the evaluation and use the online system to invite them at that time so it is easy for them to find the link to your evaluation.
 - [Instructions for Fulbright Foreign Language Evaluators](#)
 - If a language evaluation is not required, but you have experience with the language of your host country, completing the self-evaluation and a formal language evaluation can make your application more competitive.
- For open study/research applicants: begin making contacts with potential institutions to provide a letter of affiliation. This process can take several months. Seek input from your faculty adviser and other professors as needed. The [area studies centers at MSU](#) may also be able to provide connections.

June

- Request post-secondary transcripts as needed (ensure spring semester grades are included). Transcripts may be unofficial versions; if you are named a semifinalist, you will need to provide an official copy at that time.
- Share a draft of your Personal Statement with at least one person for feedback (e.g., faculty adviser, professor, Writing Center tutor, Career Services Network adviser), refine draft.
- Share a draft of your Statement of Grant Purpose with at least one person for feedback, refine draft.
- Draft the “Host Country Engagement” portion of the online application.
- Draft the “Plans Upon Return to the US” portion of the online application.

July

- Send reminders if needed for reference letters and language evaluation (give them MSU internal deadline of September 1, not national deadline in October).
- Share a draft of your Personal Statement with at least one more person for feedback (e.g., faculty adviser, professor, Writing Center tutor, Career Services Network adviser), further refine draft.
- Share a draft of your Statement of Grant Purpose with at least one more person for feedback, further refine draft.
- Using your almost-final Statements, draft the “Abstract/Summary of the Proposal” portion of the online application.
- For open study/research applicants: Follow up if needed on letter of affiliation.

August

- Finalize online application.
- Send final reminders if needed for reference letters and language evaluation (remind them of MSU internal deadline, September 1).

September

- September 1, 2020: MSU deadline**
 - Submit online IIE application, which sends it to MSU’s Fulbright Adviser.
- Participate in required Campus Committee interview (may be held via Zoom) to receive feedback on application.
 - Application will be “un-submitted” back to you following the interview so you can make changes.
- Refine Statements and rest of application based on Campus Committee input.
- Gather any necessary final materials for submission.

October

- October 13, 2020: National deadline**
 - Submit online application to IIE before 5:00pm ET – no late applications are accepted.

After the National Deadline

November/December

- Applications are reviewed by National Screening Committee.

January

- Semi-finalists notified (by end of month) that their applications are moving to the next step; applicants not selected to advance also notified.

February/March

- Semi-finalist applications are reviewed by host country Fulbright Commissions and other stakeholders. A Zoom/Skype/phone interview is typically conducted.

Late March through May

- Finalists are notified; notification dates vary widely by country.
- Alternates and applicants who were not selected are also notified on a rolling basis by country.

September

- Most grants begin, corresponding to the host country's academic year.

Timeline Doesn't Match Your Plans?

Most MSU students begin looking into IIE Fulbright options the spring of their junior year, applying at the beginning of their senior year and hoping to travel the fall after graduation.

Other MSU applicants might be in graduate school, hoping to incorporate a Fulbright as part of their thesis or dissertation research.

If you don't fit into these parameters, that's OK!

- If you are a sophomore, you can browse the [MSU Fulbright website](#) and [IIE Fulbright US Student Program website](#) to learn about the program and keep an eye out for MSU information sessions. Students with more lead time can think about activities that might strengthen their applications, like [English tutoring](#) (for English Teaching Assistant awards), leadership positions in a club or job, language study, and volunteer or work experience in your field of study.
- If you are an MSU alumnus/a, you can work with the Fulbright Program Adviser for guidance up to five years after graduation. After five years, you should apply as an At-Large applicant.