

# Nationally Competitive Fellowships

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**Director of Fellowships**

# National Fellowships

- **Highly competitive**
- **Application process is a serious time commitment (100+ hours)**
- **Life-changing events**

# General Criteria

## Evidence of Excellence

— >3.75 GPA

— Scholarly Potential

— Other

— Research

— Leadership

— Service

— Study Abroad



# Why Should I Be Interested in Nationally Competitive Fellowships?

- Process can open doors to further opportunities
- Acquisition and honing of life skills
- Learning and Networking opportunities
- And...sometimes, you win a fellowship.

# Improve Chances

- **Maintain an excellent academic record** that demonstrates diverse interests and rigorous coursework.
- **Get to know your professors and employers.** You will need references for your applications.
- **Get involved in research**– undergraduate opportunities
- **Take graduate level courses**

# Improve Chances

## **Reflect on your long-term goals**

**Think about where you see your life headed.**

- What's important to you? What kind of work do you hope to do?
- Thinking about these issues will help you articulate your interests and goals in personal statements and will help you decide what classes to take, what groups to get involved with, what work to pursue outside of class.

# Improve Chances

**Develop a narrative** to show how what you've done (and what you're doing now) fits in with your long-term goals and demonstrates potential to be a future leader in your field.

- Think about how you would tell your life story in 1,000 words.
  - What key events in the past have led to where you are now?
  - Where do you see yourself headed in 5-10 years?
  - What are the main things you're doing now that are preparing you for that future?
- Try to develop a thread or theme that connects your past to your present and to your (planned) future.

# Improve Chances

- **Become involved in extra-curricular activities** that are important to you; be selective and deliberate about what you do.
- **Get involved in leadership roles** with student and community organizations.
- **Take advantage of volunteer, internship, and research opportunities** – gain experience.
- **Expand your knowledge of the world:** study abroad
- **Strongly consider language study**, especially if interested in study abroad



# Strong Application

- Unified
- Concise and clear
- Edited and revised
- Strong letters of recommendation

# Recommendations

- Provide ample lead time
- Know you as scientist, personally, and is familiar with proposal
- Share application materials / statements and merit review criteria

# Other Things to Consider

- Address guidelines
- Deadlines
  - Prepare in advance: *start early*
- Eligibility requirements
- Proofread!
- Involve mentor

# Tau Beta Pi Fellowship

- **\$10,000**
- **30 awards**
- **Due February 1**

# Tau Beta Pi Fellowship

- Academic achievement
- Strong faculty recommendations
- Extracurricular contributions
- Promise of substantial achievement through a definite plan or purpose
- Program that advances the interest of the engineering profession.

# National Fellowships

- [ **National Science Foundation**
- [ **NDSEG**
- [ **SMART**
- [ **GEM**

# National Science Foundation Fellowship

[www.nsfgrfp.org](http://www.nsfgrfp.org)

- [ **STEM graduates**
- [ **2000 grants / yr**
- [ **\$34,000 / yr for up to 3 years**
- [ **Deadline: Oct 26-30**

# National Fellowships

- [ **Rhodes Scholarship**
- [ **Marshall Scholarship**
- [ **Mitchell Scholarship**
- [ **Fulbright Grants**



# Contact

Personal Statements:

[www.e-education.psu.edu/writingpersonalstatementsonline](http://www.e-education.psu.edu/writingpersonalstatementsonline)

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