

Fulbright U.S. Student Program: Guidance for Recommenders of **Study/Research or Arts** Candidates

Thank you for supporting a UT Study/Research candidate for the [Fulbright U.S. Student Program](#). Because the Fulbright is a nationally competitive scholarship, these letters are of critical importance to the student's application and likelihood of success. The [Office of National Scholarships & Fellowships](#) (ONSF) serves as UT's official point of contact for the Fulbright, with ONSF Director Andrew Seidler the UT Fulbright Program Adviser (FPA). We hope the information provided here is helpful; however, should you have any questions or concerns or would like feedback on a draft of your letter, please do not hesitate to contact Andrew at aseidler@utk.edu.

You will receive from the Fulbright's online application system (FBstudent@ie.org) an e-mail with instructions on how to submit your letter online. **ONSF requests that recommendations be submitted in the Fulbright online system no later than September 25.**

Your letter should be 1 – 2 single-spaced pages (~1.5 pages is typical), include your FULL TITLE, be on official department LETTERHEAD, include a SIGNATURE, be addressed to *The Fulbright Commission*, and uploaded as a PDF or Word document. In your letter, please comment on the following, as possible/appropriate: (MORE INFO AT: <https://us.fulbrightonline.org/instructions-for-study-research-recommendation-writers>)

- How you know the candidate
- Feasibility of the applicant's proposed project
- Appropriateness of the project and subject matter for the host country
- Suitability of the proposed research methodology given the topic and applicant's background
- Ability of the applicant to successfully carry out the project in the allotted time
- Linguistic preparation for the proposed plan
- Candidate's ability to adapt to a different cultural environment and to represent the U.S.
- In the arts, the candidate's talent and potential for growth
- Any other factors which you believe may have a bearing on the candidate's experience overseas

In the case of the Fulbright, while ONSF facilitates campus interviews, there is no national interview, so all the Fulbright's national screening committee will have is what is before them on paper. Your letter will therefore provide perspective not otherwise present in the application, perhaps highlighting particular strengths—ones the student might downplay or not even recognize. **In writing your letter, please keep in mind that Fulbrighters serve as cultural ambassadors representing the United States and that personal suitability, as well as academic excellence, is an important criterion.** Wherever possible, **please use CONCRETE EXAMPLES to illustrate the student's relevant preparation and suitability for this opportunity.**

Review committees assume these are very bright students; what a review committee needs to hear are those things that set apart a particular student from the others they will be reading about. *You might consider how: the student showed unusual initiative and ability to be self-directed; addressed some difficult questions; translated coursework into a significant research project; showed resilience and adaptability; developed/matured over the duration of your relationship; and/or will contribute to the future field based on specific accomplishments and contributions already made.*