



## National Fellowships Recommendation Letter Request

**Asking for a letter of recommendation** can make even the most confident person nervous. What if you ask and the professor says “No”? What if your supervisor says “Yes”, but does not offer the committee a positive take on you or your potential? Inviting a teacher or mentor to share what they think of you and your potential can feel risky, but when you approach the conversation with care and preparation, the exchange can strengthen your relationship with your writer (and help you tap into their expert knowledge).

### General Tips:

- Give your writers adequate time! Contact references at least 3-6 weeks before the deadline if possible.
- Write a brief thank you note to your recommenders!

### Information you can share with your recommender to get a strong letter of recommendation:

- a brief description of the mission or purpose of the scholarship, fellowship, or position you are pursuing
- a list of the selection criteria, specify what applies to you
- tell your recommender why you are applying for this opportunity
- a current resume or curriculum vitae (CV), include this information within the request as well
- concise descriptions of relevant academic, scholarly or professional research or projects
- a list of any classes you have taken with the recommender (if applicable) specify course numbers, titles, semester, year, brief descriptions of projects you developed, how they might relate to your current application, and final grade.
- a list of any work you have done with the recommender (research, independent study, portfolio, internship, ect.)
- a list of any other achievements that are relevant to the application process
- your current academic status - semester, year, planned or actual date of graduation, current job
- a draft of the application essay is ideal, but if that is not possible, it is wise to share an outline or summary of your ideas.
- Clear instructions to follow when your recommender is:
  - Addressing the letter
  - Formatting or printing the letter (Letterhead? Electronic signature?)
  - Submitting (mailing or emailing) the letter or reference

These instructions should include the recommender or reference’s deadline for submission or contact, a website address and contact information for yourself, as well as the university’s fellowship representative if that is relevant to the opportunity.

Remember to go over the most important details with your recommender! This will ensure that they take the time to read the materials you have prepared for them *AND* the process can help you both reconnect with the relationship and experiences that are at the root of your relationship.

**Deadline reminders are appreciated and necessary for most writers and references.** Everyone is busy and unexpected changes in circumstance or responsibility can be managed with thoughtful communication and purposeful support.

Remember to treat your writers with the utmost courtesy and give them the information they need to support your candidacy effectively. Strong support from those who know you is essential for fellowship success.

*This information was adapted from NAFA Resources:*

*UI Supporting Recommenders.pdf*

*2012\_ Requesting Letters of Reference \_Hohenbary, Kansas State.pdf*