

Fulbright-Nehru and Other Fulbright Fellowships

Complete Guide for Indian Citizens

Table of Contents

1. Introduction to Fulbright-Nehru
2. Fellowship Types
3. Eligibility Criteria
4. Eligible Fields of Study
5. Application Process
6. Key Dates and Deadlines
7. Other Fulbright Fellowships
8. Resources and Links

1. Introduction to Fulbright-Nehru

The Fulbright-Nehru Fellowship Program is a prestigious bilateral educational exchange initiative between the United States and India, administered by the United States-India Educational Foundation (USIEF). These fellowships support Indian citizens pursuing advanced study, research, or professional development in the United States.

Key Features:

- Fully funded or partially funded opportunities
- Support for Master's degrees, doctoral research, and postdoctoral research
- Cover tuition, living expenses, travel, and health insurance
- Open to Indian nationals with strong academic credentials
- Competitive selection process based on merit

2. Fellowship Types

A. Fulbright-Nehru Master's Fellowships

Duration: Up to 2 years

Purpose: Support Indian citizens pursuing a Master's degree at accredited US universities

Eligibility Highlights:

- Minimum Bachelor's degree with good academic record
- English language proficiency (TOEFL/IELTS if required)
- Indian passport holder
- Generally under 35 years old
- No prior degree from a US institution

Fields Eligible: Varies by cycle; typically includes economics, public health, computer science, environmental sciences, urban planning, and more

Application Deadline (2026-27): May 14, 2025

Support Includes:

- Full or partial tuition coverage
- Monthly stipend for living expenses
- Health insurance
- Travel allowance
- Books and supplies allowance

B. Fulbright-Nehru Postdoctoral Research Fellowships

Duration: 8-24 months

Purpose: Support Indian PhD holders conducting advanced research in US institutions

Eligibility Highlights:

- PhD degree completed before application
- Active research background in chosen field
- Proposed research aligns with US academic interests
- Strong academic credentials and publication record

Eligible Fields: Economics, energy studies, environmental sciences, neurosciences, computer science, agriculture, public policy, and specialized disciplines

Support Includes:

- Monthly stipend
 - Health insurance
 - Travel allowance
 - Research support funds
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C. Fulbright-Nehru Doctoral Research Fellowships

Duration: 6-9 months

Purpose: Support Indian PhD candidates conducting dissertation research in the US

Eligibility Highlights:

- Currently pursuing PhD in Indian institution
- Doctoral research requires US-based study
- Research proposal evaluated for merit
- Strong academic performance required

Eligible Fields: Similar to postdoctoral programs

D. Fulbright-Nehru Academic and Professional Excellence (FNAPE) Fellowships

Duration: 4-9 months

Purpose: Support professionals and academics in teaching, research, or professional development

Target Participants:

- University faculty members
- Government officials
- NGO professionals
- Think tank researchers
- Policy professionals

Eligible Fields: Broad range including public policy, economics, history, sociology, environmental sciences, and professional fields

3. Eligibility Criteria

General Requirements (All Fellowships)

✓ Indian citizen/passport holder ✓ Excellent academic record ✓ English language proficiency ✓ Strong motivation for proposed project ✓ No prior long-term US residency ✓ Commitment to return to India after fellowship ✓ Good health and physical fitness

Specific Requirements by Fellowship

Requirement	Master's	Postdoctoral	Doctoral	FNAPE
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Requirement	Master's	Postdoctoral	Doctoral	FNAPE
Minimum Education	Bachelor's degree	PhD degree	Currently pursuing PhD	Bachelor's (minimum)
Age Limit	Usually under 35	Typically under 40	No specific limit	Variable
Work Experience	Generally recent graduates	Active research record	Enrolled student	5+ years typical
Research Proposal	Study plan	Detailed research plan	Dissertation research plan	Project proposal
Language	TOEFL/IELTS (if needed)	English proficiency	English proficiency	English proficiency

4. Eligible Fields of Study

Primary Eligible Disciplines

Social Sciences & Humanities:

- Economics
- History
- Sociology
- Anthropology
- Political Science
- International Relations
- Public Administration
- Urban and Regional Planning

Sciences & Technology:

- Computer Science
- Mathematics
- Physics
- Chemistry
- Neurosciences
- Environmental Sciences
- Agricultural Sciences
- Energy Studies

Professional Fields:

- Public Health
- Public Policy
- Business Administration
- Environmental Management
- Education

- Library Science

Emerging Focus Areas:

- Smart Cities and Urban Innovation
 - Climate Change and Sustainability
 - Cybersecurity and Information Security
 - Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning
 - Health Security and Pandemics
 - International Development
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5. Application Process

Step-by-Step Guide

1. Check Eligibility

- Review all requirements for your fellowship type
- Verify you meet the age, education, and citizenship criteria
- Assess your academic credentials

2. Prepare Documents

- Bachelor's/Master's/PhD transcripts (certified copies)
- English language test scores (TOEFL/IELTS if applicable)
- Passport copy (valid for 2+ years)
- Medical clearance certificate
- Police character certificate

3. Develop Strong Application

- Write compelling Statement of Purpose (500-750 words)
- Highlight academic achievements and career goals
- Explain research/study project in detail
- Articulate how fellowship aligns with career plans

4. Obtain Recommendations

- Secure 2-3 strong recommendation letters
- From university faculty or professional mentors
- Should address academic ability and research potential
- Original signatures or institutional letterhead

5. Submit Application

- Apply through USIEF online portal

- All supporting documents uploaded as PDFs
- Payment of application fee (non-refundable)
- Application in English with proper formatting

6. Selection and Interview

- Short-listed candidates invited for interview
- Panel interview conducted in English
- Assess motivation, academic ability, and communication skills
- Interview typically at USIEF office or via video

7. Final Selection

- Successful candidates receive award letter
- Visa support documentation provided
- Health insurance and travel arrangements made

6. Key Dates and Deadlines (2026-2027 Cycle)

Milestone	Date
Application Portal Opens	Typically September
Application Deadline	May 14, 2025 (Master's)
Short-listing	June-July
Interviews	July-August
Final Selection Announced	August-September
Fellowship Begin Date	January 2026 (variable)

Note: Dates vary by fellowship type. Check USIEF website for specific deadlines.

7. Other Fulbright Fellowships for Indians

A. Fulbright Scholarship Program (General)

- For Indian citizens pursuing higher education in US
- Covers Bachelor's, Master's, and research
- Broader field eligibility than specialized programs

B. Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program

- One-year non-degree fellowships
- Professional development for mid-career professionals

- Fields: public administration, economics, agriculture, environment

C. Fulbright Foreign Student Program

- For Indian students pursuing degrees in US
- Partial or full support
- Competitive selection based on merit

D. Fulbright Specialists Program

- Short-term (2-6 weeks) academic expertise exchange
- For faculty and professionals
- Project-based collaboration with US institutions

E. Fulbright-Kalam Pair Initiative

- Collaborative research between Indian and US researchers
- Joint projects in science and technology
- Support for both Indian and US participants

8. Resources and Links

Official Organizations

USIEF (United States-India Educational Foundation)

- Website: <https://www.usief.org.in/> (<https://www.usief.org.in/>).
- Email: info@usief.org.in
- Location: New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad

US Embassy/Consulates in India

- New Delhi: <https://in.usembassy.gov/> (<https://in.usembassy.gov/>).
- Mumbai: <https://mumbai.usconsulate.gov/> (<https://mumbai.usconsulate.gov/>).
- Chennai: <https://chennai.usconsulate.gov/> (<https://chennai.usconsulate.gov/>).
- Hyderabad: <https://hyderabad.usconsulate.gov/> (<https://hyderabad.usconsulate.gov/>).

Application Documents

2026-2027 Cycle Resources:

- Fulbright-Nehru Master's Application Instructions
- Fulbright-Nehru Postdoctoral Research Instructions
- Official Fellowship Flyers and Brochures

- FAQ Documents

Preparation Resources

English Language Proficiency:

- TOEFL iBT: www.ets.org/toefl (<http://www.ets.org/toefl>)
- IELTS: www.ielts.org (<http://www.ielts.org>)

Graduate School Preparation:

- GRE: www.ets.org/gre (<http://www.ets.org/gre>) (if required by US university)
- University websites for program requirements

General Information:

- EducationUSA: <https://www.educationusa.state.gov/> (<https://www.educationusa.state.gov/>)
 - Study in USA guides and resources
 - Previous Fulbright Scholar testimonials and blogs
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9. Tips for Strong Application

Statement of Purpose

✓ Clear articulation of academic/professional goals ✓ Specific description of proposed research or study ✓ How US education fits into career trajectory ✓ Commitment to return and contribute to India ✓ Well-structured, error-free writing

Recommendations

✓ Choose recommenders who know your work well ✓ Provide them detailed information about fellowship ✓ Allow minimum 4 weeks for letter preparation ✓ Recommend academic references over professional (if possible) ✓ Follow-up to ensure timely submission

Overall Application

✓ Highlight unique perspective and experiences ✓ Connect past achievements to future goals ✓ Demonstrate leadership and community engagement ✓ Show awareness of field-specific developments ✓ Proofread multiple times for errors

10. Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can I apply for multiple fellowships simultaneously? A: Yes, but you must inform USIEF. If selected for multiple, you can accept only one.

Q: What is the selection success rate? A: Highly competitive; acceptance rates typically 10-15% depending on fellowship type and field.

Q: Do I need work experience for Master's fellowship? A: Generally no, but recent graduates with strong academics are preferred.

Q: Can I choose my own US university? A: Yes, but you must have an acceptance letter from a US institution for Master's fellowships.

Q: What happens after the fellowship ends? A: Fellows are expected to return to India and apply their learning in professional roles.

Q: Is there financial support for dependents? A: Generally no; fellowships are for individual fellows only.

Q: Can I extend the fellowship? A: Extensions may be possible in exceptional circumstances; apply through USIEF.

11. Important Reminders

△ **Start Early:** Begin preparing 6-8 months before the application deadline

△ **Gather Documents:** Collect all required certificates and transcripts in advance

△ **Learn English:** Ensure strong English proficiency; consider TOEFL/IELTS if needed

△ **Research US Universities:** Identify programs matching your academic interests

△ **Strong Recommenders:** Build relationships with faculty/professionals who can write compelling letters

△ **Follow Instructions:** Read all guidelines carefully and follow formatting requirements

△ **Authenticity:** Be genuine in your application; selection committees value authenticity

△ **Check USIEF Regularly:** Visit [usief.org.in](https://www.usief.org.in) for updates, new announcements, and cycle-specific information

Contact Information

USIEF Headquarters (New Delhi)

- Address: 1 Shanti Path, New Delhi 110021, India
- Phone: +91-11-4169 9000
- Email: info@usief.org.in
- Website: <https://www.usief.org.in/> (<https://www.usief.org.in/>)

USIEF Regional Centers:

- Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Bangalore (contact details on website)

Last Updated: December 2, 2025

Disclaimer: This document provides general information about Fulbright-Nehru Fellowships. For official, detailed, and current information, always refer to the USIEF website (usief.org.in) and official fellowship guidelines. Eligibility criteria, deadlines, and fellowship components may change; verify before applying.

Good luck with your Fulbright-Nehru Fellowship application!