

# Frequently Asked Questions: Scholarships and Fellowships

Updated November 2024

## **What is the difference between a scholarship and a fellowship?**

The terms are often used interchangeably to describe a grant (or any money) awarded to a student for an academic purpose or project. *Scholarships* refer to grants that support undergraduate study. *Fellowships* refer to grants that support post-baccalaureate study or projects that may be pursued outside the normal curriculum. Fellowships are typically awarded based on academic merit rather than financial need. All scholarships and fellowships are grants. Scholarships and fellowships do not need to be repaid.

## **Who is eligible to apply?**

In our Scholarships and Fellowships Database we include opportunities for currently enrolled sophomores, juniors, seniors and alumni. Search for scholarships and fellowships listed by your current year in school. For example, if you are a sophomore, you'd be applying for a scholarship to support your junior year. The awards listed for seniors support teaching, research or graduate study after your PLU graduation. These are also referred to as *post-graduate fellowships*.

Recent graduates can apply for most post-graduate fellowships. If you think you might apply for a fellowship after graduation, you should discuss this possibility with your faculty advisors before you leave campus.

Most awards listed in the database are open only to U.S. citizens or permanent residents, but some fellowships invite non-U.S. citizens to apply.

## **What sort of academic record do I need to apply? What are some typical selection criteria?**

Some scholarships and fellowships specify minimum GPA requirements, but there is no universal minimum GPA requirement.

A good GPA is rarely the only selection factor. Many competitions also value the types of learning experiences that we support at PLU, including leadership, community service, service learning, research, and study away.

Be sure to carefully read the requirements for each scholarship or fellowship in order to better understand your eligibility.

## **Can I apply for more than one scholarship or fellowship? Will it hurt my chance of winning others?**

You can apply for multiple awards at the same time. Having previously been awarded another grant, or even having applied for the same scholarship in the previous year, will not hurt your chances.

Consider that each application is significantly different and some may require more time and effort than others.

## **What is an institutional endorsement?**

Some fellowships either limit the number of applicants a school can nominate, or they ask the school to carefully review the student applicants. An institutional endorsement means that a PLU fellowship applicant is submitting their application, administered through Scholarships and Fellowships, Office of the Provost, with the official approval of the university.

To be considered for an institutional endorsement, a PLU student or graduate should submit a complete draft of the application (typically not including letters of recommendation) by the Scholarships and Fellowships Office deadline. The university's deadline is referred to as the internal deadline, while the official or national deadline is set by the scholarship or fellowship foundation. The earlier internal deadline provides adequate time for faculty advisors and the Scholarships and Fellowships Office to review the applicant's materials and for students to revise their application materials.

## **What is the difference between a resume and a curriculum vitae?**

While a resume summarizes your background and experiences in order to demonstrate your ability to do well in a specific position, a curriculum vitae (CV or vita) is a more detailed document that focuses on your academic training and experiences in order to demonstrate your potential as a scholar or researcher. A vita is used if you're applying for an academic position; a resume is used if you're applying for a non-academic position in the public or private sector.

Resumes are usually no more than one page in length. Resumes include the following information:

- Name and Contact Information
- Education
- Work Experience and Work Skills

A vita maybe several pages long and will include the following information:

- Name and Contact Information
- Areas of academic interest
- Education
- Grants, Honors and Awards

- Publications and Presentations
- Employment and Experience
- Scholarly or Professional Memberships

### **How far in advance of the deadlines do I need to begin the application process?**

We recommend that you begin the application process several months in advance of the internal and national deadlines, to allow time for introspection and revision throughout the application process.

Certain fellowships, such as the Fulbright Study/Research Grants, recommend that you start even earlier in order to establish institutional connections and affiliations in a host country. It is never too early to set up an appointment to discuss your interests with your faculty advisor or with the Scholarships and Fellowships coordinator.

### **How much time is involved in applying for a scholarship or fellowship?**

Applying for one or more award requires a significant investment of time and energy. People who spend very little time on their application do not do well in these competitions. Creating a quality application takes time.

### **How do I get started on the application process?**

Browse this site and the Scholarships and Fellowships Database to find a scholarship or fellowship that matches your interests and ambitions.