

Specific Considerations for Improving Scholarship & Fellowship Applications

Personal Career Statement:

The personal career statement should include future career interests. Scholarships and fellowships are open to students pursuing degrees outside of nuclear engineering, so make sure your career interests align with DOE-NE mission areas as identified in the solicitation. If you have a career goal (e.g., to conduct nuclear fission energy-related research at a national laboratory), do not just briefly mention it at the end of the essay—it should be a main focus of the essay.

Program Eligibility:

This essay ties your program of study to the DOE-NE mission. It is not enough to assume that, because you are in a nuclear engineering program, your course of study automatically fits into the DOE-NE mission. As part of the Federal government, DOE-NE awards are structured for students who are sincerely interested and committed to the nuclear fission energy field of study. Please keep in mind that medical physics and isotopes, fusion, nuclear forensics, or environmental management topics are not part of the DOE-NE mission.

References:

Request references from individuals who know you in a professional capacity and are aware of your work and ability. Preferably, seek references from individuals who are currently or have very recently interacted with you in a professional setting (school, internships, research, etc.) and who know you well. DOE-NE understands that references can span across longer periods of time—for example, if you had a summer internship at a national laboratory in the past but more than a year ago. It is not appropriate to use family members or other students as references, even if they hold prominent positions at national laboratories or universities. For fellowship applicants, it is strongly suggested that you seek a reference from your thesis advisor or intended thesis advisor (for those beginning a graduate program).

Research Essays (fellowships):

A proposed or previous research essay should not be just a submission of an abstract, nor should you simply copy/paste papers to which you contributed. These essays should be clear, written by the applicant, and reflect your own original work, experiences, and proposed research plans. For beginning graduate students, discuss with the faculty who will advise you about proposed research—sometimes letters of reference talk more in detail about future research than the proposed research essay!

DOE-NE understands that previous undergraduate research/internship/employment opportunities may not be related to your proposed or current graduate work, but pay close attention to the solicitation and the topics identified as not being part of the DOE-NE mission. Keep application essays focused on your current subject and how previous experiences help you perform your current research and complete

your graduate degree in a nuclear fission energy-related field. DOE-NE is driven by targeted research outcomes for mission-relevant nuclear topics, and must ensure that Fellows will pursue a career in nuclear energy fields relevant to DOE-NE interests.