



Fulbright New Zealand Graduate Award FAQs

Am I eligible for an award?

Fulbright New Zealand Graduate Awards are for New Zealand citizens who will have completed the equivalent of four years of full time tertiary study and obtained a bachelor's degree (but not hold a doctoral degree) by the time they embark for the US. New Zealanders who are joint citizens of the US or already resident there are not eligible to apply. Citizens of other countries may be eligible to apply for the Fulbright programme through their home country – see <http://foreign.fulbrightonline.org> for links to other Fulbright commissions. Please check the full eligibility criteria on our website carefully before you begin an application.

When should I apply?

You should apply for a Fulbright New Zealand Graduate Award the year before you want to go to the US. For most students, this means applying on 1 August to commence study 12 months later, at the beginning of the next American academic year. It is not necessary to have applied to American universities before applying for a Fulbright award.

Which award should I apply for?

Fulbright New Zealand offers a range of Graduate Awards in different fields of study, which are detailed on our website. You should apply for the award most applicable to your proposed course of study in the US. Fulbright New Zealand General Graduate Awards are for applicants who do not fit into any of our subject-specific awards.

How do I apply?

You must fill out an online application and supply additional documents as detailed on our website, all by the application deadline. Applications are then shortlisted for interview by a selection committee in Wellington.

What are the selection criteria?

Selections are based on academic excellence, leadership potential and the ability of candidates to act as a cultural ambassador for New Zealand. We are looking for applicants who will make the most of a Fulbright exchange, personally as well as academically.

How good do my grades have to be?

Academic excellence is just one criteria of selection. Your grades do not need to be perfect, but to be competitive should average at least B+.

What will I receive?

Fulbright New Zealand Graduate Awards consist of a cash payment towards the costs of study in the US (generally for one year), plus a return airfare and basic health insurance cover while in the US. Costs of study and living vary widely between cities, universities and courses, so the

Fulbright award may not cover all of your costs. That said, the prestige of the Fulbright programme generally helps our grantees to secure additional funding from US institutions.

Where can I study?

Fulbright New Zealand Graduate Awards are for study at any US institution of the grantee's choice. Alternatively, our American partner organisation IIE offers a placement service to help you choose and apply to colleges most suited to your course of study.

What can I study?

It is up to you which you study on a Fulbright New Zealand Graduate Award. Some winners use their Fulbright award to complete the first year of a Masters degree or a doctorate (and many grantees stay on to complete those qualifications in the US). You may also use the award to undertake independent research, especially towards a New Zealand qualification such as a doctorate. Fulbright New Zealand Graduate Awards are not for post-doctoral study - holders of doctorate degrees should instead refer to our range of Scholar Awards.

How long can I stay?

You must stay a minimum of six months. Although most Fulbright New Zealand Graduate Awards are intended for one year of study, you may stay on a visa sponsored by the Fulbright programme for up to five years of study, after which you will need to transfer to a different visa (eg. one sponsored by a university). In addition, at the end of your studies you may stay for a period of practical work experience (called "academic training") of up to 18 months, but no longer than your original academic programme.

Are there any conditions attached to the award?

Fulbright New Zealand Graduate Award grantees travel to the US on a J1 exchange visitor visa. One of the requirements of this visa is a Two Year Foreign Residency Requirement that the grantee return to New Zealand for a two year period before they can apply for a permanent visa to live or work in the US. This will not inhibit you from visiting the US on a short-term visa for tourism or business during your homestay period.

Can I take my family?

Spouses and children under the age of 21 can accompany a Fulbright grantee to the US on special exchange visas, at the grantee's expense. Spouses and children are entitled to study in the US, and may apply for a work permit separate to their visa (which does not itself allow them to work).

Where can I find out more information?

The Scholarships Office of your university may be able to provide general information about scholarships and studying abroad, and current Fulbright grantees or alumni from your university (especially recent ones) can let you know about their own experiences as an applicant and grantee. However, for the most comprehensive and up-to-date information about Fulbright New Zealand and our range of New Zealand Graduate Awards, please visit our website or contact Ron Mitchell, Graduate Awards Programme Manager:
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www.fulbright.org.nz