



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 study at tertiary level (NZQF Level 4 or above) and obtained a bachelor's degree, but not yet 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 during the year before the beginning of the academic year in which you want to go to the US. This means applying 12-15 months before 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 – see www.fulbright.org.nz/awards/nzgraduate. 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 often helps our grantees to secure additional funding from US institutions.

Where can I study?

Fulbright New Zealand Graduate Awards are for study at any accredited 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 what you study on a Fulbright New Zealand Graduate Award. Some grant recipients use their Fulbright award to complete the first year of a Masters degree or 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 experience/academic training of up to 18 months, but no longer than your original academic programme.

Are there any conditions attached to the award?

Fulbright grantees must travel to the US on an Exchange Visitor (J) visa. A requirement of this visa is that you must return to New Zealand for a cumulative total of two years at the end of your exchange before becoming eligible to apply to live in the US. This home-country residency requirement is in keeping with the philosophy of the Fulbright exchange programme, that you return to New Zealand to share your experiences. 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 our range of Fulbright New Zealand Graduate Awards, please visit our website at www.fulbright.org.nz or contact our Graduate Awards Programme Manager, Kara Wood: kara@fulbright.org.nz / (04) 494 1504