

# **THE BOREN FELLOWSHIP FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS** **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

The Boren Fellowship is an initiative of the National Security Education Program (NSEP) and offers up to \$25,000 for language training, research, and cultural immersion in areas critical to U.S. interests but underrepresented in study abroad. Eligible countries are in Africa, Asia, Central & Eastern Europe, Eurasia, Latin America, and the Middle East. In addition, Boren Fellowships can provide limited funding for domestic language study that will supplement the overseas component. The maximum award for a combined overseas and domestic program is \$30,000. Please review the budget guidelines for more information.

Boren Fellows can clearly articulate links between their study of less commonly taught languages (such as Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, or Swahili), their academic and career goals, and U.S. national security. NSEP defines national security in broad terms to include not only protecting and promoting American wellbeing, but also addressing global problems: sustainable development, environmental degradation, global disease and hunger, population growth and migration, and economic competitiveness.

In exchange for funding, Boren Fellows commit to working for at least one year after graduation for the federal government. Fellowships are a minimum of 12 weeks and a maximum of one year studying overseas. Boren Fellowship applicants design their own study plans and may combine language study with study, research, or internships. Study of a foreign language appropriate to the identified country or region must be an integral part of each application proposal.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

To be considered for nomination, a student must:

- be a U.S. citizen
- be either matriculated in or applying to a graduate degree at a U.S. college or university located in the United States. Boren Fellows must remain matriculated in a graduate program throughout the fellowship and may not graduate until the fellowship has ended
- plan a program overseas that meets the standards of the home institution and is outside of the United States, Western Europe, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand

## **SELECTION**

Regional review panels and a national selection panel, made up of faculty members and administrators from across American colleges and universities, designate finalists to the NSEP office. Students with a strong academic and leadership background are encouraged to apply. Competitive applicants demonstrate commitment to language study and national security.

Dr. John McPeak - [jomcpeak@maxwell.syr.edu](mailto:jomcpeak@maxwell.syr.edu) is the SU faculty representative for the Boren Fellowship.

## **APPLICATION**

Application components include:

- the online application form
- two essays
- three recommendation letters
- official transcript(s)

## **BRIEF TIMELINE**

Late August: application available online

November 12, 2020: initial interest meeting via Zoom (register for the event here:

<https://www.emailmeform.com/builder/form/J1fj65YI8O63fu0> )

January 13, 2021: internal deadline for Syracuse University review

January 27, 2021, 5pm EST: National Boren Fellowship deadline

## **HOW TO APPLY**

Go to the Boren Awards [website](#) and click on the “Online Application” link. Register as a new user. Be sure to review the [application instructions](#) provided on the website. All components of the application are completed online.

## **DESIGNING A STUDY PLAN**

The Boren Fellowship does not design or recommend a study plan for you. Study plans must incorporate serious language study, but may also include coursework, research, or academic internships. Consult the following steps that Boren recommends when designing your study plan:

### **Outline Your Study Plan**

- Decide which type of overseas study plan works best for you. All Boren Fellowship applicants must include a serious language component in their proposals. Applicants can focus entirely on linguistic and cultural immersion or they can combine it with additional academic coursework, research (either Master’s or Ph.D. level), and/or an academic internship. You should design a project based on your own academic interests.
- Decide whether you would like to apply for domestic funding. Boren Fellowships can provide limited funding for domestic language study that will supplement the overseas component.
- Consider how your Boren Fellowship will complement your overall graduate curriculum and help you to meet your personal and professional goals.
- Map out your plan of study. Emphasize the dates you will be studying, where that study will occur, and when the study program will end.
- Consider how your proposed study plan and your selected region, language, and culture are important to U.S. national security.

### **Investigate Your Study Plan**

- Discuss plans with your academic and research advisors, other professors specializing in your region and discipline, and students who have completed similar programs.
- The Syracuse Abroad office may be able to provide you with information about organized study programs overseas and country specific characteristics.
- Consult IIEPassport, an online study abroad directory with more than 7,000 study abroad programs worldwide.

- Contact the U.S. embassy or consulate in your country of interest. Many will have educational affairs officers who have information about universities in their countries.

### **Finalize Your Study Plan**

- Contact the academic institutions, research institutes, non-governmental organizations, and/or individuals you would like to work with during your Boren Fellowship. If you are selected as a Boren Fellow, you will need a letter of overseas affiliation. Start making those contacts and, if you are applying for a study abroad program, submit necessary application materials.
- Make sure that you have a feasible study plan. If your plan includes a research component, make sure that you have the support of your research advisor at your home institution and that you are planning to spend enough time overseas to complete your research.

## **LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION**

The Boren Fellowship application requires three letters of recommendation. Your recommenders should be academic and able to comment on your academic, linguistic, and personal preparation for the study abroad program. Your recommenders must speak to the feasibility of your proposed study plan and the appropriateness of your study plan in their letters. Recommenders should also speak to your national security argument and your career interests. Plan to provide your recommenders with clear and thorough information about your study plan.

If your proposed plan includes a research component, at least one of your letters must come from a research advisor at your graduate institution. If you are not currently enrolled in a graduate program, you are nonetheless encouraged to include a letter from a professor at your future graduate program to speak to the feasibility of your proposal.

Share your essay drafts with your recommenders, and refer them to the Boren recommendation letter guidelines on the CFSA website: <http://nationalscholarships.syr.edu/faculty-resources/guide-to-recommendation-letters/>

## **ESSAY GUIDELINES**

The essays are the most important part of the application. Essay one has a maximum length of 800 words; essay two has a maximum length of 1000 words. Essays should be single spaced, except when spaces separate paragraphs.

Be clear about your language level. Since the Boren Fellowships focus on less commonly studied languages, it is ok if you have never studied the language before, but you should do all that you can do now to at least familiarize yourself with the language. Be specific about your language acquisition goals. How much will you learn and how will you use it?

Readers will not have access to your resume, so be sure you share all of your relevant experience. This should include your academic background and extracurricular/volunteer/leadership activities. Be specific and detailed.

Be specific and clear about your career goals, and how the Boren Award would help you achieve them. You should also address your plans to fulfill the NSEP Service Requirement. What type of position or agency are you interested in working for?

Use your essays to demonstrate your maturity and your adaptability, flexibility, and resourcefulness.

### **Essay One:**

Explain the significance of your proposed country, region, and language to U.S. national security. The Boren Awards recognize a broad definition of national security, but you should make a specific, detailed, and focused argument.

### **Essay Two:**

Please discuss the following points in an integrated essay, giving equal attention to each point. You can discuss the points in any order:

- Think about a previous experience that has led to growth or a personal quality. Reflect upon it and describe how it will assist you in preparing to spend significant time overseas studying a critical foreign language and culture and, if applicable, conducting your proposed research.
- Explain how the country and language you selected will help you achieve your career goals, including your plans to fulfill the federal service requirement. Be specific. If appropriate, you may also include relevant past academic, extracurricular, volunteer, internship, and professional experiences.
- As you will be committing to working for the federal government for at least one year, describe what makes you interested in federal service and what you will bring as a leader in the federal workforce.

### **Study Plan:**

All Boren Fellowship applicants will have a maximum of 250 words for each segment of their proposed overseas program, as well as alternate-country programs to respond to the following prompt:

Describe the basic structure of your proposed Boren-funded study, with particular focus on language acquisition.

Boren Fellowships applicants in traditional language programs should also describe curricular and extracurricular immersion. Program segments that involve language immersion as part of research, internships, or academic study should characterize how the language will be used, and whether supplemental language courses or tutoring will take place concurrently.

### **Research Abstract & Methodology:**

For Fellows conducting research, you are encouraged to include your research abstract and an explanation of your methodology.

## **BUDGET GUIDELINES**

Maximum award amounts for **overseas funding** are:

- \$12,500 for 12-24 weeks
- \$25,000 for 25-52 weeks

In addition, Boren Fellowships can provide limited funding for domestic language study that will supplement the overseas component. The maximum award for a combined overseas and domestic program is \$30,000.

Award amounts are based on the amount needed as stated on the budget up to the maximum award amount for each term. Please note that underestimating your expenses will not make your application more competitive. Be as accurate as possible as increases to award amounts are not guaranteed. All amounts should be given in U.S. dollars.

The cost of obtaining a passport and visa is not covered by the Boren Fellowship. The cost of vaccinations, expenses for dependents, and personal travel expenses are also not covered by the Fellowship.

The following should be in your budget:

- **Tuition and Fees while Overseas**
  - Home Institution (maximum \$5,000): Indicate minimum tuition costs to maintain matriculation at U.S. university while overseas, if applicable.
  - Other Entities: List tuition costs for organized programs, tuition costs to foreign institutions, and the costs of language tutors, if applicable. Do NOT include any research expenses in this line item (including assistants or translators).
  - Room and Board (costs for recreation and entertainment are not allowed).
- **Books and Research Expenses**
  - Books: Provide explanation if above \$500.
  - Research Expenses: Maximum \$3,000 (itemize and explain). May include research assistants, translators, or supplies. The Boren Fellowship will only cover expendable supplies. Items such as computers and computer equipment, cameras, scanners, and audio recorders cannot be covered by the fellowship.
- **Travel Expenses**
  - Visa and Visa Related Travel: Visa and necessary visa-related travel costs may be included in your budget. Please note that vaccination costs and medical expenses are not covered by the Boren Fellowship.
  - Airfare: One international round-trip economy class ticket on a U.S. airline from the United States to your destination. This ticket must be in compliance with the Fly America Act or the cost of the ticket will be subtracted from your award amount. Please note that the round-trip itinerary must be purchased before receipt of the first check from Boren. If you are unable to purchase a flight for your actual return date, you will still need to purchase a return ticket. You may need to pay a change fee to change your ticket. You should budget accordingly.
  - Local transportation: Indicate mode, distance, destination, and costs involved in surface transportation for specific trips.
  - Baggage fees are allowed up to 2 bags.
- **Insurance**
  - All Boren Fellows are required to have insurance that covers health, accident, repatriation of remains, and medical and non-medical evacuation (including war, civil unrest, and natural disaster). Insurance policies vary greatly in cost, but some overseas program/study abroad programs include this insurance as part of program fees. In addition, you may be able to purchase this insurance from your home institution.

- **Other Expenses**
  - Itemize and explain. May not include research expenses.

## DOMESTIC FUNDING

The Boren Fellowships offer up to \$12,000 for summer intensive language study. This funding is limited to the summer immediately before the applicant's proposed program overseas. Therefore, in order to be eligible for domestic funding, the applicant must have an overseas program that starts no later than September 30.

- Applicants may receive domestic funding for study at their own institution or other U.S. academic institutions.
- Domestic funding must be for the primary language the applicant plans to study while overseas.
- Domestic funding for tutors, commercial services, and/or self-study guides will not be provided.
- Domestic funding is for language classes only. Boren will not fund other academic coursework, internships, or research conducted in the U.S.
- Applicants planning on taking language classes at their home university or in their local area are eligible to receive funding for tuition and fees only. Applicants planning domestic summer intensive language study in a different geographic area will also be eligible for room and board funding. The Boren Fellowship does not cover travel or relocation expenses associated with domestic funding.

## CONTACT

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