

APPLYING FOR THE MELLON MAYS UNDERGRADUATE FELLOWSHIP

PLEASE READ BEFORE BEGINNING YOUR ONLINE APPLICATION:

Each applicant will be required to submit two essays as a part of the application process. We encourage you to complete these essays before you begin your application as you cannot save your progress on the Google Form. Please proofread and edit your documents, share drafts with your advisors and professors, and take this opportunity to visit your campus writing centers.

Essay 1: A two to three page essay in which you articulate and discuss your most pressing intellectual interest. Include in your essay a discussion of a person, class, book, theory or experience that had a significant effect on the way you think about this area of interest. Outline a research project that might come out of this intellectual interest.

Essay 2: A one to two page essay in which you explain why you are interested in becoming a Mellon fellow. You should discuss your future educational and career plans.

REQUESTING FACULTY RECOMMENDATIONS

Faculty recommendations provide insight to the search committee about who you are as a student and researcher. Recommendations will carry much more weight if they are from professors or instructors who can address your ability to conduct research. Faculty can write a stronger recommendation for you if they understand your research interests and your motivations for wanting to complete a research experience, so feel free to spend time discussing your ideas and research interests. Below are a few tips to assist you when determining who will be your reference and the steps you should take to assist your references:

Who is an appropriate reference?

Ask for recommendations from someone who knows your academic work and can comment specifically on your performance and/or research capabilities, particularly in the fields of study related to your desired research area.

Advisors and program directors can comment on your overall achievement. Generally, they cannot evaluate you in your field of study, unless they have also taught you directly. If you have

a recommendation from someone like this, you should also have a strong academic reference that can speak to your research potential and knowledge in the field to supplement it.

How to secure a reference:

Early in the application process, email or visit your references during office hours, and schedule an appointment to discuss your plans to apply for MMUF and your graduate school goals.

Give the instructions to your reference of when and to whom their letter should be sent. Plan ahead and be sure to give your references 2-3 weeks' notice, at minimum.

Provide a list of any relevant experience and areas of interest (and/or your resume if you have one) to your reference. Remind them about a project or paper you completed in their class. What grade did you make? Was there something about that project that stands out?

More Information about the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship:

Mellon seeks to diversify the professoriate, especially in the following fields: Anthropology, Area/Cultural/Ethnic/Gender Studies, Art History, Classics, Geography, English, Media Studies, Musicology, Foreign Language and Literature, History, Linguistics, Performance Studies (theoretical focus), Philosophy and Political Theory, Religious Studies, Sociology, and Theater (non-performance focus). You do not necessarily need to be a major now in any of these fields in order to apply; you just need to be interested in graduate school in one of them.

The following criteria are weighed in selecting participants for MMUF:

- Strong academic promise/standing (minimum 3.0 GPA);
- Interest in pursuing an academic career in an eligible field;
- Potential for serving as a mentor and teacher for a wide variety of students;
- Race and ethnicity, in relation to their underrepresentation in designated fields of study;
- Demonstrated commitment to the goals of MMUF;
- Availability for, and commitment to, full and enthusiastic participation in all aspects of the MMUF program, including attendance at conferences and meetings;
- Status as a U.S. citizen or permanent resident