

# Focus on: Letters of Affiliation (Research Grant ONLY)

Hello!

I hope you had a great July 4 weekend! As you move forward with your Fulbright planning, one item to keep in mind is that if you are pursuing a full grant, you should try to obtain a letter of affiliation from the individual or group you will be working with in your proposed country. In some cases, you might have more than one affiliation and you may include more than one letter.



## Fulbright website affiliation information:

“A majority of Fulbrighters undertaking study/research grants will affiliate with universities, although in some countries it is possible to affiliate with other types of organizations, such as research institutes or government ministries. Affiliation requirements vary by country, so before starting the application you should note the specific requirements for the proposed host country. The affiliation letter should come from the institution/individual in the host country with whom you are proposing to work. It should be printed on official letterhead and should be signed by the author. Email correspondence is not acceptable.”

## Keep in mind:

- ETA applicants do not need letters of affiliation.
- Sample letters are available for viewing in OSSP.
- Generally speaking, the affiliation or host country sponsor is an institution, organization, and/or individual that will provide the grantee in in-country support or supervision during the grant period. Affiliations can include universities, laboratories, libraries, non-governmental organizations, and others.
- The type of affiliation and nature of the relationship between the grantee and the affiliation varies significantly depending on the country, the grantee’s degree level, and the proposed project (e.g. whether it is primarily study or research),
- Some country committees will assist applicants with finding an affiliation. Some countries require affiliation with an academic institution. Check the country description for details.
- In some cases, particularly in the arts, the affiliation may be a person such as a writer, musician, or artist or an arts organization or foundation.
- The letter could be in the form of an invitation from the host institution/organization/individual indicating research support or allowing access to facilities to the applicant; or, it could be a letter indicating that the admitting institution provides courses in the applicant’s areas of study.
- **There are no specific requirements for the letter of support from the host institution. Every affiliation relationship will be different depending upon the candidate’s project.**
- The letters should state how the supervisor/host institution will help the applicant to facilitate the project (i.e., what resources will be offered, what kind of supervision will be given, etc.).
- Some applicants propose to do independent research, so these letters of support are more crucial to establishing the feasibility of a project.
- **The letter should be submitted electronically with your final application by the October 14 deadline.**

## Warning:

- In the U.S., we have become accustomed to rapid response, especially in electronic communication. Many cultures *do not* have this expectation, and many people do not enjoy the reliable connectivity or easy access to the Internet that we do. Therefore, be advised that you may not receive a response to your inquiries as quickly as you might hope.
- Applicants are advised to begin their search for an affiliation as early as possible.
- In general, letters of support on institutional letterhead sent with the application are preferred. **(copies of emails are not accepted)**
- There are special circumstances for **applicants pursuing structured degrees:**
  - If you plan is to complete a master's or other degree or to attend a structured degree program, make sure that you apply for admission to the host university **by their deadline**. Do *not* wait for the Fulbright decision to come through or you may be too late in gaining admission into your chosen university.

- You do not need to submit the letter of admission with the application. You can submit the acceptance letter whenever you receive it, but an Fulbright award offer would be contingent upon you receiving placement at a university.
- If you are not planning to matriculate at a university but intend to audit/enroll in courses at local university, then a support/ affiliation letter should be included with your application. Any documentation of support that you can obtain from a potential host will help to make your application more competitive. The letter will also demonstrate that your project proposal is feasible, as it will show that you have in-country support.

### **IDENTIFYING A POTENTIAL AFFILIATION**

Here are some resources to consult as you try to identify a potential affiliation:

- Faculty, mentors and advisors in your field
- International students or faculty on your campus
- Fulbright Professors in the U.S or US Fulbright Scholars who had grants to the host country. Directories are available at ([http://www.cies.org/vs\\_scholars/vs\\_dir.htm](http://www.cies.org/vs_scholars/vs_dir.htm));
- Internet searches can help you find professors at potential host institutions with your interests, or organizations in the host country that work with issues related to your topic.
- Articles on your topic of interest may lead you to experts to contact in your chosen country.

### **General advice:**

- Do not hesitate to contact professors from other universities both in the U.S. and in your prospective country, especially if your proposal fits the professor's expertise. They may also be able to refer you to others with expertise in your topic.
- Committed research and perseverance will go a long way in establishing a host affiliation. Once you find a possible host, make contact by sending an introductory letter or email. Keep in mind that many schools are closed during the summer months, so be patient about responses.
- IIE refers to these letters synonymously as: letters of support, letters of affiliation, letters of invitation and/or letters of admission.

Please contact me at [bpowers@uic.edu](mailto:bpowers@uic.edu) to follow up with your questions about affiliations or the Fulbright more broadly.

Best wishes,  
Beth