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One-on-one writing consultations, workshops, and retreats for student writers; consultations and conversations about writing pedagogy, courses, and curricula for educators

TACKLING THE FULBRIGHT APPLICATION PERSONAL STATEMENT

The personal statement plays a vital role in your Fulbright application. It's your opportunity to show them an aspect of yourself that you can't easily show on other aspects of your application package. Make sure your personal statement conveys what you want it to say about you, not what you think the selection committee wants you to say. After all, you can't control for any reader's particular taste or sensibility, so write something that is unique and authentic to you and your experiences.

Generally, these are aspects that should come through in your personal statement of the Fulbright application:

- Why you would be a good American ambassador
- Explanation of what kind of America (type of diversity) you would bring with you
- Why you chose a particular country
- How this opportunity fits into the bigger plan you have for yourself
- How your project aligns with the Fulbright mission statement
- A sense of adaptability, maturity, and flexibility

Good writing comes from authenticity. If you're not sure how to get to a place of authenticity, try sitting with these brainstorming prompts:

- Pick a characteristic: adaptability, maturity, or flexibility. What have you experienced lately that has helped you grow in one of these areas?
- Name the most prominent social identities and life experiences that you believe define you. How do the intersections of these things shape the perspective with which you see the world?
- Think about the country you want to go to. What draws you to this country? What could you learn by living and learning there? How will this particular place help you grow as a person?
- What do you envision for yourself 10 years from now. If you were to get this opportunity, how do you think it would help you get to this vision?
- How does your project align with the Fulbright mission statement?
- Why do you need to be in that country to do research?

You don't have to answer all of these questions—just the ones that resonate with you. By answering these questions honestly, a theme might emerge for you to explore in a personal statement. Remember that a good personal statement takes a few drafts, so give yourself the time to not only explore and reflect on your intentions for this opportunity, but also time to revise and refine the writing.



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