

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: BOREN FELLOWSHIPS

1. What is the Boren Fellowship?

The Boren Fellowships is an initiative of the National Security Education Program that provides funding for U.S. graduate students (Master's or Ph.D. level) to study languages in world regions critical to U.S. interests. You can go abroad for language study, academic study, research abroad, academic internship, or any combination of the above.

2. What countries can I travel to on the Boren Fellowship?

You may apply to study abroad in Africa, Asia, Central & Eastern Europe, Eurasia, Latin America, and the Middle East. Students cannot apply to Western Europe, Canada, Australia, or New Zealand. Multi-country comparative studies are available but must be well justified.

3. What expenses does the Boren Fellowship cover?

The Boren Fellowship covers expenses associated with overseas study including tuition, living expenses, books, supplies, equipment, travel expenses, and insurance. In addition, the Boren Fellowship can provide limited funding for domestic language study. Please see the budget guidelines for more information.

Budget Guidelines: <https://www.borenawards.org/fellowships/how-apply/boren-fellowship-budget-guidelines>

4. Must I be an enrolled graduate student to receive a Boren Fellowship?

You must be enrolled at an accredited U.S. institution of higher education located within the United States, and be in the process of pursuing a graduate degree at the time the award begins. Boren Fellows must remain enrolled in their graduate programs for the duration of the fellowship. The option of registering for independent study or directed reading credits during the semester(s)/quarter(s) of absence from the home institution is available. Please consult with your academic advisor or campus representative about your options.

5. Am I eligible apply for a Boren Fellowship if I have applied to graduate school but have not yet been accepted?

If you are in the process of applying to graduate schools, you are eligible to apply for a Boren Fellowship. In your Boren Fellowship application, you will need to indicate the graduate programs to which you have applied. If you are selected for a fellowship, the award will be contingent upon your acceptance into a graduate program, and you will be required to provide IIE with proof of enrollment before any Boren Fellowship funds are disbursed. For more information on eligibility, please see the following link:

<https://www.borenawards.org/fellowships/boren-fellowship-eligibility>

6. How can I make my application more competitive?

Work with your academic advisors, mentors, campus representative, the UCLA Graduate Writing Center and read Boren's "What Makes a Competitive Application" and "Applicant Resources" pages for helpful information. See links below.

What Makes a Competitive Application:

<https://www.borenawards.org/fellowships/thinking-applying/boren-fellowship-what-makes-competitive-application>

Boren Applicant Resources:

<https://www.borenawards.org/student-resources/resources>

UCLA Graduate Writing Center:

<http://gsrc.ucla.edu/gwc/>

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7. Is a foreign language component required for all Boren Fellows?

Yes. Foreign language study is a key element in all Boren proposals. The language you choose should be appropriate to the country in which you plan to study. Boren is committed to both new language acquisition and improvement of language competence.

8. Is there a language proficiency requirement for Boren Fellowship applicants?

For most languages, there are no language proficiency requirements. Your study program should be appropriate for your language ability. In the cases of Spanish and French, there are language proficiency requirements; click the below link for a full explanation.

Language Requirements:

<https://www.borenawards.org/fellowships/thinking-applying/boren-fellowship-what-languages-can-i-study>

9. If my proposed country, language, and/or field of study are not on the preferred list, should I still apply?

We encourage applications for study in non-preferred countries, languages, and fields of study when the applicant can make a compelling argument that such increased understanding and appreciation of that particular country, language, and/or field of study contributes to U.S. national security and the goals of the Boren Fellowship.

10. If I cannot go overseas for 6 months or longer, should I still apply?

Yes. While the Boren Fellowships have a preference for 6 months or longer overseas, applicants can apply with a minimum stay of 12 weeks. Those in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) fields are especially encouraged to apply. In your application, explain why you have chosen to go overseas for a shorter period, whether it is because of your class sequence, participation in a particular sport, familial responsibilities, or other compelling reasons.

11. May I apply to study in a country with a State Department Travel Warning?

Yes. You may study in a country with a current State Department Travel Warning; however, if you decide to do so, you must be willing to sign a waiver. In certain countries, further restrictions may apply, including possible outright prohibition on using the Boren Fellowship in a particular country. In such cases, IIE will work with the Fellow to find an alternate program.

State Department Travel Warnings:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html>

12. Must I study overseas?

Yes. All Boren Fellowships must include an overseas component. The duration may be as short as 12 weeks or as long as one year.

13. Can I use my Boren Fellowship to work or participate in an internship overseas?

You can participate in an internship if it is an integrated and meaningful component of your academic program. However, you may not accept paid employment while abroad. In addition, you cannot intern with U.S. or foreign government agencies.

14. May I apply for a Boren Fellowship before I have a letter of overseas affiliation?

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Yes, we recognize that it may be difficult to receive a letter of overseas affiliation by the time of application; therefore, the letter is not required at that time. Applicants should use the essays to describe their overseas plans. Applicants who do have a letter from an academic institution, research institute, or non-governmental organization should include it in the application.

15. I currently work for the federal government. Can I apply for a Boren Fellowship?

Yes. Current employees of the federal government may apply for a Boren Fellowship. Recipients of the award, however, may not be employees of a federal agency during their Boren-funded study period. A Fellow who was previously an employee of the federal government must provide proof that he or she is separated from that agency. In addition, ROTC students, military reservists, and members of the National Guard must confirm de-activated status during the Boren-funded study period.

16. What is the National Security Education Program (NSEP) service requirement?

Boren Fellows represent a vital pool of highly motivated individuals who wish to work in the federal national security arena. Boren Fellows must make a commitment to work in the federal government for a minimum of one year.

NESP Service Requirement:

<https://www.borenawards.org/about-us/nsep-service-requirement-boren-scholars-and-fellows>

17. May I receive more than one NSEP award?

Yes. Graduate students who received Boren Scholarships as undergraduates are encouraged to apply for the Boren Fellowship, especially if they plan to continue studying the same language.

18. Can Boren Fellowships be combined with funding from other sources?

You can receive additional awards provided that there is no duplication of support in requested budget line-items. Boren Fellows who receive scholarship funding to support their study abroad must notify IIE about their award(s). In some cases, reduced financial need as a result of increased support may impact the amount of the Boren Fellowship.