



# **Scholarships & Fellowships 101**

University of Northern Colorado

U-Engage

Office of Undergraduate  
Research & Creative Works

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# What is the difference between scholarships and fellowships?



IRS Definition:

A scholarship is generally an amount paid or allowed to a student at an educational institution for the purpose of study.

A fellowship grant is generally an amount paid or allowed to an individual for the purpose of study or research.

# More about Fellowships...

Fellowships are funded, short-term opportunities, that can last from a few weeks to a few years.

They can be focused on professional, academic and/or personal development.

Fellowships are sponsored by a specific association, organization, institution, or government which sets the eligibility requirements.

## **Fellowships are designed to support various activities:**

- Research, either independent or as part of a larger project
- Developing new community-based organizations
- Training within a specific field
- Opportunities to further explore a particular field of work
- Graduate Study

## **Benefits to participating in a fellowship:**

- Fellowships can provide opportunities for cultural immersion, expanding both professional and personal networks, experiential learning, and professional development.
- Process of applying is beneficial:
  - help clarify goals and interests
  - articulate plans for the future,
  - improve presentation and interview skills



# Where to find National Scholarships and Fellowships



## University Websites:

- <https://www.unco.edu/honors/connect/external-scholarships.aspx>
- <https://grad.ucla.edu/funding/#/>
- <https://www.northwestern.edu/fellowships/find-fellowships/fellowship-finder/>

## National Collegiate Honors Council:

- <https://www.nchchonors.org/students/awards-scholarships/national-scholarships>

## Office of Global Engagement

- Works with students on study abroad related opportunities, including Fulbright.

## National resources

- ProFellow is a free database of more than 2,300 funding awards: <https://www.profellow.com/>
- The National McNair Scholars Program website has a page for funding sources: <https://mcnairscholars.com/funding/>
- Colorado Graduate Grant: <https://www.unigo.com/scholarships/by-state/colorado-scholarships/colorado-graduate-grant>

# Being competitive

1. Do things that make you competitive
2. **Winning awards leads to more awards.** Start with campus award programs at an early stage to then be able to list those for larger awards.
3. In other words – Start EARLY or start NOW.

*The best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago or today.*

## Do these things:

1. Research or other scholarly or creative endeavors
2. Internships and jobs that are relevant
3. Leadership activities
4. Apply for UNC level awards
5. Be active in some way in your community – join a board or volunteer for a weekend library activity.

## Show BOTH:

- **Depth in one area (often related to your professional goals – such as research or internships)** and
- **Breadth as leader and/or an active role model/active in your community**



# Examples of competitive activities

1. Peer mentor or Tutor or Teaching Assistant
2. Community organization board or regular volunteer
3. Campus organization officer who develops a program or activity
4. Student government
5. Student Honors Council
6. Internship that is relevant or impactful
7. Paid job that helps you to develop relevant skills or allows you to be a leader.
8. Develop your own research project or creative project  
Even better if under an Honors Program or McNair Scholars umbrella to provide legitimacy and higher level of recognition
9. Apply for Fall Symposium
10. Participate in Student Showcase – EVERY YEAR
11. Be a room facilitator for Student Showcase
12. Attend National or Regional conferences as a presenter – NCUR, Rocky Mtn Psychology conference
13. Apply for awards (Phelps C.A.P., Honors Awards)



# Timelines



- Look **now** (whenever "now" is) for opportunities you might be able to apply for in the future.
- **Create a customized timeline for each opportunity** – working backwards from final due date to when you would be working on obtaining recommendations, writing your statements or proposals etc.
  - You must plan to upload all your materials **at least** 1-2 days BEFORE the deadline, never ON deadline.
- You often need to set up an account, start the process much further in advance, possibly a couple months in advance.
- **Triple check the list of requirements for the opportunity.**
  - For instance: often an official transcript may be required to be sent directly by the institution. You must request this far in advance!
- Check if an institutional endorsement is required. If yes, you must request that through U-Engage office at least 2 months in advance, normally.
- Some opportunities only allow 1 or a small number of student applications from that institution to be submitted. You may be required to compete at the institutional level first.

# The Application

1. Find programs that you feel might fit.
2. READ the program requirements and deadlines.
3. Start months in advance – the earlier the better (3-6 months).
4. Write a clear and compelling proposal (or statement) – making sure to hit **all the required information**.
5. Update your CV with EVERYTHING that makes you competitive. Do not be shy.
  - List all presentations, research experiences, leadership, outside of class activities, internships or intern-like activities, community connections.
  - However, carefully read about any page limit to the CV. If it is limited, create a strong list of your most important achievements.
6. Recruit an outside proofreader who is meticulous. All grammar must be correct, and **you must not have any typos in ANY of your documents**.
7. Obtain strong letters of recommendation that are tailored specifically to the opportunity.
8. You may need an institutional nomination – work with U-Engage for that at least 1-3 months in advance
9. If you are selected as a finalist – do mock interviews and brush up on best practices for fellowship interviews.
10. Obtain outside assistance with choosing your apparel for the interview and any other required functions.
  - UNC has professional wear you can borrow, and ARC or Goodwill are often excellent places to find inexpensive quality professional clothing.





# Writing the proposal

Download the application required components and track them with a spreadsheet or other system to track.

Work on your personal statement or proposal at least one - two months in advance. You should have a draft at least 2 weeks prior to deadline.

- <https://cssh.northeastern.edu/17-fellowship-proposal-tips/>
- Recruit an editor to review your writing at a detailed level.
  1. **Avoid: slang, informal language, contractions, vague words.**
  2. **Be concrete, specific, use evidence and examples. “Upgrade” the language using editors to help.**
- Provide your statement or proposal to all recommenders.
- You must sell yourself and your work, but you must do so using professional language. Do not be shy about talking about your achievements, and you must also connect yourself to the future work you will be doing that applies to the opportunity.
- Determine all components that must be included – and use SUB-TITLES to show that you have covered that area.
- If the fellowship is for research, you may need IRB approval and/or letters from partners or sites indicating their partnership with you or approval for the research at their site.

Applications may require a list of accomplishments in various categories and may allow upload of evidence/documents.

- Keep copies of important documents that provide evidence of your accomplishments.
- Keep a running list of all accomplishments (in addition to including them in your CV), with ALL pertinent details listed.



# More about Recommendations

- Cultivate 3-4 or even 5 individuals – faculty and administrators, sometimes supervisors, definitely research supervisors/mentors.
- Understand title, position, faculty tenure status
  - **What is the difference between full Professor and Assistant Professor?**
- Mix of individuals who know you from different areas.
- NOT just an instructor in a class you received a high grade – that will not be enough.
- Therefore, you need to be doing additional work, extra projects, Honors, McNair, leadership positions, department club officer positions.
- Sometimes can (and sometimes should ) include an internship supervisor.
- Recommenders for highly competitive national fellowships should be willing to provide you or your fellowship advisor with a draft of the recommendation in advance for edits.



# UNC Undergraduate Scholarships



UNCO Academic Works: <https://unco.academicworks.com/>

Large UNC Scholarships:

- [Phelps C.A.P. Awards](#)
- [Reisher Scholars](#)
- [Stryker Leadership Program](#)
- [President's Leadership Program](#)

Deadline moved back to March 15.

# Campus based Scholar Programs and Award Program



## Scholar Programs

- [President's Leadership Program](#) – includes significant scholarship
  - Deadline will be March 15
- [Honors Program](#) – Provides support for capstone and interdisciplinary work
  - Deadline is April 1
- [McNair Scholars Research Program](#) – Provides support for applying to Graduate School and some stipend support
  - Rolling deadline – priority by Feb. 15
- [Summer Undergraduate Research Mentorship Program](#)
- [Academic Year Undergraduate Mentorship Program](#)

## Award programs

- [Office of Undergraduate Research & Creative Works Grants](#)
  - Deadline is Feb. 1 for Spring 2024. Also Summer grants.

# Questions?

Contact Us:

**U-Engage**

Undergraduate Academic Engagement

[www.unco.edu/academic-engagement](http://www.unco.edu/academic-engagement)

Loree Crow, Executive Director

Krista Caufman, Director McNair Scholars

Brooke Welsh, Office of Undergraduate Research &  
Creative Works

QR Code for Workshop  
Attendance:

