

2024 Reviewer Guide - Ford Foundation Fellowships Dissertation & Postdoctoral Fellowships

The Ford Foundation Fellowships are designed to increase the diversity of the nation's college and university faculties by increasing their ethnic and racial diversity, maximize the educational benefits of diversity, and increase the number of professors who can and will use diversity as a resource for enriching the education of all students.

Reviewers of Ford Fellowship applications are asked to:

- **Review Assignments for Conflicts of Interest and Confirm with Fellowships Office** **no later than one week from receipt of assignments.**
 - The Fellowships Office will send an e-mail with a unique link to access assignments.
 - See page 2 of this Guide for identifying and communicating conflicts of interest.
- **Read and Adhere to this Reviewer Guide** prior to and while rating applications.
- **Complete Assigned Reviews** **no later than February 22, 2024**, including entering comments justifying your scoring.
- **Access the Panel's Deliberation Roster to Prepare for the Virtual Panel Meeting** (late February to mid-March).
 - The Fellowships Office will provide detailed instructions for these procedures.
- **Attend the Virtual Panel Meeting** (mid-March 2024) to meet as a panel to establish a rank order of applicants based on the panel's deliberation.

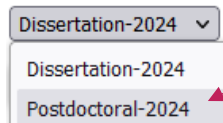
Table of Contents

- [Communicating Conflicts of Interest](#)
- [Fellowship Award Scope](#)
- [Applicant Eligibility](#)
- [Application Components](#)
- [Self-Paced Review of Assigned Application Files](#)
- [Rating & Scoring Assigned Applications](#)
- [Completing All Reads Prior to Virtual Panel Meeting](#) (NEW for 2024)
- [Panel Deliberation Rosters & Virtual Panel Meeting](#) (NEW for 2024)
- [Confidentiality of Applications](#)

COMMUNICATING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Reviewers who identify a conflict of interest (COI) with any of the applications in their panel will no longer be able to participate in the review and all their applications will be assigned to an Alternate reviewer.

Reviewers should check **EACH file at BOTH the Dissertation and Postdoctoral levels** to determine if they believe there is a COI for any assignments (see p. 2 for criteria). Dissertation assignments are listed by default, and reviewers should select Postdoctoral from the dropdown on the Ford Rater Home page to access those assignments:



Dissertation-2024 ▼

Dissertation-2024

Postdoctoral-2024

Once all files have been checked, **reviewers must send** a confirmation e-mail to FellowshipsOffice@nas.edu with **one** of the following statements:

1. I confirm that I have checked all applications assigned to me at both the Dissertation and Postdoctoral levels, and I do not have any potentially disqualifying COI's with any of these applications.
2. I have identified a potential COI with [applicant name] because [reason].

Criteria for Potentially Disqualifying Conflicts of Interest (COI)

As a general rule **reviewers should not evaluate an application** if one or more of the following are true:

- The reviewer is personally acquainted with the applicant.
- The reviewer has written a letter of recommendation for the applicant.
- The applicant has attended or is planning to attend the reviewer's current or future institution.

Based on the conflict of interest policy of the National Science Foundation (http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/gpg/nsf04_23/appb.jsp) a reviewer **cannot** review an application if:

- the reviewer, the reviewer's spouse, minor child, or business partner,
- the organization where the reviewer is employed, has an arrangement for future employment or is negotiating for employment, or
- the organization where the reviewer is an officer, director, trustee, or partner

has a financial interest in the outcome of the proposal.

A reviewer may be barred from reviewing a proposal if it involves individuals with whom they have a personal relationship, such as a close relative, current or former collaborator, or former thesis student/advisor.

A disqualifying conflict may exist, if a proposal involves an institution or other entity with which the potential reviewer has a connection. Such potentially disqualifying connections include:

- a reviewer's recent former employer,
- an organization in which the reviewer is an active participant;
- an institution at which the reviewer is currently enrolled as a student, or at which they serve as a visiting committee member, or
- an entity with which the reviewer has or seeks some other business or financial relationship (including receipt of an honorarium).

FELLOWSHIP AWARD SCOPE

Dissertation Fellowships provide one year of support for individuals working to complete a research-based, dissertation-required Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) or Doctor of Science (Sc.D.) degree that will prepare them for the pursuit of a career in academic teaching or research. Practice-oriented degree programs are not eligible for support. The fellowship is intended to support the **final year** of writing and defense of the dissertation.

Postdoctoral Fellowships provide one year of support for individuals engaged in postdoctoral study after the attainment of the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) or Doctor of Science (Sc.D.) degree.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

The application system checks for eligibility based on data entered by the applicant, and applications are further reviewed by Fellowships Office staff. While we do not anticipate eligibility issues during the review, reviewers should communicate any eligibility concerns to FellowshipsOffice@nas.edu as soon as possible.

All applicants to the 2024 competition must:

- Confirm holding a previous Ford Foundation Fellowship;
- Regardless of race, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, or sexual orientation, confirm being one of the following:
 - U.S. citizen or U.S. national
 - U.S. permanent resident (holder of a Permanent Resident Card)
 - Individual granted deferred action status under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program,¹ Indigenous individual exercising rights associated with the Jay Treaty of 1794, individual granted Temporary Protected Status, asylee, or refugee
- Demonstrate an intent to pursue a career that includes teaching and research at a U.S. institution of higher education; and
- Provide evidence of superior academic achievement (such as grade point average, class rank, honors, or other designations).

In addition, **Dissertation applicants** must:

- Be enrolled in a research-based Ph.D. or Sc.D. program at a not-for-profit U.S. institution of higher education;
- Expect to complete the Ph.D. or Sc.D. degree in a period of 9-12 months during the 2024-2025 academic year;
- Have completed all departmental and institutional requirements for their degree, except for writing and defense of the dissertation by December 12, 2023;
- Upload a signed Verification of Doctoral Status Form (PDF, 92 KB) by the January 9, 2023 Supplementary Materials deadline; and
- Not have already earned a prior doctoral degree at any time, in any field.

Postdoctoral applicants must have completed all departmental and institutional requirements for their degree, including successful defense of the dissertation, **no earlier than December 12, 2016 and no later than December 12, 2023** in a research-based field from a U.S. institution of higher education.

APPLICATION COMPONENTS

Dissertation and Postdoctoral applications have common and unique components:

- Profile Information
- Education History – a listing of degrees awarded and sought
- Honors and Awards – academic honors and awards
- Employment History – a listing of employment
- Personal Statement – a description of the applicant's background and experience and commitment to the goals of the Ford Foundation Fellowships
- Statement of Previous Research and Scholarly Productivity
- Abstract of Dissertation
- Proposed Plan
- Annotated Bibliography

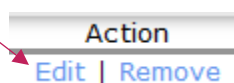
- Letters of Recommendation (3-5 letters)
- Host Commitment Letter (Postdoctoral applicants only)
- Transcripts (Ph.D. only for Postdoctoral applicants)
- Verification of Doctoral Degree Status Form (all Dissertation applicants; if required for Postdoctoral applicants)

SELF-PACED REVIEW OF ASSIGNED APPLICATION FILES

On the **Ford Rater Home** page, reviewers can update their Panelist Profile information and access their application assignments, the Panelist Roster, this Guide, Comment Examples, Applicant Instructions, and the Reviewer Orientation slides.

Accessing the Applicant Rating Form

Reviewers should select the **Edit** link under the Action column to open an applicant's rating form.



The rating form contains links to each section of the application:

- Academic Achievement
- Personal Statement
- Scholarly Productivity
- Proposed Plan
- Letters of Recommendation
- Overall Assessment of the Fellowship Application

By selecting the links on the rating form, reviewers may access the various parts of the application, including Education History, Honors and Awards, Employment History, Transcripts, Verification Forms (if applicable), the Personal Statement, the Statement of Scholarly Productivity (including publications and presentations) as well as the Dissertation Abstract, the Proposed Plan, an Annotated Bibliography, Letters of Recommendation, and a Host Commitment Letter (Postdoctoral only).

Reviewers may also view the application as one PDF document from the **View Entire Application** link in the top right corner of the rating form. Transcript files and verification forms can be viewed under the **View Transcripts** dropdown in the top right corner of the rating form.

Communicating Application Irregularities

Reviewers who discover a missing file or are unable to view an application document should notify FellowshipsOffice@nas.edu and await further instructions from the Fellowships Office regarding how to proceed with the review of the application.

Reviewers should notify FellowshipsOffice@nas.edu of any suspected plagiarism or fraud of any kind.

The Fellowships Office will make the final determination regarding an applicant's eligibility to continue in the review.

RATING & SCORING ASSIGNED APPLICATIONS

NOTE: It is expected that it will take an average of 15-20 minutes to read, score, and prepare comments for applications; however, some applications may take more time. Comments entered are extremely useful when discussing applications during panel deliberations and determining awardees.

Assessing Individual Components of the Application

Reviewers should assess each element of the application for quality. Sliders are provided, on a scale ranging from Excellent to Fair, to indicate how the applicant rates in each section of the application. If the criterion in any category is not applicable to the application or was not provided (e.g. the applicant has not entered employment history), reviewers may select N/A. These assessments provide feedback to the applicant regarding the relative quality of the application *but are not tied to the numerical score assigned*.

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	N/A
Academic Achievement (View: Academic Achievement or Transcripts)					
Education History (degrees, transcripts)					
Honors and Awards					
Employment History (if applicable)					

Entering Comments

The rating form includes two comment boxes: **Comments for the Applicant** in which reviewers can provide constructive feedback to the applicant and **Remarks** in which reviewers can enter comments that may be referred to during panel deliberations. These latter comments will not be shared with applicants, and the identity of individual reviewers and scores assigned will not be disclosed to applicants.

Comments for Applicant (Provide feedback that will be shared with the applicant.): (0/2000 characters)

Remarks (For your reference only; available throughout deliberations, but will never be shared with applicant.): (0/2000 characters)

Applicants may view the constructive comments from reviewers after they are notified of the outcome of their application. **Constructive** feedback should be provided for all applicants to support the assigned rating.

Reviewers **should refrain** from making comments that:

- Are overly harsh or critical
- Identify a particular letter writer, adviser, or host
- Address weaknesses of a particular university or department
- Suggest that the fellowship limits eligibility to underrepresented minority (URM) groups
- Mention the applicant's race/ethnicity/gender
- Indicate the reviewer has prior knowledge of the applicant or any application materials beyond what was provided to review
- Indicate the reviewer is not qualified to review the application

Additional tips and templates/examples of constructive comments can be found [HERE](#) and are also linked in the rater system.

Scoring an Application

After reading and rating an application and entering comments, reviewers should assign a score to the application based on their assessment of the applicant's overall ability to address the goals of the Ford Foundation Fellowships.

Each application will be read by the same five reviewers. Reviewers should assign a **unique score** to each individual application (e.g., 1.60, 2.40, 3.75) to establish their own rank order among all the applications read at the Dissertation or Postdoctoral level. **The same score should NOT be given to more than one application within the same level.** Scoring is on a five-point scale:

1.00 = MOST COMPETITIVE score

5.00 = LEAST COMPETITIVE score

Factors to Consider in Scoring

Based on the selection criteria for Ford Foundation Fellowships, *a more competitive score should be assigned to applicants who demonstrate:*

- Evidence of superior academic achievement
- Degree of promise of continuing achievement as scholars and teachers
- Capacity to respond in pedagogically productive ways to the learning needs of students from diverse backgrounds
- Sustained personal engagement with communities that are underrepresented in the academy and an ability to bring this asset to learning, teaching, and scholarship at the college and university level
- Likelihood of using the diversity of human experience as an educational resource in teaching and scholarship
- If applicable, how experience as a member of an underrepresented group through discrimination, inspiration, resilience, etc. may inform participation in the fellowship

Reviewers may assign a lower score to applications that do not address elements of the selection criteria or do not clearly describe the applicant's plans and career goals.

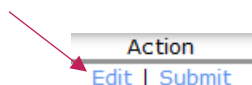
Saving, Making Edits to the Rating Form, and Submitting Reviews

Reviewers are advised to **complete the submission step** only **after** all applications have been reviewed and saved. Once a review has been submitted, reviewers will no longer be able to edit the review; however, they may contact FellowshipsOffice@nas.edu to request that the evaluation be unsubmitted on their behalf.

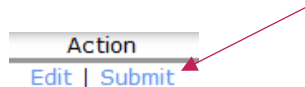
- To **save** the rating form *without submitting the review*:
 - Ensure the **Pending – Evaluation is Incomplete** radio button is selected at the bottom of the rating form.
 - Select the **Save and Go Back** button.

The screenshot shows a form titled "Evaluation Disposition:". It has two main sections: "Score:" and "Disposition:". The "Score:" section has a dropdown menu currently showing "1.50". The "Disposition:" section has three radio button options: "Pending - Evaluation is Incomplete" (which is selected), "Cannot Evaluate - Return to Fellowships Office Staff" (with an external link icon), and "Submit - Evaluation is Complete". Below these options are two buttons: "Save and Go Back" and "Cancel and Go Back". Red arrows point from the text in the list above to the "Pending" radio button and the "Save and Go Back" button.

- To **edit** the rating form: On the Ford Rater Home page, select the **Edit** link under the Action column:



- To **submit** the rating form: On the Ford Rater Home page, select **Submit** under the Action column:



COMPLETING ALL READS PRIOR TO VIRTUAL PANEL MEETING (NEW FOR 2024)

To ensure that all applications receive all five readings prior to the virtual panel meeting, ***all reviews must be submitted before Thursday, February 22, 2024 at 11:59 PM.***

After the review submission deadline has passed, the Fellowships Office will determine if there are any applications that still require readings due to a reviewer's conflict of interest or unexpected last-minute cancellation. Alternate reviewers may be assigned applications to evaluate leading up to the virtual meeting and will be contacted if their service is needed.

PANEL DELIBERATION ROSTERS & PREPARING FOR VIRTUAL PANEL MEETING (NEW FOR 2024)

Accessing Panel Deliberation Rosters

Once all applications have received five readings, the Fellowships Office will close the review phase and open the deliberation phase during which reviewers will have access to the Dissertation and Postdoctoral Deliberation Rosters ahead of the virtual panel meeting. **Reviewers will not be able to change scores after the deliberation phase has opened.**

The Fellowships Office will contact all reviewers once all readings are complete and will provide instructions for the next steps for viewing the Deliberation Roster and preparing for the virtual panel meeting.

Virtual Panel Meeting

The purpose of the virtual panel meeting will be for all reviewers who read the applications to determine which applicants should be offered awards. Reviewers will be provided detailed instructions on these procedures when the panel's Deliberation Rosters are made available to them.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF APPLICATIONS

Information contained in applicant files evaluated prior to or during the panel meeting must be kept in strictest confidence. Please shred any printed applications. In order to maintain consistency in the evaluation, do not look up applicants, their programs, or research online. Only the submitted application materials should be considered. Cooperation in keeping all results of the review entirely confidential is appreciated and expected.