How to Obtain a Fulbright Letter of Affiliation
Institute for Global Studies, University of Delaware

What is a letter of affiliation and which Fulbright grant requires them?
Research Fulbrights require letters of invitation from an in-country host institution. The letter must be from an individual and must be signed on university or organization letterhead. Emails are not acceptable. Requirements for which organizations or universities may serve as affiliations vary from country to country. Before obtaining a letter of affiliation, it is very important to check the country-specific requirements.

Affiliation Time Frame
Start EARLY. Some affiliations will involve multiple points of contact and may take months to obtain, especially if you are contacting potential letter-writers during summer months.

How to Find an Individual to Write a Letter of Affiliation
Talk to current or former professors about your research project, and see if they can recommend colleagues abroad who are doing similar work. If they don’t know anyone personally, ask for recommendations for other UD faculty to talk to.

If you have studied abroad, contact individuals or professors you met in that country. Ask for their suggestions for who might be able to provide an affiliation letter.

Look up publications on your proposed topic. Contact authors in the country where you want to conduct your research and ask if they will sponsor you, or if they have suggestions about who you can contact.

Search the Fulbright Scholar Directory for visiting international scholars from your proposed host country who have received a Fulbright grant to the U.S. They may be willing to serve as a resource or connect you with other scholars in their home country.

Consult with the Institute for Global Studies staff. They may be able to connect you with faculty who have similar research interests or connections in your proposed host country.

What is the best way to contact a possible affiliate?
Email is the quickest and most direct way to contact possible affiliates.

If a faculty or staff member referred you, see if they would be willing to send an email to their contact, cc’ing you as a way to make the introduction.

What should you say in the initial email?
If you haven’t been introduced, start by explaining how you got their contact information. Refer to their published research, connecting their research interests with yours. Clearly explain who you are. Include brief information about your major, graduation year and relevant research or employment.

Tell them you are applying for a Fulbright grant to spend a year conducting research in their country. Specify the time frame. Include the link to the country-specific page. Give a succinct explanation of your proposed project (2-3 sentences at most). Ask if they would be willing to support your project, and describe the type of resources and assistance you are seeking. (Lab space, library access, computer access, for example). Be as
specific as possible. If you are not sure what you need from them, say that you would welcome any assistance that they could provide.

Be clear that you are not asking for financial support since you will be funded by a Fulbright Grant. However, the affiliation may be able to provide funding for research costs over and above the Fulbright stipend.

**Beyond the Initial Email**

Responses can take a long time. Be patient and polite, but do be persistent. Don’t let weeks go by without following up.

If you have multiple possible affiliates, pursue all of them simultaneously-- promising leads sometimes can turn into dead ends. If you get multiple offers, you can graciously decline one of them, or perhaps work with several affiliates.

Once your affiliate agrees to assist you, thank them and explain that you will need a letter of affiliation (details below). The letter must be uploaded with your application no later than September 15th. It’s best to give your affiliate a deadline of September 1 or even earlier in order to ensure on-time submission.

Provide a copy of the most recent draft of your Statement of Grant Purpose.

Letters of affiliation are NOT confidential. It is fine to give the letter writer details about your research that they can include in their letter, or even suggested text of an actual letter that they can use. Providing a strong, well-written sample letter that the writer can edit makes their task easier and increases the likelihood that the letter is accurate and will enhance your Fulbright application.

**Guidelines for the letter of affiliation**

Fulbright research grantees are required to provide a signed letter as proof that they have secured an affiliation. [https://us.fulbrightonline.org/applicants/application-tips/academic](https://us.fulbrightonline.org/applicants/application-tips/academic) IIE specifies that the letter should:

Come from an individual at the proposed institution in the host country where you are proposing to conduct your research. The letter must:

- Be written in or translated into English
- Be printed on official letterhead
- Be signed by the author
- Indicate the author’s willingness to work with you on the intended project
- Speak to the feasibility and merit of your proposal
- Indicate any additional resources that the affiliate will provide in support

An email is not acceptable. However, a signed letter on letterhead that has been scanned and emailed to the applicant as a PDF is fine. A faxed copy of the letter is also acceptable.

Letters written in a foreign language must be translated into English (by the applicant or someone else). Both the original letters and the English-language translations must be uploaded into the application.
This document was adapted from *Tips for Obtaining a Fulbright Letter of Affiliation* from Virginia Commonwealth University.