



Frequently asked questions about Mortar Board Fellowships

Who can apply for a Mortar Board Fellowship?

- Current or former collegiate members of Mortar Board who have not previously received a Mortar Board fellowship are eligible to apply.
- A member of any age may apply for a Mortar Board Fellowship for a postbaccalaureate degree in any field.

What time frame do Mortar Board Fellowships cover?

All awards are for one academic year only and must be used beginning in the academic year starting after the award of the fellowship. Fellowships may not be used for graduate degree studies already completed at the time of award or that begin later than six months after the fellowship is awarded.

What is the amount awarded?

The amount of money awarded depends on the current resources of the Mortar Board National Foundation. In 2024, nine fellowships ranging from \$4,000 to \$5,000 each were awarded.

I haven't decided what school I am going to attend yet. Can I still apply without having made a final decision on the school I'm attending?

Yes. You need not have decided which school you will be attending for graduate work. The Mortar Board Fellowship application includes a section to list all institutions to which you have applied.

I will be taking one or more gap years before continuing postbaccalaureate studies. Is there a time limit as to how far into the future I can start graduate school?

Yes. All awards are for one academic year only and must be used beginning in the academic year starting after the Fellowships are awarded. Fellowships may not be used for graduate studies already completed at the time of award or for graduate studies that begin later than six months after the Fellowship is awarded. Fellowships cannot be deferred and used at a later time.

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I previously applied for a Mortar Board Fellowship. May I apply again?

If you previously applied but **did not** receive a Mortar Board Fellowship, and you are still otherwise eligible, you may apply again.

Am I able to email my transcript myself and then send it to Mortar Board?

Applicants are required to provide a university transcript as part of the application process. While official transcripts are preferred, an unofficial transcript is also acceptable. Many institutions will provide a secure portal to access your official transcript **at no cost** to send to organizations that you designate. If your institution requires you to pay for an official copy of your transcript, you can submit an unofficial university transcript to upload. However, you or your institution may send a hard copy of the current transcript to:

*Mortar Board Fellowships
1200 Chambers Road
Suite 201
Columbus, OH 43212*

If you choose to send a hard copy of your transcript, please acknowledge that on your submitted application. *Note: An uploaded version is preferred.*

Should graduate school entrance exam scores, such as GRE, MCAT, GMAT, or LSAT be sent to the fellowship committee as additional evidence of academic achievement?

No. The Fellowship Selection Committee does not consider entrance exam scores, and you do not need to forward these.

Who should recommendations be from?

Two letters of recommendation must be from faculty or other people who can speak with authority about your ability to do graduate work in your chosen field and about your personal qualities and achievements. It will be helpful if one of your recommenders writes about your out-of-classroom experiences related to your degree objective and your leadership and service on campus and in the community.

Applicants will supply their names and information in the application form.

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May I supply more than two recommendations?

Only the first two recommendations received will be considered by the Mortar Board Fellowship Selection Committee. If you are uncertain if a person will be able to submit a recommendation by the March 15 deadline, you may wish to ask more than two recommenders to provide recommendations. Recommendations will be accepted in the order they are received.

One of the people I asked to submit a letter of recommendation prefers to send a hardcopy letter rather than complete the online recommendation form. Is this acceptable, and if so, where should the letter be sent?

While completion of the online recommendation form is preferred, we understand that some recommenders prefer to send hardcopy letters. Hardcopy letters should address the same information required in the online recommendation form, namely:

- Name and college/university of fellowship applicant.
- Name, title, institution or organization, email, and phone number of the person submitting the recommendation.
- The length of time the recommender has known the applicant.
- A description of the person's connection with the applicant.
- Rating the applicant on
 - Leadership in collegiate organizations,
 - Leadership in community organizations,
 - Mastery of and excitement for academic work, and
 - Promise for achievement in future academic endeavors.
- Any additional comments in support of the applicant.
- Signature of the person making the recommendation.

Recommendation letters may be emailed directly by the recommender to mortarboard@mortarboard.org or sent directly to:

*Mortar Board Fellowships
1200 Chambers Road
Suite 201
Columbus, OH 43212*

Recommendations received through the applicant will not be accepted. All recommendations must be received by Mortar Board on or before March 15.



I have letters of recommendation that were written in support of my graduate school applications. May I submit those letters as my recommendations as part of my Mortar Board Fellowship application?

Letters of recommendation prepared for another application may be submitted if:

- the recommendation letter is submitted directly by the recommender or their staff;
- the recommendation letter addresses the same information required in the online form for Mortar Board Fellowship recommendations; and
- the recommendation letter was written within the preceding nine months.

Does each recommender also have to write a formal letter of recommendation and send it in separately from the recommendation form?

No. Completion of the online recommendation form by two different recommenders is sufficient.

Will Mortar Board follow up with those whose recommendations are not in?

No. Applicants are responsible for following up to ensure recommendations and transcripts are submitted.

I inadvertently submitted an application or recommendation that contained an error. May I correct the error?

Yes – if it is before March 15. If you note an error in an application or recommendation, you may correct the error by completing and submitting a new form, then send an email to mortarboard@mortarboard.org that the earlier form should be discarded and replaced with the latest, correct form. Forms cannot be corrected after March 1.

Are members who applied for a Mortar Board Fellowship able to update their college acceptance portion of the application?

Before March 15, applicants may advise if they are accepted to graduate programs for which they were unsure or waitlisted. Email mortarboard@mortarboard.org with these updates before March 15. After March 15, changes to the graduate school acceptance status in the application cannot be made; however, Mortar Board will retain the information in your file and advise the final review committee as appropriate.

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There is not enough room to list all of my publications in the awards section of the application. May I submit an additional list?

If you would like all of your publications or other awards listed in your application packet, please email the list of additional information to mortarboard@mortarboard.org before March 15 to have those included in your application. No additional publications or awards can be listed in your application after March 15.

How can I check if my application materials have been submitted?

Every applicant is responsible for the completion of the three parts of the application. The National Office staff will not initiate calls or emails to advise you about parts that are missing or incomplete. Applicants will receive an email confirmation that the online application was received. You are invited to email mortarboard@mortarboard.org or call the Mortar Board National Office at (614) 488-4094 to determine the status of your application.

Who reviews Fellowship applications?

The Mortar Board Fellowship Selection Committee draws from the Mortar Board National Foundation Trustees and other experienced Mortar Board alumni to serve as application readers. Candidates will be judged on their academic record, recommendations, goals and objectives, excellence in leadership and service, and contribution/commitment to Mortar Board.

What information or materials are finalists required to submit?

Finalists are required to enter into an acceptance agreement that includes but is not limited to:

- providing the Mortar Board National Office with a copy of a letter of acceptance from the institution where you will matriculate in the fall;
- express thanks in written form to the Mortar Board donor whose generosity made the fellowship possible;
- participate in a cohort Zoom session with other Mortar Board Fellows;
- provide Mortar Board with a short, but detailed progress report reflecting on experiences and learning during the first term of study; and
- provide a copy of your official grade report.

Finalists will also be required to submit a photo, preferably a headshot, and at least 300 DPI for use in Mortar Board media releases and publications. Fellows are encouraged to attend the Candlelight Banquet and all programs at the Mortar Board National Conference.

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I have excellent credentials, leadership experience, and a strong track record of service; why was I not selected to receive a Mortar Board Fellowship?

As with other competitive honor society scholarships and fellowships, Mortar Board considers, in combination, applicants' grades, courses, research, unique experiences, campus leadership, community service, and reference letters. As Mortar Board members, all applicants enter the process as strong candidates. The number of applicants and mix of qualifications varies each year, and all applications are given full and careful consideration during our multi-level reviews. The Mortar Board National Foundation resources compel us to offer a limited number of Fellowships. You may contact mortarboard@mortarboard.org after the selection process is complete to arrange for feedback.