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## Fulbright and Foreign Language Preparation and Study (Research Grant & ETA)

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Fulbright offers many opportunities to study, research or teach in non-English speaking countries. That said, not everyone needs to be fluent in order to be a good candidate for a non-English speaking country. Check the individual pages for the countries of interest to you to see what they say about the language level they expect.

**The Fulbright seeks students who have the ability to carry out the project or teaching they are proposing.** In some cases proficiency will be essential, in other cases not, but in all cases, Fulbright seeks candidates who want to engage deeply with the culture and language learning is often a gateway to a cultural immersion experience in which you can be an effective ambassador of American culture and an active participant in the host country's culture. Take advantage of the opportunity to learn or refine your language skills as it will improve your Fulbright experience and give you useful cultural and linguistic tools in your future career.

Generally speaking:

1. Most countries would like visitors to learn some of the local language in order to interact more fully in society
2. Projects in which you will be interviewing or observing non-English speakers will usually require you to have a more advanced level of the language
3. Proposals in which you will be interacting primarily with people fluent in English (in labs, archives, etc.) may require less language proficiency.

### Fulbright Language Forms

There are two forms for candidates to fill out in relation to language.

- **Form 7: Language Self Evaluation.** If you will be completing the prerequisite language study after submission of the Fulbright application the proposed study must be detailed in Form 7.
- **Form 8: Foreign Language Evaluation.** Form 8 should be completed by a qualified language instructor or, for less commonly taught languages, a faculty member with knowledge of the language. The foreign language evaluator should comment on the desirability and need for additional language training in their report.

**To have access to Form 7: Language Background Report of the Fulbright application, you must answer 'Yes' to Preliminary Question #3 when you create your online application account.** Form seven allows you to describe your past experience learning the language and what your plans are to become more fluent in the language before you start the grant and while you are on the grant.

Form 8 is the Language Evaluation that an expert in the language fills out at your request. Many students are fortunate to have teachers who have taught them in the language recently and these are ideal people to fill out the form. They are asked to rate your ability in reading, writing, speaking and listening and to describe how they made the determination. Having taught you in a course recently is an acceptable means of assessment. If you have not studied the language recently or it is a language you learned at home or on a study abroad experience and courses in the language are not offered at UIC, *you can check in with OSSP staff about places where you might find an evaluator.* You may be able to find people on the faculty/staff at UIC or in the community who know the language. ***It is best to avoid having family members do the evaluation.*** The evaluator can select whatever method he/she deems appropriate to evaluate your skills; often you will be asked to read, discuss and write about a passage.

**Critical Language Enhancement Award (CLEA):** Several countries offer the opportunity to apply for a CLEA to supplement your language learning. This is an additional part of the Fulbright application and is not available for all languages. <http://www.us.fulbrightonline.org/critical-language-enhancement-awards>

CLEA may provide language study as part of an early arrival program in your chosen country or it may be part of a regular lesson plan throughout your time in the country. Please check each program's website for details.

**Learning the language prior to departing:** Many students are interested in going to countries where they don't speak the language. Learning some of the language prior to departing can help you prepare better linguistically and culturally to settle in and fully engage in your Fulbright experience.

**Ways you can engage in language study prior to departure:**

1. Take a course or join a group at UIC or at other area universities and community colleges.
2. Utilize online or DVD resources such as Open Culture (<http://www.openculture.com/freelanguagelessons>), LiveMocha (<http://livemocha.com/>), LingQ (<http://www.lingq.com/>), or Rosetta Stone
3. Start a language partnership with a foreign student at UIC
4. Find a community organization that offers lessons
5. If you need more detailed tips on getting started, just ask OSSP!



Fingers crossed,

Beth and Sheena