

Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Fellowship Competition 2007-08

CAMPUS DEADLINE: Extended to February 25th

Dear Jack Kent Cooke Fellowship Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in the Jack Kent Cooke Fellowship competition at Stanford. Please read the entire application packet *carefully*. You may also wish to consult the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation at <http://www.jackkentcookefoundation.org>

If you need further information, please contact Dr. Renee Courey at rcourey@stanford.edu.

If you are abroad, you can still compete; please contact Renee Courey.

Experience indicates that students who consult on their applications with our staff perform better in the competition. To schedule an appointment for application support, please use the web form at <http://vpue-fmpform1.stanford.edu/uar/advappts/fs.htm> and indicate that you'd like to speak with an advisor who has experience with this competition.

Eligibility: Fellows for the Graduate Scholarships are by nomination through Stanford only. Current Stanford seniors or alumni who have graduated in May 2003 or since, but who have not started graduate studies are eligible to apply. Applicants must have been accepted or waitlisted at an accredited university by April 30, 2008, and plan to start their graduate degree full-time in fall, 2008. Students must have a cumulative college GPA of 3.5 or better on a 4.0 scale, based on the inclusion of all college-level courses. Experience indicates that most Stanford nominees have a GPA of at least 3.6. Students must demonstrate un-met financial need, a will to succeed, leadership and public service, critical thinking ability, and appreciation for or participation in the arts and humanities.

Award: Fellows will receive up to \$50,000/year for up to six years to cover the tuition, living expenses, books, and fees of graduate work.

Application Procedures

1. This year, Stanford will use the Jack Kent Cooke online application system for submission of some materials to the campus competition. **By February 5th, register and submit to the online form:**

- Applicant Financial Information
- Online Application
- Identification of Recommenders (please note that letters must be uploaded by Tuesday, February 26th at the latest).

2. Work with your faculty mentors and UAR staff familiar with this competition to answer the essay questions, including your "Narrative Autobiography" as per application instructions.

3. Ask two faculty members who are on the Stanford Academic Council and who know you well to complete letters of recommendation. At least one should be from a professor in your major department. If you're an alumnus, you may request a letter from a non-Stanford recommender. Include their names on the online application and they will receive via email a web form that will allow them to upload their recommendation. Please warn them ahead of time to upload their letters as soon as possible. All letters must be received by Tuesday, February 26th for your application to be

considered.

4. Submit additional hard copy materials to Undergraduate Advising and Research, First Floor Sweet Hall by the deadline above, including:

- **Official College Transcript(s)** for **ALL** undergraduate coursework
one original for each institution attended **AND**
three legible copies
 - **Applicant Tax Forms**
two legible copies (no originals of tax forms required)
 - **Parent Financial Information Forms** – Parent Financial Information Forms are **required** regardless of age or independence status of the applicant.
one original signed by the applicant and both of his or her parents **AND**
one legible copy
 - **Parent Tax Forms**
two legible copies (no originals of tax forms required)
- * Applicants and/or parents **living abroad** and not filing US taxes in 2006, must complete the forms as best as possible and attach a statement (in English or a certified translation into English) from the employer(s) listing all income and benefits for the prior year.
- **Portfolio for Applicants in the Arts** – Required item for **all applicants in the arts**.
one original (no additional copies necessary)
- Applicants must send in copies of the following two items as they become available by May 5 via fax: 319-337-1204.**
- 6. Acceptance Letter from Graduate School(s)**
one legible copy
- 7. Financial Award information from Graduate School(s)**
one legible copy

5. A committee will review applications and select up to two nominees for the national competition. Nominees will re-submit a final version of the application, working closely with UAR staff to finalize materials. The UAR will send nominee applications to the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation on March 14, 2008. Winners will be notified in mid June.

Copies of applications by winners of this award are available for review in the UAR office only. If you can't visit the office, your UAR advisor will provide a detailed review of expectations for each question on the application.

We wish you good luck in the competition and hope you will find the application process a valuable and fulfilling experience.

Sincerely,

Renee Courey, Ph.D.
Undergraduate Advising and Research

ASKING FOR LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Scholarship selection committees depend heavily on recommendation letters to gain insight into applicants' personal strengths, weaknesses and accomplishments. This kind of information cannot be

readily gleaned from transcripts and test scores, so it is in your best interest to help your recommenders write the most accurate and detailed letters possible.

You should begin to cultivate close working relationships with faculty early in your undergraduate career. Once you've become acquainted with faculty members through coursework, research or other ways, consider stopping by their offices once a quarter to discuss your interests and to keep in touch. When the time comes, you need not feel shy about requesting a recommendation. All faculty members and graduate students had the same service done for them, and they regard this as a familiar process. Refer to the following guidelines for managing your letter requests:

- **Choose the people who know you best.** Many students wonder whether they should ask a “big name” professor who knows only their face and final grade or a less-known professor who knows them better? Letters by famous people or well-known scholars *only* carry more weight if the famous person knows you *well* and can write a substantial, convincing letter. The more detailed and personalized a letter is, the more likely it is to make a strong impression on a selection committee, so you should ask your instructors with the most extensive, personal knowledge of you and your work.
- **Ask early.** It is common courtesy to allow recommenders *at least* three weeks to prepare and submit their letters. We highly recommend involving them in the early stages of your application process, while you are deciding what to write about and how to present yourself in the application materials. Their insights will prove invaluable, and they will be well-informed of your interests when they write their recommendations. You should thus begin your request with a substantial conversation about your interests and goals, and then ask them if they can write a strong letter of recommendation. Most likely they will say yes. In some cases, however, the faculty member may say no or that he or she can only write a recommendation citing certain qualifiers or weaknesses. In this case, you should accept his/her judgment graciously and consider asking for more feedback about your goals and plan for study.
- **Once faculty have agreed to write your letters, provide them with copies of your application materials.** The following items will help them to write accurate and purposeful letters:
 - photocopies of key pages from the application brochure, describing the nature and purpose of the scholarship
 - a copy (or a draft) of your application essays, or a summary of your career and educational goals
 - a list of your activities (sports, organizations, leadership and volunteer positions, etc.)
 - a description of pertinent work or research experiences
 - a copy of your transcript
 - If a number of quarters have passed since you worked with a recommender, you should also provide her/him with a copy of your paper or class project.
- **Write out all submission instructions and deadlines.** There should be no question as to when and where to submit the finished letters. Provide properly addressed, typed and stamped envelopes.
- **Keep in touch with your recommenders.** After submitting your application, send recommenders a thank you note expressing your appreciation for their guidance and support. Update them on your progress throughout the stages of the competition and inform them whether you are selected for the award or not. Should you need a recommendation in the future, this kind of follow-up communication will continue to foster a close, positive relationship with your faculty sponsors.