

Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles
Application Materials, Fellowships, and Mentorship Programs

Application materials to think about soon

1. Curriculum Vitae (CV)
 - a. CVs are an academic version of a resumé
 - i. They aren't exactly the same as a resumé, though
 - b. Why to think about it now:
 - i. Attach your CV to emails when contacting potential advisors
 - c. General principles of CVs
 - i. Highlight the skills and experiences that make you a good candidate
 - ii. Keep it organized, concise, and easy to read
 - iii. Think carefully about formatting (fonts, headers, bullet points, bold, etc.)
 - d. For detailed advice on CVs, please see the separate handout
2. Recommendation letters
 - a. You will need 3-4 people to write letters when you apply to grad programs
 - b. Why to think about them now:
 - i. You may need time to solidify your connections with potential recommenders
 - c. Best people to ask
 - i. Professor(s) who can speak to your research experience (e.g., honors or master's thesis advisor, someone you worked for as a lab or field tech)
 - ii. Professor(s) who taught a small class where you really distinguished yourself
 - d. Less ideal, but possible if necessary:
 - i. A current or former work supervisor who is not a professor (especially good if it's something biology related, like a job at a science center, vet clinic, or wildlife rehabilitation center)
 - ii. Professors of other relevant classes you took (if the class had a ton of students, they may not know you well enough to write a strong letter)
 - iii. Postdoc or grad student you worked with (admissions committees don't put as much weight on these letters as on one from a professor)
 - e. For potential letter writers you know well, make sure you've been in touch recently
 - i. If not, maybe schedule a call/meeting to tell them about your grad school plans and to catch them up on your recent accomplishments
 - f. If there aren't three potential letter writers who know you well:
 - i. Can you build relationships in the few months before applications are due?



- ii. Should you consider a bridge program or a year as a research tech to cultivate new relationships?
- 3. GRE
 - a. The GRE is a standardized test; there is a GRE general test and GRE subject tests
 - b. Why to think about it now:
 - i. It may be offered only sporadically, and you need to make sure you can schedule it in time for applications
 - ii. You may need time to study/prepare
 - c. The general test costs \$220-\$230
 - d. Only some programs require it
 - i. Check your programs of interest, and don't sink your time and money into the GRE unless a program high on your list requires it
- 4. IELTS/TOEFL
 - a. These are standardized English tests
 - b. Why to think about it now:
 - i. They may be offered only sporadically, and you need to make sure you can schedule one in time for applications
 - ii. You may need time to study/prepare
 - c. These tests may be required of international students for programs where English is the primary language of instruction
 - i. Check the requirements of your programs of interest
 - ii. Don't make assumptions about who needs it – someone from England who had lived in the U.S. nearly their whole life reported having to take it for a program in the U.S.
 - iii. If you aren't sure, ask!
 - d. Check prices as well as the schedule ahead of time

Application materials to think about later

- 1. Personal statement
 - a. Describes your journey as a person and as a scientist
- 2. Research statement
 - a. Describes your research interests, career goals, what you want to learn/accomplish in graduate school
- 3. Program-specific application materials
 - a. Some programs might have their own set of questions or prompts to address in the application
- 4. Application fees
 - a. Ask about waivers, if you need one
- 5. The SSAR DEI Committee plans to have a virtual event focused on the nitty-gritty of these application materials in late summer or early fall 2024



Predoctoral fellowships

1. Pre-doctoral fellowships cover some portion of your stipend and tuition for graduate school
2. They are prestigious, and the stipend is often much higher than what the graduate institution would otherwise pay you
3. Why to think about it now:
 - a. If you want a strong application, you need to start early and find people to help you with brainstorming and editing
4. SSAR members receive monthly email newsletter where we advertise predoctoral fellowships that we hear about
5. Some major predoctoral fellowships in the United States:
 - a. NSF GRFP
 - i. <https://www.nsfgrfp.org/>
 - ii. For U.S. citizens, nationals, and permanent residents
 - b. Hertz Fellowship
 - i. <https://www.hertzfoundation.org/the-fellowship/>
 - ii. For U.S. citizens and permanent residents
 - c. Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowships
 - i. <https://www.pdsoros.org/>
 - ii. For immigrants and children of immigrants to the U.S.
 - d. Fulbright Scholarships (different webpages for different countries; Google “Fulbright Foreign Student Program” + the country of interest)
 - i. For students from certain countries to study in the U.S.; note that the program doesn’t exist in all countries

Mentorship programs

1. Several mentorship programs exist that can help you apply to grad school and/or predoctoral fellowships
2. EEB Mentor Match
 - a. <https://eebmentormatch.com/>
 - b. Open to anyone in ecology and evolutionary biology
3. MAP Program
 - a. <https://sites.google.com/view/mapprogram>
 - b. Open to Indian applicants to PhD programs
4. Científico Latino Program
5. <https://www.cientificolatino.com/>
 - a. Open to applicants from minoritized backgrounds for master’s and PhD programs in all STEM discipline

