

LUCE INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE FELLOWSHIP

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

First Nations and the Henry Luce Foundation have compiled answers for common questions that may arise during the application process. You may also refer to information provided within the RFP.

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Eligibility

1. Who is eligible to apply for the Luce Indigenous Knowledge Fellowship?

Applicants must self-identify or be nominated as an Indigenous knowledge holder or knowledge maker engaged in meaningful, positive work that benefits Indigenous people and communities in either reservation and/or urban settings.

Eligible applicants must be:

- At least 18 years of age.
- A U.S. citizen or permanent resident.
- Tribally-affiliated with a Native American, Alaska Native, or Native Hawaiian community.
- Actively engaged in the creation, dissemination and/or perpetuation of knowledge in their field.
- Able to demonstrate previous experience or expertise in the knowledge field they are pursuing for the fellowship year.
- Able to clearly demonstrate how their work can impact and benefit Indigenous communities in the U.S. or U.S. Territories.

Canadian First Nations individuals may be eligible to apply if they qualify as lawful permanent residents under the Jay Treaty as defined in [Section 289 of the Immigration and Nationality Act \(INA\)](#).

2. What types of activities does the fellowship support?

This program is designed to support fellows as they work to further Indigenous knowledge creation, dissemination and perpetuation in Indigenous communities. It is up to the applicant to determine how best to use the funding and resource support to advance their personal and professional goals as it relates to their field of knowledge.

3. Do I need to apply with a specific project in mind?

No. The overarching goal of the fellowship program is to invest in individuals engaged in knowledge creation, dissemination and perpetuation in Indigenous communities. Applicants do not have to design or complete a project to be eligible for selection. However, if you have a specific project you are welcome to include that in your application.

4. Can I pursue a knowledge field outside of my expertise area?

First Nations does not recommend pursuing a new field for which the applicant has little to no experience in. The fellowship program is intended for Indigenous knowledge holders and knowledge makers seeking to expand on or further meaningful contribution to their field of knowledge. Should an applicant wish to pursue a new area they should clearly define how their pursuit relates to their previous existing work and builds on their previous knowledge and experience.

5. Are organizations or tribes eligible to apply for this fellowship program?

No. This fellowship program is intended for individuals. However, First Nations has long funded Native organizations and tribes through its grantmaking programs. For more information on First Nations' Grantmaking and other opportunities or resources for tribes and Native nonprofits, please visit [First Nations Grantmaking page](#).

6. Can I apply for this fellowship in partnership with another individual?

No. First Nations is only able to award and provide support to 10 individuals throughout the fellowship year. We recognize and understand that much of the important work in Indian Country is not done alone and may be done in partnership or with a group of people. For the purposes of this fellowship program, only singular individuals may apply and gain access to capacity building funds, cohort convenings, and other benefits of the fellowship program.

7. Are students eligible to apply for this fellowship program?

Yes, individuals still in school such as those pursuing undergraduate or graduate degrees are eligible to apply. Please keep in mind that this program is different than other academic fellowship programs. Applicants must demonstrate their deep knowledge and experience working in their field and demonstrate how they are furthering knowledge creation, dissemination and change in Indigenous communities.

8. Does the fellowship program have any geographic restrictions?

Yes, First Nations is only able to provide support to U.S. citizens and permanent residents. This fellowship is a targeted effort to support, maintain and expand knowledge systems and intellectualism for the long-term vitality of Native communities within the U.S. and U.S. Territories. Therefore, individuals applying for this fellowship program must be able to clearly demonstrate how their work positively impacts Native communities within this area.

Use of Funds

9. What types of expenses are eligible with the fellowship funds?

The goal of this fellowship is to provide flexible funding. Fellows should decide how to best use their funds to achieve their goals and make a positive impact in their communities. The fellowship may be used for a wide range of costs including but not limited to: living expenses, tuition, conference registration, equipment, travel and childcare.

The fellowship funds are considered taxable income and recipients will be responsible for all related taxes resulting from this award. Therefore, taxes are an allowable expense under this fellowship.

10. What types of expenses are not eligible through this fellowship program?

The fellowship funds cannot be redirected to another person or organization.

11. How will the fellowship payments be disbursed?

Fellowship payments will be issued in several installments throughout the fellowship year contingent upon participation and attendance of the fellow convenings. Payments will be mailed directly to fellows.

12. Will I need to provide a detailed line item budget for the application?

No, a detailed line item budget is not required. A general idea of how you will use the funds to achieve your stated goals for the fellowship year will suffice.

13. Will this award affect any programs or services I receive due to my current income status?

The \$75,000 award is considered taxable income and must be reported as income received during the fellowship period. First Nations recommends contacting the services or program that may be impacted to determine if this award may affect service or eligibility for other programs.

Nominations

14. Who can submit nominations?

Individuals can nominate their family, friends, neighbors or colleagues for this fellowship opportunity. The nominator will be required to fill out the “Nominator’s Information” section of the application and identify their relationship to the applicant.

15. How do I nominate an individual?

Nominators should first contact the nominee to inform them of the intent to nominate the individual for the fellowship program. Nominators will use the same application form as those who self-apply. Nominators should work collaboratively with the nominee to fill out the application form on their behalf and ensure that the nominee understands and agrees to the requirements and terms of the fellowship program.

All nominated applications **must** include a [Consent Form](#) indicating that the nominee has been made aware of and granted permission to the nominator to submit an application on their behalf.

16. I have been nominated. What is my role in the process?

Nominees are required to sign a [Consent Form](#) stating that they have reviewed the fellowship requirements and understand and agree to the fellowship terms. Ideally, nominees will work collaboratively with the nominator to fully flesh out their overarching goals and vision for the fellowship year.

Letters of Reference

17. How should I select my reference letter writers?

Applicants must submit three letters of reference during the Stage 2 application process. Specifically First Nations is seeking letters from:

- One individual who can speak to the importance of the applicant's work and meaningful contribution to their knowledge field
- One individual from the tribal community they serve who can speak to the applicant's experience working with Indigenous communities and garnering community support for their work
- One individual who can speak to the applicant's personal character

Reference letters must be submitted by three different individuals. When selecting your referees, please consider the above criteria and who in your network can best speak to each area.

18. How do I use the Recommender feature in the application?

In order to submit your reference letters you will need to utilize the Recommender feature in the Stage 2 application. On the Recommender tab you will be prompted to enter email addresses and names for your three referees. Please enter the first and last name of your recommenders along with their email address in the appropriate boxes, select the send e-mail check box and hit send one at a time. Upon hitting the "Send" button you will be taken to a new page to compose a customized message to your letter writers. For you to customize to each recommender you will need to do this separately for each individual. Your letter writers will receive your composed email and within it a link to upload their letter of reference to your application. Please instruct them to click on the link to upload their letter when ready.

When a referee submits a letter their attachment will appear in the Attachments tab of your application. Please note that reference letters must be attached using the Recommender feature of the application. The online system will not allow your application to be submitted until each referee has clicked their own unique link and uploaded their letter.

19. Help! My reference letter writers are having difficulty using the online system. What should I do?

Our Grantmaking team can assist with and troubleshoot issues. Please call our office at (303) 774-7836 and ask to speak with a member of our Grantmaking team. You can send an email to grantmaking@firstnations.org. Please have the name and contact

information for your referee on hand in case our staff need to reach out for further troubleshooting. Referees may also contact the Grantmaking team directly.

20. I have my three letters of reference. Can I just attach them to my application through the Attachments page?

No. The online system requires three individuals to upload letters through the Recommender feature. Please contact our Grantmaking team for assistance in identifying a workaround to attach the letters so your application can be submitted.

Application Assistance

21. Are you able to make exceptions to the specified deadline?

No. Exceptions will not be made to application deadlines. Should you run into any technical issues the day of the deadline, please contact grantmaking@firstnations.org immediately and prior to the deadline so that a member of the Grantmaking team can assist.

22. Can you provide assistance or feedback in developing my fellowship application?

No, First Nations cannot directly assist in the development of applications. However, First Nations will offer Q&A webinars to go over the application and answer questions for each stage of the application and selection process.

23. Do I really need to use the online system? Can I just mail or deliver it to you?

Due to the volume of applications First Nations receives, we request that applicants utilize the online system. The online system allows application information to go directly into our database and facilitates the review and timely processing of applications.

Any applications submitted outside of the online system require additional processing time, which may delay review and/or notification. If you cannot submit an application online due to unreliable Internet access, please refer to the process for requesting an exemption from the system described below.

24. What if I have limited or unreliable access to the Internet?

First Nations recognizes that some of our most rural and remote applicants may have limited access to high-speed Internet. Any exceptions to use of the online system must

be made at least two weeks in advance of the application deadline by submitting an email request to grantmaking@firstnations.org. Please include your name, contact information, and the name of the RFP for which you are applying. If you do not have access to email you can call our office at (303) 774-7836 and ask to speak with a member of the Grantmaking Department.

25. How do I get a login for First Nations' online application portal?

Please go to the applicant/grantee [login page](#) and select the "New Applicant?" link.

26. I already registered with First Nations. What is my login?

Your login information is the email address used to register for your account and the password of your choosing.

27. I forgot the password for my account with First Nations. What should I do?

You can have a temporary password emailed to the email address used to register your account. Please go to the applicant/grantee [login page](#) and select "Forgot Password."

28. I am having trouble logging into my account within First Nations' application portal. Who do I contact?

Please call our office at (303) 774-7836 and ask to speak with a member of our Grantmaking team. You can send an email to grantmaking@firstnations.org.

29. Why can't I upload my files?

First, check what types of files you are trying to upload. Most documents should be uploaded in PDF format. If you do not have a PDF writer, many free options are available. Suggestions of PDF writers include [Cute PDF Writer](#) and [BullZip](#). You may also conduct a web search to find a program that fits your needs.

If your file still will not upload, it may be too large for our system. Try saving the document as an Optimized PDF.

30. Is it okay to wait until the last day to submit my online application?

Please allow yourself enough time to submit a complete application before the deadline using the online system. The system shuts down automatically at 5 p.m. Mountain Time on the date listed within the RFP.

Unfortunately, First Nations cannot make any emergency exceptions to use of the online system. Partial applications, incomplete applications due to user error, or faxed/emailed/mailed applications without prior approval will not be reviewed.

Additional Facts

31. What happens if I have not heard back about my fellowship application submission? When should I contact First Nations about my submission?

First Nations will send the notification via email to the participant contact email address listed on the application by the dates listed in the RFP. Emails come from mail@grantapplication.com. Check your junk email or spam folder first and then contact grantmaking@firstnations.org if you are unable to find your notification.

32. Why was my application declined?

First Nations typically receives far more applications than it is able to support. A well-written application will improve your chances of being selected, but may not guarantee an award. First Nations considers a number of factors including overall fit and alignment with the fellowship goals and intent. However, the guiding selection criteria consists of:

- **KNOWLEDGE:** Applicants must be actively engaged in the creation, dissemination or perpetuation of Indigenous and/or Western knowledge. They must have a cultural grounding and connectedness to community.
- **EXPERIENCE:** Applicants must be engaged in relevant work that seeks to grow and advance knowledge. They must demonstrate a record of success of working and collaborating with Indigenous people and communities, and preserving and perpetuating Indigenous knowledge systems.
- **POTENTIAL:** Applicants must demonstrate continuing promise in their field of endeavor. They must embody exceptional creativity, progressive and critical thinking, and the potential to significantly move forward their field in ways that will ultimately lead to broad, transformative impacts for Indigenous peoples.
- **VISION:** Applicants must clearly articulate how the fellowship will support or accelerate their work. They must develop a unique plan of action that details their vision for preserving and perpetuating Indigenous knowledge in either reservation and/or urban community settings.

First Nations has limited capacity to provide feedback on declined applications. Should you wish to be added to a waitlist for feedback, please provide your name and the RFP title via email to grantmaking@firstnations.org.

33. Does First Nations offer other support to Native individuals?

First Nations periodically offers webinars on various topics and key issues in Indian Country, and houses resources and guides on [First Nations Knowledge Center](#). The Luce Indigenous Knowledge Fellowship is the largest award opportunity provided by First Nations for Native individuals. First Nations also provides [scholarships](#) to Native college students studying agriculture or agricultural-related fields, and periodically provides travel scholarships to various First Nations conferences and convenings.

To stay up-to-date on First Nations news and opportunities, please sign up for our mailing list at: <https://www.firstnations.org/>

If you have any additional questions about the Fellowship program, or if you need assistance using the online application system, please contact First Nations' Grantmaking Department by email at grantmaking@firstnations.org or by phone at (303) 774-7836.