

Advice from Selection Committee Members for National and International Fellowships*

What should the recommender do?

Provide **specific information** about the applicant, which selectors can use in any interview that the applicant might be offered.

Provide **context** for how you know the applicant and for what period of time you have known him.

Demonstrate that you know the applicant personally. Examples unique to this relationship are more valuable than information that could be gathered from a resume.

Point to **specific examples** of what the applicant has done. Has the applicant done outstanding work in some regard? Explain the nature of the work and its particular strengths, especially as they relate to the goals of the fellowship.

Discuss **why** the applicant would be a strong candidate for the specific fellowship. How does the applicant exemplify the personal qualities or selection criteria specified? Specificity in examples is crucial.

Indicate what you believe **qualifies** the applicant for the course of study or project being proposed, providing links between past performance and what is proposed.

Place the student in a **larger context**. For example, you might compare the applicant to others who have applied for similar honors or succeeded in such competitions. Quantitative remarks may be useful,

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If possible and appropriate, draw on the **remarks of others** for supporting evidence or corroboration of specific strengths.

What should the recommender avoid?