

Applying for an APEX FELLOWSHIP



APEX

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APPLICATION DETAILS

2021 due dates

Early deadline:	Sun. Feb 14 by 11:59 p.m.
Final deadline:	Weds. Mar 31 by 11:59 p.m.
Means of submission:	Formstack Application
Application review begins:	Immediately after deadline
Interviews begin:	7-10 days after deadline
Notification of accepted status:	10-14 days after deadline

All application information can be found
[on the APEX website](#)

GETTING STARTED ON YOUR SUMMER EXPERIENCE

Being considered for an APEX Fellowship requires proposing an internship or vocational exploration program outside The College of Wooster. Some students begin this process with very clear ideas about what they'd like to do, where they'd like to be, and with whom they'd like to work. Most do not.

To help determine what you would like to do... **Ask yourself** —

- In what area(s) do I want to gain experience? What do I enjoy doing?
- What skills do I hope to develop? What skills can I offer?
- Would I like to do this domestically or internationally?
- Do I have the language skills necessary for a successful international experience?
- How far out of my comfort zone am I willing to go?
- Do I want to create my own experience, or would I prefer an existing internship or volunteer program?
- Can I allocate 6-8 weeks over the summer?
- How much money do I have to contribute to the experience?
- How much money do I need to earn over the summer?



Then...

Use your personal contacts

Your professors, professional staff, people you have worked for, family, family friends, etc.- ALL can be good sources of information about topics and host organizations more specific to your interests.

Talk to experienced students

Hearing how students who've received funding from APEX found their internship or program will give you ideas where to look, what worked for them, and what some of the pitfalls are. You can find a [list of previous recipients](#) who are on campus and links to their host organizations for you to explore on the APEX website.

Speak with Experiential Learning Staff in APEX

The staff in Experiential Learning is available to be a sounding board and to provide guidance as you start formulating your ideas. All fellowship applicants are **strongly** encouraged to speak with a staff member one-on-one. Stop by during Wired-in Wednesdays on Teams from 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. or 8:00-10:00 p.m. for a drop-in meeting or [make an appointment](#).

Research online

Portals such as [Handshake](#) and [idealist.org](#) ask you to put in key words, such as, what issues you're interested in, what locations you'd like to consider, when and how long you can do your project, etc., and will generate lists of potential opportunities and organizations. The APEX website also has links to many, many internship sites.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS ABOUT ELIGIBILITY

Who can apply for an APEX Fellowship?

Rising sophomores, juniors and seniors in all majors can apply. APEX Fellows may not be on academic probation and must maintain good standing under The College of Wooster's Codes of Academic Integrity and Social Responsibility. Students must also be enrolled at The College of Wooster or in a Wooster-endorsed off-campus study program the semesters preceding and following the Fellowship.

What are the kinds of experiences for which I can apply for an APEX Fellowship?

APEX Fellowships support unpaid or underpaid (that is, wages or stipends less than the amount of the awards) summer internships or vocational exploration programs. We support students who do on-site immersive work, are given meaningful tasks, and can perform a variety of capacities and with a mixture of employees. While some tasks may be mundane, the majority should demand professional responsibility. Host sites must provide a supervisor to regularly monitor the student's progress and give feedback.

What kinds of experiences are *ineligible* for an APEX Fellowship?

APEX Fellowships *do not* support some summer research, including I.S. research, credit-bearing academic programs, travel programs, or work for the student's family enterprise.

What type of research is eligible for support from an APEX Fellowship?

APEX uses the definition of authenticity the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE) details in its *Eight Principles of Good Practice for All Experiential Learning Activities* to evaluate what type of research we will support: "The experience must have a real world context and/or be useful and meaningful in reference to an applied setting or situation. This means that it should be designed in concert with those who will be affected by or use it, or in response to a real situation."

An **example** of a research experience supported by an APEX Fellowship: A student doing lab-based research on HIV/AIDS spent part of their summer interviewing AIDS patients as part of their intake session when coming to receive treatment.

If you have questions about whether your proposed summer experience qualifies, speak with Experiential Learning staff in APEX before applying. We find most students who intend to propose a strictly lab-based experience are able to incorporate an applied component when prepared to discuss this with their P.I.

Will an APEX Fellowship support remote internships?

While supporting students gaining professional experience in a shared workplace setting is preferred, the realities of the pandemic and shifts in workplace settings make remote internships an attractive option, as long as the host organization adheres to good practices regarding on-boarding, supervision and communication. Michael True, author of *InternQube*, has put together [this check list](#) to help determine if a remote opportunity will work for a student.

What if I don't have a position secured by the time the application is due? Can I still apply for a Fellowship?

To be considered for funding, all proposals must have confirmed positions. This includes actual internship site placements promised by third party providers. Although some organizations say they notify acceptances of summer internships *after* our deadlines, often they will respond sooner if told about the fellowship program and due dates. Applications submitted after the last deadline will be considered on a first-come first served, space available basis. Incomplete applications will *not* be considered.

QUESTIONS ABOUT FUNDING

How much funding can I receive?

APEX Fellowships provide funding for *unpaid or under-paid* internships or vocational exploration programs at two levels: ▪ \$2025 for six weeks *and* 225 hours ▪ \$2700 for eight weeks *and* 300 hours In addition, students may apply for **up to \$600** to off-set costs related to travel to/from the host site (excluding cost of traveling home) and/or commuting costs.

What if I find an opportunity that is less than full time? Can I still apply for an APEX Fellowship?

Yes, as long as you work *both* the minimum number of weeks *and* the minimum number of hours. For example, a student who finds an opportunity for 25 hours a week could work nine weeks and still receive the \$2025 award (25 hrs/wk x 9 wks = 225 hrs).

What if I find a great internship or vocational exploration program that is shorter than 6 weeks? Can I still apply for an APEX Fellowship?

No. APEX Fellowships are awarded to summer experiences that are *both* at least 6 weeks in duration *and* require at least 225 hours of activity related to the internship or vocational exploration program.

Can I apply for an APEX Fellowship if I find an internship that pays a salary or provides a stipend?

If your organization provides compensation *less than* what the Fellowships offer (up to \$2025 for 6 weeks or \$2700 for 8 weeks) you may apply for funding to make up the difference. As a recipient of APEX funds, you will be required to participate fully in all expectations of APEX Fellows.

How will I get the funds?

You will receive your funds (*minus* \$300) as a lump sum in May. The last \$300 is awarded in the fall after completing all assignments and reports.

I hear some students can get an additional \$500. How does that happen?

Up to *ten students* will be named *Andrew Fellows* and will receive *an additional \$500* for demonstrating excellence in the application process after the cohort of APEX Fellows has been selected. Applicants will be evaluated on:

- Advising meetings with Experiential Learning staff throughout the application process
- Quality of résumé
- Demonstrated communication with reference writers
- Quality of extended answers on the application
- Quality of LinkedIn profile
- Demonstrated interview preparation
- Follow up with the interview committee

For details on being considered for this additional award, please see Experiential Learning staff in APEX.



Do I have to pay taxes on the fellowship?

Possibly. This depends on how much you have earned in the tax reporting year. For specific questions, consult your tax advisor for answers. You are responsible for reporting the monies to the IRS.

SELECTION CRITERIA

How are the applications evaluated?

The Selection Committee will appraise proposals for:

- Strength of connection to academic interests
- Strength of connection to personal and professional experiences and interests
- Level of authentic responsibilities, opportunities for growth, student safety, and supervision provided in proposed internship/program
- Depth of the vocational exploration questions you seek to examine
- Clarity of goals and measurable outcomes you propose
- Strength of personal recommendations

Who is on the Selection Committee?

Experiential Learning Peer Advisors, APEX professional staff, and Faculty Mentors.

ADDITIONAL INFO FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

You could have as much as 30% withheld from your grant. If you have specific questions about the amount of tax withholding, please confer with Student Employment.

If you do your Fellowship in the U.S.:

- ◇ You must meet with Carol Knoble in International Student Services to make sure you understand and comply with all regulations related to your visa.
- ◇ You must have had full-time student status in the U.S. for a full academic year before you do your internship.
- ◇ If you have not worked in the U.S. before, you will need to apply for a Social Security Number (SSN) once you have an employment letter. You must have a SSN before you can receive any fellowship monies.
- ◇ The experience **must be tied to your major.** You must apply for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and ask your department chair to sign the CPT form to verify your experience relates to your major. As an APEX Fellow, you receive academic credit with your award, therefore you do not need to apply for or pay for a summer internship credit.



If you do your Fellowship outside the U.S.:

- ◇ Make sure your U.S. visa is valid upon return, otherwise, you must renew it before you return to the U.S.
- ◇ Have at least 6 months remaining on your passport before returning to the U.S., otherwise, it must be renewed



Ready
to
Apply?



FYI—INFORMATION FOR YOUR APPLICATION

APEX uses **Formstack** submission software for the Fellowship application, the link to which can be found [here](#).

You may read through the entire application to familiarize yourself with what you will be asked to provide. It is a lengthy application and is considered part of your preparation to take on the responsibilities of a funded, mentored experience. We advise all students to

- ◇ **Start early.** It is always easy for us to tell who has rushed through an application at the last minute.
- ◇ **Meet with APEX professional and student staff** along the way. You should make use of Career Planning for help with your resume (and LinkedIn profile) and Experiential Learning staff to answer questions and provide feedback on your application.

A few important notes about managing the application on Formstack:

- ◇ Formstack provides a “*save and resume*” feature, so you can return to information you have already put into the application, with the exception of uploads. However, it is best practice to write your responses to the questions that require extended answers in a separate document, then paste them into the application.
- ◇ **Uploads** should be prepared and ready to insert **at the time of submission**. Formstack does not save uploaded documents when using the save and resume feature.
- ◇ All uploaded documents **must be in pdf format**
- ◇ **Once you have submitted** your application, **no further changes** can be made.
- ◇ You will receive an **email from apex@wooster.edu confirming your submission** and providing you a copy of your responses. *If you do not see the email in your Inbox*, please check your Clutter/Junk folders.

A Few Application Tips

1) You are asked to summarize your proposed summer experience **in 30 words or less** (≤ 200 characters). **To write an effective summary,**

- assume that the reader already knows your experience will be “this summer,” so don’t waste words using the expression
- include name of organization and location
- focus on scope and responsibilities/purpose

This one by Kat Neis ’18, shows how to get a lot of specific information across in just 26 words:

As an editorial intern for Dressage Today, an equestrian magazine based in a suburb of Washington, D.C.,
(position) (name of organization) (type of organization) (location)
I will be writing articles and managing social media.
└ (responsibilities) ┘

Other effective examples include

- Intern at New England Coastal Wildlife Alliance in Massachusetts, where I will collect data onboard whale-watching ships, educate the public about marine wildlife through outreach programs, and help beached animals. (30 words)
- At the LGBT Center of Greater Cleveland in Cleveland, Ohio I will assist with and implement programming, work alongside counselors, and gain non-profit management skills. (25 words)
- Intern at the San Diego Natural History Museum in Exhibit Development. I will research content development and engage in the evaluation process to complete my own multi-disciplinary exhibit. (28 words)

Application tips, cont'd

- 2) Writing your **goals**. Many students find this to be challenging. The activity is intended to help you focus on what you would like to accomplish and to be able to enlist your host organization in providing you with relevant opportunities. We suggest using the “SMART” format to make sure your goals are clear and reachable:

- ◇ **Specific**—this often feels small to students, but the more specific you are, the easier it is to articulate what you want to accomplish
- ◇ **Measurable**—how will you know you have achieved your goal?
- ◇ **Achievable**—do you have the skills to accomplish what you want to do? Will you have the support? Enough time over the course of your internship?
- ◇ **Relevant**—how does the goal support your interests and/or those of your host organization?
- ◇ **Time bound**—what can you accomplish *by the end of your internship*?

- 3) Asking for **recommendations**. To complete your application for an APEX Fellowship, we must receive **two references**:
1. One from a Wooster professor with whom you have taken a class
 2. One from someone who has been **in a supervisory position** with you **outside of the classroom**. This should be in regard to an experience in which you held responsibilities and/or took on leadership positions. This recommender could be a current or former work supervisor, an athletic coach, a choir, band or theater director, a youth group adviser, or faculty member from an off-campus study program where you completed an internship or participated in extensive experiential learning activities.

The selection committee reads the references very carefully. Help your recommenders write a reference that reflects your strengths and how well your proposal matches your interests by following these suggestions:

DO

- ◇ Ask for references early, at least 2 weeks in advance. These are **due the same day** as your application.
- ◇ Make sure you let those giving you recommendations know **what it is you are applying for and why**. Tell them about your host organization, the experience you are proposing, and how it fits with your academic, professional and personal interests.
- ◇ Give your recommenders a copy of your résumé.
- ◇ Think about who can speak best to your skills outside the classroom.
- ◇ Send your recommenders the link to the reference form provided for you in the APEX Fellowship Application.
- ◇ Politely follow up *before the application deadline* to make sure the recommendation has been written and submitted.
- ◇ **Make sure to thank** your reference writers—and let them know the results of your application!

DO NOT

- ◇ Ask for a reference from peers, relatives, family friends, counselors or support services staff (unless they are your work supervisor), or the person for whom you will be working.
- ◇ Wait until the last minute to ask for a reference.

Click [here](#) for link to APEX Fellowship Application

Required Documents

1) To complete your application, **upload** the documents listed below. Please note that all uploads **must be in pdf format**. An asterisk (*) means **required**.

- ◇ ***[Program/Internship Agreement form](#)**—This is completed by your host organization or your program provider. The completed form will come back to you. Make sure to give them your wooster.edu email address, and check your spam folders if you do not see it in your Inbox.
- ◇ *If you plan to work on-site during the pandemic*, you will submit two forms *1) **[An on-site addendum](#)** and *2) **[A safety plan](#)**
- ◇ ***[A budget worksheet](#)**. This is a protected Excel document that does some of the math for you. You must be logged into Microsoft 365 to access this. Fill it out and print it in pdf format.



If you put in costs for the items below, you are also required to upload verification of the cost, for example, screenshots from websites, maps with completed mileage calculations, copies of receipts, etc. All verifications must be in English and in U.S. dollars (translation tools and exchange rate calculators can be used).

- Program fees
- Travel costs getting to/from your internship site at the beginning and end of your experience.
- Travel costs getting to/from your internship site on a daily basis.

Please note that travel funds are only available to get you to and from your internship site and for your daily commute.

You may **not** apply for travel funds to pay for your trip home.

For example: If your internship is in Atlanta, GA and you live in Houston, TX, you **may** apply for funds to cover the cost of your travel from Houston to Atlanta. However, you **may not** apply for funds to cover the cost of your travel from Wooster (or wherever your starting point is) to Houston.

- ◇ ***Your transcripts.** Just print off an **unofficial copy from Self-Service Advising** and save it as a pdf. There is no need to pay for an official transcript.
 - ◇ ***Your resume.** Keep it to **one page**. The staff in Career Planning can help you trim your document so it is relevant to the APEX Fellowship.
- 2) *Provide **[two recommendations](#)**. Send the link to the form to
- 1) a College of Wooster professor with whom you have taken a class—and
 - 2) someone who knows you outside the classroom in a supervisory role. Make sure you provide them with your wooster.edu address.

APEX FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- You have completed the [application through Formstack](#), including uploading (in pdf format):
 - Completed budget information (in English and in U.S. dollars)
 - Additional health and safety information if applying to be on-site during the pandemic
 - A copy of your unofficial transcripts from ScotWeb
 - Your **one-page** résumé
- You have asked your host organization to complete the *Program/Internship Agreement*
 - You have uploaded the *Program/Internship Agreement* into your Formstack application (in pdf format)
- You have asked for two recommendations to be submitted to APEX by the application deadline from
 - a College of Wooster professor from whom you have taken a class
 - a workplace manager, coach, director, etc. who has first-hand knowledge of how you have taken on responsibilities outside the classroom

2021 APPLICATION DUE DATES

Early deadline: Sun. Feb 14 by 11:59 p.m.

Final deadline: Weds. Mar 31 by 11:59 p.m.

Incomplete applications, or those received after March 31 will be considered on a space-available basis until Monday, April 26

For help with...

- finding internship opportunities or volunteer programs
- creating a polished, one page résumé and a LinkedIn profile
- reviewing your application materials — *before you submit them!*

...come meet with an advisor in APEX

⇒ during **Wired-in Wednesdays 1:30-4:00 p.m. or 8:00-10:00 p.m. on Teams**—*or*

⇒ **Make an appointment:** apex@wooster.edu