

Prospective Fellow Information | Spring 2025

About the Self Graduate Fellowship

The Madison and Lila Self Graduate Fellowship offers a unique opportunity for students seeking a Ph.D. at the University of Kansas. The Self Graduate Fellowship (SGF) selects students who possess unusual motivation, passion, and potential to make significant contributions to their profession and to society. Self Graduate Fellows demonstrate initiative, passion for achievement, and commitment to lifelong learning. Specifically, SGF is looking for high-potential individuals who have a clear vision, career goals, leadership potential, motivation, and a strong work ethic.

The total value of this four-year doctoral fellowship exceeds \$200,0000.

Self Graduate Fellows benefits:

- Provides annual support of \$34,850 for four years through a 50% appointment as a graduate research assistant
- Sponsors tuition and fees for three academic semesters each year: fall, spring, and summer
- Pays employer's share of student health insurance costs
- Provides a total of \$5,500 in funding for professional development opportunities during the four years of the fellowship
- Provides \$5,000 start-up award (year 1)
- Provides \$1,000 textbook and technology award (years 2, 3, 4)
- Includes communication, management, leadership, innovation, and policy training through the Fellow Development Program
- Opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C. for a customized government and science policy seminar
- Opportunity to travel abroad for a customized international seminar
- Allows Fellows to collaborate and network with their interdisciplinary cohort of Ph.D. students
- Provides access to a network of alumni mentors

Outstanding Ph.D. applicants and first-year Ph.D. students in eligible disciplines may be nominated by their departments for a Self Graduate Fellowship. Nominees must be U.S. citizens and must have received their first bachelor's degree within the last eight years (January 2017 – 2025).

Nomination Process

Eligible KU academic departments identify and nominate applicants for doctoral study and first-year doctoral students who are potential Self Graduate Fellows. Students who are a strong fit to the program are welcome and encouraged to ask their department for a nomination. The nomination file that is submitted by the department will include a letter of nomination from the department, your graduate school application, academic letters of recommendation, transcripts of all college or university work, your application statement to the department, your resume, and other supporting materials from your file. Your academic department will request additional documents specifically for the Self Graduate Fellowship, detailed below. The Self Graduate Fellowship relies on these documents to assess how you match the attributes of a Self Graduate Fellow.

Instructions

As a nominee, you will need to submit to your nominating department the below items:

1. Self Graduate Fellowship Personal Statement
2. Current Resume or CV
3. Access/Waiver form
4. One Letter of Recommendation specific to SGF (Required)

1. Self Graduate Fellowship Personal Statement

Your personal statement is critical to your success in the Self Graduate Fellowship selection process. This is your opportunity to demonstrate how you fit the profile of a Self Graduate Fellow. Your statement should be authentic and tell your story in your own words. Remember that through this document you will try to persuade the evaluation committee that you deserve an interview. Edit the statement carefully. Before you begin, be sure to review the Self Graduate Fellowship website (selfgraduate.ku.edu). Your statement should be two to three pages long, in 12-point font, and double-spaced. Your personal statement must address the following points:

- The academic and professional choices you have made to date and why
- Career goals, both short-term and long-term, and specification of intended career field (industry, government, medical, higher education)
- How you envision yourself in a leadership role expanding human knowledge, contributing to your profession, and benefiting society as a whole
- How you match the Self Graduate Fellow profile (see below)

Self Graduate Fellow Profile

The ideal candidate possesses unusual motivation, passion, and potential to make significant contributions to their profession and to society. In addition to a strong academic record, the candidate has leadership, communication, and decision-making skills. Should display personal attributes including self-awareness, emotional maturity, initiative, tenacity, energy, vision, risk-taking, and interpersonal effectiveness. The ideal candidate is interested in personal development and lifelong learning and is committed to participation in the Fellow Development Program.

2. Current Resume or CV

All nominees must submit an updated resume or CV. This should be distinguished from a traditional academic vita, as this document should highlight a variety of leadership experiences and significant achievements from work, school, volunteer projects, and extracurricular activities. Include awards, honors, memberships, positions held, and research experience.

3. Access/Waiver Form

A completed access/waiver form is required. A form submitted electronically to your department with an electronic signature will be accepted. The access/waiver form is the last page of this document.

4. SGF Letter of Recommendation

All nominees are required to include one SGF specific letter of recommendation in their nomination. This provides additional materials for reviewers to refer when determining student fit to SGF profile. It also provides students with the option to include letter writers who may not traditionally be included in graduate admissions but can offer information on SGF attributes and program fit.

Deadline

Your SGF personal statement, updated resume or CV, and access/waiver form must be submitted to your nominating department prior to the nomination deadline. **The deadline for departments to nominate students is January 29, 2025, at noon CST.** Please contact your department for additional details as they may require students to submit additional materials before the SGF deadline.

The Selection Process

The Self Graduate Fellowship Board of Trustees and a faculty evaluation committee work to fulfill the mission and goals of the fellowship when selecting students to interview for the fellowship. Their responsibility is to select individuals whose academic preparation, vision, and commitment to career goals match the Self Graduate Fellow profile.

Self Graduate Fellowship Interview

Candidates selected for interviews will be notified via email by mid-February 2025. Interviewees will be invited to interview for the Self Graduate Fellowship during the week of February 21, 24-28, 2025. Please block this time as no alternate dates will be scheduled. *If invited to an on-campus interview for the SGF, travel to Lawrence and two nights of lodging expenses will be paid. You will be hosted by your academic department.*

Those invited to interview will be asked to provide proof of U.S. citizenship prior to the interview. Acceptable documents are a copy of a birth certificate, a passport, or proof of naturalization.

The Self Graduate Fellowship interview will last approximately one hour in-person. During this time, students will have the opportunity to describe their accomplishments and their goals to the interview team.

Self Graduate Fellowship Offers

After the interviews are completed, the Self Graduate Fellowship Board of Trustees makes final selection decisions. Offers are extended in cooperation with academic departments by mid-March 2025.

The deadline for student acceptance of offers is April 15, 2025. Students are encouraged to communicate their decisions as soon as possible as their decision may impact other candidates.

Madison and Lila Self Graduate Fellowship

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MADISON & LILA SELF GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP

Access/Waiver Form for Student Files and Recommendation Letters

Letters of Recommendation, Fellowship Selection Documents

Madison and Lila Self Graduate Fellowship at The University of Kansas

Public Law 93-380 permits students or alumni to have access to their files or to waive their right to see recommendations written concerning them after January 1, 1975. Please indicate your preference by signing one of the following:

_____ I understand that Public Law 93-380 provides for access to my file, and **I wish to retain my right to access all letters of recommendation and evaluation documents in conjunction with the nomination for a Self Graduate Fellowship.**

Date _____

Signature _____

OR:

In accordance with 438 (a) (1) (B) (iii) of Public Law 93-380, **I hereby freely waive my right to access all letters of recommendation and evaluation documents in conjunction with the nomination for a Self Graduate Fellowship.**

_____ I understand that these documents may not be used for any purpose other than evaluation of my qualifications for the fellowship, and that by signing this waiver, I retain the right to learn the names of any and all persons submitting such letters and documents.

Date _____

Signature _____