**A GUIDE TO THE FULBRIGHT ENGLISH TEACHING ASSISTANT (ETA)**

 **REFERENCE FORMS**

**The Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship (ETA) – What is it?**

“The **Fulbright** U.S. Student Program aims to increase mutual understanding between the peoples of the United States and other countries through the exchange of persons, knowledge and skills. In most cases, English Teaching Assistantship (**ETA**) grantees are placed in schools or universities outside of the capital cities. They are assigned various activities designed to strengthen English language instruction by establishing a native-speaker presence and to improve their students’ language abilities and knowledge of the United States. At the same time, U.S. participants will conduct community work, and gain from intensive cross-cultural interaction and international education while increasing their own language skills and knowledge of the host country. Proficiency in the host country's language is not always required. Last year, approximately 870 awards were made in 70 countries from 3900 applications.” (From the Fulbright website, <http://www.iie.org/fulbright>).

**What are some of the qualities of successful ETAs?**

Selection committees look for individuals who would make good teachers of English. Ideal candidates combine personal qualities such as independence, sound judgment, energy, and emotional stability with excellent English language skills and teaching or mentoring experience. *If you were in a position to hire a teacher, would you choose this student?*

**What is the recommender’s role?**

Each ETA application must be supported by three references, a transcript, a language evaluation (if relevant), and a nomination form completed by the Director of Fellowships. The reference letter is not a traditional letter of recommendation but an on-line form that poses a series of questions. The more specific you can be about the student’s qualities and teaching potential, the better. (We encourage students to have a conversation with their recommenders about their plans, and to provide them with relevant materials.) Reference letters play an important part in the candidate’s success.

**Who reads the reference letters?**

The letters are read by three committees: a campus committee that reads each application and nominates the candidates, a national screening committee in the U.S. that screens the applications for finalists, and a country committee that makes the ultimate decision. Students do not read the reference letters.

**What is the deadline?**

There are two deadlines to keep in mind: **the campus deadline, September 18**, and the **final submission deadline, October 6**. Our office must “sign-off” on each of the 50+ applications from Williams before October 6th, so it is important that your reference be submitted on time.

You can see a sample of the Fulbright ETA reference form here: <https://us.fulbrightonline.org/instructions-for-eta-recommendation-writers>

If you have any questions about the Fulbright ETA Program or about supporting your student, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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