

# DoD National Defense Science & Engineering (NDSEG) Fellowship

## NDSEG Summary of Goals Prompt

In your own words, provide a summary of your educational program objectives and your long-range professional goals.

- As part of this statement, we are interested in your ideas about:
  - the kinds of research in which you would like to be engaged during your graduate study or in the longer term;
  - specific research questions that interest you and how you became interested in them;
  - how your research might be of interest to the Department of Defense (DoD); and
  - your long-term goals and how the science fits into your life as an individual, especially your future career.
- Please discuss these research interests in sufficient detail for an expert who is technically competent in your field to judge your understanding of the questions to be addressed. This includes relevant hypotheses and approaches one might take to answering the questions and other research principles required to investigate the research area you identify.
- We do not want this to look like a grant submission.

Your response will be limited to 3,000 characters, including spaces. There is no extra space for citation. If you are writing this text elsewhere and copy-pasting it into this box, be aware that some word processing programs will transfer spaces and returns differently.

The statement you present in this part of the application should be reflective of your ability to think independently and creatively, as well as your ability to write about your research or study plans accurately, thoughtfully, and concisely. The panelists evaluating your responses will be highly qualified professionals and faculty members, generally with doctoral degrees in the discipline you have selected. Be sure to include in your written response all relevant information pertaining to your goals.

## Phillip Guo Comments

### General Philosophy and Format

Despite its military-sounding name, I've heard that the NDSEG actually has fairly civilian intentions: The fellowships are given out to ensure that America has a steady supply of capable future scientists, because presumably America will be a stronger and safer place if our best and brightest don't escape to other naughty countries to make doomsday weapons for them. So don't worry. If you win this fellowship, you won't have to enlist in the military for mandatory service or anything. This application isn't due until January (after all your grad school apps), so if you've done a solid job on the NSF and Hertz applications, it should be trivial to fill out this one (there are no long essays, only a few short essays and fill-in-the-blanks). You can easily finish it in a few days over winter break.

### You don't need to tailor your application specifically for the military

When working on this application, don't treat it like the military brass or super-duper-hardcore patriots will be scrutinizing you, waiting to pick out any glimmer of sedition. Don't try to purposely impress them by casting your accomplishments in military terms (unless, of course, your research really does have direct military applications). Just relax and don't let the name of the fellowship intimidate you. As far as I know, respectable scientific researchers will be reading your application, just like for the NSF.

### Study what the funding agencies are looking for

The area of specialty you choose to write in really matters a lot. Here is why ... taken from a passage from the *Proposed discipline & area of specialization* section of the NDSEG application instructions: