

Obermann International Fellowships (OIF)

An open invitation to scholars from around the world

The Obermann Center for Advanced Studies at the University of Iowa now offers flexible fellowships for international researchers and artists to develop collaborations and pursue independent work at our beautiful Iowa City campus. Obermann International Fellowships are funded by the University of Iowa's Obermann Center for Advanced Studies with generous additional support from [International Programs](#) and the [Center for Social Science Innovation](#).

Applications for Spring 2025 fellowships were due November 15, 2024.

Applications for Fall 2025 fellowships are due February 15, 2025.



What an OIF offers to international researchers

- A \$2,000 stipend to help defray the cost of travel and lodging
- University of Iowa health insurance coverage for the duration of the fellowship
- Office space at the Obermann Center for Advanced Studies
- Temporary University of Iowa affiliation, including access to UI libraries
- Structured opportunities for scholarly exchange (seminars, lectures, introduction to UI researchers, etc.)
- Official letter of invitation for institutional and visa purposes
- Information about accommodations and other practical needs

Funding

Each fellow will be reimbursed up to \$2,000 for travel and lodging expenses. Since the fellowship covers only a portion of the expenses of travel and lodging, **applicants need to secure funding from their home institutions.**

The Obermann Center will also cover the cost of a University of Iowa health insurance plan for each fellow, for the duration of their stay. (J-1 scholars are required to carry a UI health insurance policy.)

Eligibility

Up to eight international fellowships are granted per academic year.

Applicants must be active researchers at an accredited institution of higher learning outside of the United States or independent researchers/artists with a track record of excellence based outside of the U.S. Their area of research must have a direct equivalent at the University of Iowa.

Fellows are chosen for their ability to expose the campus to new and relevant research agendas or regions, and the likelihood that the fellowship will result in lasting scholarly contributions. Applications will be reviewed by the Obermann Center staff, who will make recommendations for acceptance to the Advisory Board.

Qualified candidates of any nationality are invited to apply; they should have a good enough command of English to be able to partake in UI academic activities. Researchers are expected to reside in the Iowa City area during the term of their fellowship and participate in the Obermann Center's activities.

The duration of the stay is flexible: fellowships can last a minimum of two weeks and a maximum of one UI academic semester. The start and end dates of the fellowship must fall within a single Fall or Spring UI semester. **Fall 2025 fellowships must take place between August 25 and December 12, 2025.**

Application Process

Complete our [online application](#). The application asks for

- a curriculum vitae;
- desired start and end dates of fellowship (Fall 2025 fellowships must take place between August 25 and December 12, 2025);
- a research proposal, including a rationale of the project's connection to the University of Iowa (maximum 2,000 words);
- a one-page bibliography related to the proposal;
- two reference letters (only required for applicants without a Ph.D. or other terminal degree); and
- proof of English proficiency (a TOEFL or IELTS score, a transcript, or a request for a video interview).

Once you submit this application, the Obermann Center will notify you of your application status via email. If you are accepted, we will ask you to email us the photo page of your passport and a financial statement showing the USD equivalent of at least \$1,000/month for living expenses for the duration of your stay; scholars with J-2 dependents are required to show \$500 per month for living expenses for each dependent.

Shortly after, you will receive a link to the University of Iowa's online international scholars system (iHawk), where you will complete a few forms necessary for the preparation of your DS-2019. Once you have completed them, the Obermann Center will be in touch in 1–2 weeks with your letter of invitation and DS-2019. At that point, you should make your visa appointment.

Note: The Obermann Center will pay for your \$185 J-1 visa application fee, but you are required to pay the \$220 non-refundable SEVIS fee. (SEVIS is the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System used by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to track information on nonimmigrant students and exchange visitors in the United States.)

Applications for Spring 2025 (January–May) were due Friday, November 15, 2024.

Applications for Fall 2025 fellowships are due February 15, 2025.

To join us for Fall 2025:

Apply by 2/15/25

Assessment

All Fellows are required to submit a brief assessment of the impact of the OIF on their research once their fellowship has ended.

The Obermann Center will measure the success of the initiative by considering

- the number of applications received;
- the countries of origin and research areas represented;
- the activities in which they were involved while on campus; and
- the exchanges created or programmed.

Frequently Asked Questions (F.A.Q.)

- **Can I come to the U.S. for this program on an F-1, B-1, or B-2 visa?**

No. J-1 visas are required.

- **Am I eligible for the program if I'm already in the U.S. on a J-1 visa?**

Possibly. Please email us at obermann-center@uiowa.edu before applying to discuss this.

- **Can my partner/family come with me?**

Yes, but the Obermann Center cannot assist with their visa application(s), health insurance, or other matters.

- **How will I receive my \$2,000 reimbursement for travel and lodging?**

You will need to submit all of your receipts to the Obermann Center's Director of Operations by the end of your fellowship. She will then submit them to the University, and you will receive your reimbursement via direct deposit or check mailed to your home address within 3–4 weeks. Note that you cannot receive reimbursements until your fellowship ends.

Rationale and Goals

The Obermann Center for Advanced Studies is a place of encounter for those at the University of Iowa (UI) interested in pursuing collaborative and/or interdisciplinary research. (“Research” here also includes creative work in the arts). While the work of UI researchers at all stages of their careers—from undergraduate students to seasoned professors—undoubtedly benefits from intramural exchanges, Iowa’s standing as a global institution also requires promoting strong connections with the rest of the world. These are necessary for our institution to provide “exceptional teaching and transformative educational experiences that prepare students for success and fulfillment *in an increasingly diverse and global environment*” (UI Mission Statement) and “discover *new ways to see the world and make it better*” (UI Core Values).

The Obermann Center strives to be part of this important effort. That is why the Center is **expanding its residential fellowship program to attract international scholars to our campus**. Their active, engaged presence helps our faculty and students to forge new connections, gain a clearer understanding of global realities, and create additional opportunities for discovery.

The Obermann International Fellowship (OIF) program aligns with the following goals stated in the UI 2022–2027 Strategic Plan:

- “Our overarching goal is to be a destination university of first choice for talented faculty, staff, and students.”
- “Move our university forward in addressing the needs of our state, nation, and world.”
- “Prepare students for success and fulfillment in an increasingly diverse and global environment.”
- “Create an infrastructure to promote shared high-impact practices such as research, scholarship, and creative activities; internships; study abroad and other international experiences.”
- “Expand opportunities and support for students, faculty, and staff to engage in mutually beneficial partnerships with communities across Iowa and around the world.”

In support of these goals, **the Obermann Center aims to attract researchers from a variety of regions and disciplines—thus increasing the global visibility of UI research and expanding opportunities for international cooperation for UI units, faculty and students**. During their stay, the Obermann Center will facilitate opportunities for the international fellows to engage with faculty and students to develop intellectual collaborations.