

Guide to Non-Competitive Eligibility (NCE) for Fulbright Alumni

What is Non-competitive eligibility (NCE)?

Under [Executive Order 13750](#), alumni of exchange programs such as the Fulbright Student Program are eligible for **12 months** of NCE hiring status within the federal government. It **does not** apply to positions within **state/local governments or the US Foreign Service**.

NCE **does not** guarantee or entitle an applicant to a job with the federal government, as employer discretion, and other qualifications/credentials for the job are ultimately what determine whether a candidate is hired by the agency.

Where do you apply for federal employment opportunities?

Create a profile on [USAJOBS](#). Also, look for opportunities to network with federal government representatives at on-campus or community career fairs or events.

To find NCE jobs on USAJOBS, keep in mind that you are also eligible for jobs categorized as **Peace Corps & AmeriCorps VISTA**.

You can also look at the [careers webpage for Returned Peace Corps Volunteers](#), and select the “Only Show NCE Jobs” checkbox.

On LinkedIn, you can search the phrase “Non-competitive eligibility”, although most positions will be directed back to USAJOBS.

How do you showcase NCE when applying to federal jobs?

NCE allows Fulbright alumni to apply to federal agencies outside of the formal competitive job announcement process, however, a **certificate of achievement** will need to be **included in the application as proof of NCE status**.

This includes answering questions relating to NCE status on USAJOBS, along with attaching **supplemental documentation** as proof of NCE status.

After successful completion of your Fulbright grant, you should include the **Certificate of Achievement in the “required documents” section of your application**.

NCE should also be referenced in your formal **resume** and **CV** for federal job applications.

It is also recommended that you mention NCE status in your **cover letters**, emails with potential employers, and **LinkedIn profiles**.

How do you reference NCE status on your resume, CV, cover letter, LinkedIn, and when communicating with potential employers?

Resume/CV (near the top): “Per Executive Order 13750, holds Non-Competitive Eligibility hiring status for federal jobs.”

Cover letters: “As an alumna/us of the Fulbright U.S. Student Program, I hold Non-Competitive Eligibility (NCE) hiring status for federal jobs. NCE reduces the time needed to find and hire qualified candidates by allowing a candidate to be hired outside the formal competitive application process.”

LinkedIn (in the About section at the top of your profile): “As an alumna/us of the Fulbright U.S. Student Program, I hold Non-Competitive Eligibility (NCE) hiring status for federal jobs. NCE reduces the time needed to find and hire qualified candidates by allowing a candidate to be hired outside the formal competitive application process. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly with questions about my NCE or my professional experience.”

Also be prepared to **answer questions about NCE** when discussing how an employer benefits from hiring an NCE candidate. Hiring officials may not be aware of NCE and you should be able to explain what it is.

When should you use NCE to apply for federal positions?

The **12-month** period begins on the **last day** of your **Fulbright grant**.

Federal agencies **may** provide an **extension of up to two additional years** if you **served in the military, studied at a recognized institution of higher education**, or were involved in another activity that warrant’s an extension, though **extensions and eligibility are subject to the hiring agency’s discretion**.

It is important to explicitly indicate a request for NCE extension to the hiring agency.

For example, on a cover letter, **provide the circumstances for your extension request**: “I conducted research/taught English in Germany in the 2023-2024 academic

year with the support of the Fulbright Student Program. Per Executive Order 13750, I was granted Non-Competitive Eligibility (NCE) hiring status for federal jobs until June 2025, with the possibility of extension until June 2026, at the discretion of the hiring manager. Please find more information on NCE in my supplemental application documentation.”

Where do you find more information about NCE?

See: [U.S. Student Re-Entry Resources](#) and see the Professional Development and [Non-competitive Eligibility \(NCE\) FAQs](#) sections.

[Noncompetitive Eligibility for Federal Employment](#)

<https://studyabroad.state.gov/us-government-scholarships-and-programs/us-college-and-university-students/non-competitive>

Detailed guide for alumni of Critical Language Scholarship, who are also entitled to NCE status:

<https://cdn2.assets-servd.host/cls-program/production/resources/alumni/Non-competitive-Eligibility-Guide-for-CLS-Alumni-2021-04-13.pdf?dm=1633557183>