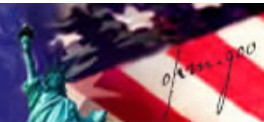




Office of Personnel Management

The Federal Government's Human Resources Agency



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UPDATED: 09/28/2006

Program and Application Overview

NOTE TO CLASS OF 2007 APPLICANTS:

The Overview below illustrates the typical application cycle (September – November). However, for applicants to the PMF Program's Class of 2007, the application cycle will run from October to November.

Application to the PMF Program is conducted annually. This Overview is generally applicable to all; however, information on this page is subject to change.

Application Period

The PMF application will be available on USAJOBS (www.USAJOBS.gov) via a link on the "PMF Application" webpage. The application period will typically open in September and close in October annually. Specific dates for the application period will be announced in the vacancy announcement.

Eligible applicants are those students who will meet graduate degree requirements before the end of the academic year corresponding to that year's application period. For example, students meeting graduate degree requirements between September 1, 2006 through August 31, 2007, would apply in September through October 2006.

Introduction

Since 1977, the Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program and its predecessor, the Presidential Management Intern (PMI) Program, have been attracting outstanding graduate, law, and doctoral-level students to the Federal service. The PMF Program is your passport to a unique and rewarding career experience with the Federal Government. It provides you with an opportunity to apply the knowledge you acquired from graduate study. As a PMF, your assignments may involve public policy and administration, domestic or international issues, information technology, human resources, engineering, health and medical sciences, law, financial management, and many other fields in support of public service programs.

With Executive Order 13318, President George W. Bush authorized the PMF Program in keeping with his emphasis on the strategic management of the Federal Government's human capital. Building on the success of its predecessor, the PMI Program, the PMF Program attracts to the Federal service outstanding men and women from a variety of academic disciplines and career paths who have a clear interest in, and commitment to, excellence in the leadership and management of public policies and programs. The Executive order charges the Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) with developing, managing, and evaluating the PMF Program.

General Information for Applicants

Eligibility

Graduate students from all academic disciplines who expect to complete an advanced degree (master's, law, or doctoral-level degree) from a qualifying college or university during the current academic year are eligible to be nominated by their schools if they demonstrate the following:

- breadth and quality of accomplishments,
- capacity for leadership, and
- a commitment to excellence in the leadership and management of public policies and programs.

A qualifying college or university is an academic institution that meets the requirements as stated in the "General Policies and Instructions" section of OPM's "Operating Manual: Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions," under "Educational and Training Provisions or Requirements." The Operating Manual is available on OPM's website at www.opm.gov/qualifications. Generally, the institution must be accredited by an accrediting body recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education or must have acquired "pre-accreditation" or "candidate for accreditation status" that is recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

To be eligible for placement with a Federal agency through the PMF Program, applicants *must* successfully complete all graduate degree requirements including any thesis or dissertation if so required by the applicant's college or university.

Students who have previously applied to the PMF Program must contact the PMF Program Office to determine eligibility. Generally, applicants are permitted to apply and participate in the PMF nomination and selection process only once per graduate degree. Applicants may apply to the PMF Program only during the academic year they will complete and satisfy graduate degree requirements (master's, law, or doctoral-level) from a qualifying college or university.

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Selective Service Registration

If you are a male born after December 31, 1959, and are at least 18 years of age, civil service employment law (section 3328 of title 5, United States Code) requires that you must be registered with the Selective Service System, unless you meet certain exemptions under Selective Service law. If you are required to register but knowingly and willfully fail to do so, you are ineligible for appointment by executive agencies of the Federal Government. For more information, visit the Selective Service System website at www.sss.gov. You will be asked to provide verification upon being offered an appointment as a Presidential Management Fellow.

Citizenship

Opportunities for Federal employment for non-United States citizens through the PMF Program are extremely limited. By law, Federal agencies are prohibited from hiring anyone who is not a United States citizen for positions in the continental United States. There are certain exemptions to this restriction. A non-citizen may be eligible for employment if the individual is: (1) permitted by a Federal agency's appropriation act or agency-specific statutes covering the hiring of non-citizens, and (2) eligible to work under U.S. immigration laws. PMFs must possess United States citizenship by the conclusion of the two-year fellowship.

If a non-United States citizen is appointed as a PMF by a Federal Agency and does not possess full United States citizenship at the conclusion of their two-year PMF fellowship, by law, the non-United States citizen cannot be converted to permanent career or career-conditional employment, or retained by the employing agency. **The PMF Program Office will not grant extensions or deferrals to a PMF's fellowship in order to meet citizenship requirements for conversion.** For information on U.S. immigration laws and U.S. citizenship, go to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's website at www.dhs.gov.

Veterans' Preference

To be entitled to preference, a veteran must meet the eligibility requirements in section 2108 of title 5, United States Code. For more information on types of veterans' preference and their application in Federal employment refer to OPM's Vet Guide at www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp.

Competitive Nomination Procedures

Colleges and universities shall establish a competitive nomination process to ensure that all interested applicants receive careful and thorough review and equal opportunity for nomination.

Nomination Process

Students **must** be nominated by their school's Dean, Chairperson, or Academic Program Director, otherwise known as the Nomination Official, of their graduate program in order to be considered for the PMF Program. Students must be in the process of completing a graduate degree (master's, law, or doctoral-level degree) from a qualifying college or university and must obtain their nomination from that institution. Schools **must** nominate all students eligible for veterans' preference who apply for nomination and are found qualified. For more information, see *Guidance for Colleges and Universities* on the PMF website at www.pmf.opm.gov, under the "Program Policy" webpage.

Each school conducts a competitive screening process based on the above eligibility criteria to evaluate its graduating PMF applicants and makes its final determination of nominees. Before applying, students must first check with their school's Nomination Official to confirm the school's process and deadlines for nomination into the PMF Program.

Applicants will be required to print a PMF Nomination Form (a fax-back teleform) once their application is completed and submit this form to their Nomination Official for a decision. If the Nomination Official is prepared to nominate you, he/she would need to fill out the form and fax it by the deadline identified. The form should be retained by the Nomination Official for their records.

Applicants are typically electronically notified, via email, within two weeks of nomination deadline (not the application deadline) on whether or not they have been nominated by their school.

Education Completed Outside of the United States

Education completed outside of the United States must be deemed equivalent to that gained in conventional/accredited U.S. educational programs to be acceptable for Federal employment. Most foreign education is not accredited by an accrediting body that is recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. A few medical schools are accredited under country standards that have been determined to be "comparable" to U.S. standards by the U.S. Department of Education's National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation. Nominees will be asked to submit all necessary documents to a private U.S. organization that specializes in the interpretation of foreign educational credentials, commonly called a credential evaluation service. To be acceptable, the foreign credential evaluation must include/describe the type of education received by the applicant, the level of education in relation to the U.S. education system, and state that its comparability recommendations follow the general guidelines of the U.S. National Council for the Evaluation of Foreign Educational Credentials. The documentation also must list the content of the applicant's educational program earned abroad and the standards obtained, the status of the awarding foreign school's recognition and legitimacy in its home country's education system, and any other information of interest such as what the evaluation service did to obtain this information, the qualifications of the evaluator, and any indications as to other problems such as forgery. This documentation is only required from candidates who have been nominated by their college or university and then only in certain cases where the institution is not formally recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. The PMF Program Office will review all such nominees and contact them if documentation is required. For further information on the evaluation of foreign education, refer to the U.S. Department of Education's website at: www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ous/international/usnei/us/edlite-visitus-forrecog.html.

Letters of Recommendation

Do **not** submit letters of recommendation to the PMF Program Office. The PMF Program Office does not consider letters of recommendation as part of its application and assessment processes.

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Assessment Process

OPM administers a rigorous assessment process during which candidates are evaluated based on critical competencies. The following selection criteria are used in the PMF assessment process:

- Analytical Problem Solving
- Selected OPM Leadership Competencies
- Written Communication

Applicants who are nominated by the Nomination Official at their school will be further reviewed by OPM (e.g., adjudication of veterans' preference, if claimed) and then invited to participate in a structured assessment at the assessment site of their choice. There they will complete an objectively scored assessment that focuses on the areas listed above **during the months of January and February in the following year after applying**. Based on their scores, and any veterans' preference adjudication, nominees are ranked and **notified of their selection as Finalists in late February or mid March in the following year after applying**. Veterans' preference points will be added to the assessment score in accordance with part 302 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations.

Appointment

Finalists are encouraged to contact the agencies for which they wish further consideration.

Finalists in the PMF Program may be appointed following: (1) official announcement of their selection as Finalists, (2) completion of all graduate degree requirements (not necessarily to have graduated), including successful completion of any thesis or dissertation from a qualifying college or university, and (3) completion of background investigation (if required by the hiring agency). PMF appointments must be made within twelve months of the official announcement of their selection as a Finalist. **For example**, if Finalists are named on March 9, 2006, then the Finalist has until March 9, 2007, to be appointed as a Fellow.

Federal agencies appoint Fellows to an excepted service position under a Schedule A hiring authority. Agencies may make initial appointments of Fellows at the GS-9, GS-11, or GS-12 level (or their equivalents), depending on the candidate's qualifications. Appointments are made under this authority for an initial period of 2 years; however, the OPM Director, or the Director's designee, may approve an extension of a Fellow's appointment for up to 1 additional year upon written request by the chair of the agency's Executive Resources Board (ERB) or equivalent. Agencies may extend, without prior OPM approval, a Fellow's appointment for up to an initial 120 days. During the appointment, a Fellow may be promoted up to the GS-13 level (or its equivalent) based on the agency's established policies and criteria for the promotion of Fellows, the requirements of the position, and the qualifications and performance of the Fellow.

The salary is based on the current General Schedule. Some geographic locations include additional locality adjustments of the base salary. Salaries can be viewed at the following OPM link: www.opm.gov/Federal_Salaries_Wages. Agencies with their own pay systems must provide salaries equivalent to that provided within the General Schedule.

Generally, the initial appointment will be made at the minimum rate (i.e., Step 1) of the grade to which the Fellow is being appointed. Agencies have the option to hire at the minimum GS-9 up to GS-12, based on qualification and other factors; this is agency-specific and most PMF appointments start at the GS-9 grade level. Fellows with prior Federal Government service *may* be placed at a higher step within the grade consistent with the maximum payable rate rules. When appropriate, agencies may appoint Fellows at a higher step within the grade based on superior qualifications of the candidate or a special need of the agency; this is determined by individual appointing agencies.

The agency may determine that (1) the Fellow has superior qualifications based on the level, type, or quality of the candidate's skills or competencies demonstrated, or obtained through experience and/or education, the quality of the candidate's accomplishments compared to others in the field, or other factors that support a superior qualifications determination; or (2) the candidate fills a special agency need if the type, level, or quality of skills and competencies or other qualities and experiences possessed by the candidate are relevant to the requirements of the position and are essential to accomplishing an important agency mission, goal, or program activity.

In meeting the superior qualifications criteria, the Fellow's skills, competencies, experience, education, and/or accomplishments must be relevant to the requirements of the position to be filled. These qualities must be significantly higher than that needed to be minimally qualified for the position and/or be of a more specialized quality compared to other candidates. A Fellow also may meet the special needs criteria by meeting agency workforce needs, as documented in the agency's strategic human capital plan.

The lists of PMF Finalists' have preference categories clearly identified and are viewable by registered agency users on the PMF website. Additionally, the list of Finalists on the public PMF website will indicate "yes" for those Finalists whose veterans' preference claim was favorably adjudicated.

If a Finalist is a veteran and he/she expresses an interest in working for an agency, that agency must apply the provisions of section 302 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, when selecting and appointing candidates. For purposes of the PMF Program, "expresses an interest" means that he/she has initiated contact with the agency in person or by other direct communication and asked for consideration for appointment to a specific position. This contact can include dropping off a copy of the Finalists' resume at the annual PMF job fair, sending a letter to the agency asking for consideration, sending it by mail/e-mail to a hiring agency, or delivering it in person at any agency office that is considering PMF appointments for a specific position. This does not mean an agency has to contact each veteran on the list of Finalists before offering a job to a non-veteran. OPM strongly encourages Finalists to contact the agencies for which they wish further consideration.

Agencies who hire Fellows usually send hiring officials from their various agency components to the annual PMF job fair, where Finalists may initiate contact and interview. Each applicant pool is individual. The applicant pool consists of those candidates the agency contacts or who contact the agency about a specific position. Because hiring officials from various agency components hire Fellows, applicant pools for a specific position may remain individual down to the lowest organizational level, or even down to the position level.

The only way a veteran may be removed from consideration for a position for which he or she has expressed an interest or for which the agency contacted the veteran is if the appointing agency can demonstrate that the veteran does not qualify for an agency's specific PMF vacancy that clearly describes the requirements needed for this specific position.

Once a job offer is extended (meaning, the Finalist has accepted an offer and an Entry on Duty (EOD) start date has been established) that specific applicant pool is closed. Veteran Finalists who request consideration after a job offer is extended and accepted will become part of a new applicant pool that will be established if/when a new position becomes available.

If the agency selects a non-veteran over a preference eligible veteran Finalist it contacted or who expressed interest in a specific position, then the agency must prepare a written justification as to why the veteran Finalist did not meet the criteria for the position. Decisions must be qualifications driven and based on the specific requirements detailed in the position advertisement. The written justification accomplishes two objectives. Veteran Finalists are entitled, upon request, to obtain a copy of the reasons they were passed over in favor of a lesser preference or non-veteran Finalist. The written justification is intended to satisfy that obligation and thus should be written with the expectation that the individual that was passed over may request to review it. Additionally, if OPM officials audit agency PMF processes, the written justification serve as documentation that veteran Finalists who were part of the agency applicant pool received proper consideration.

Federal Benefits

As employees of the Federal Government, PMFs earn annual leave and sick leave, and are paid for Federal holidays. PMFs are covered under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). Upon appointment, PMFs may elect life insurance, health insurance, and thrift savings plan options. For additional information on these Federal benefits, visit www.opm.gov/Employment_and_Benefits.

Student Loans

Federal agencies are authorized to repay student loans under the Federal Student Loan Repayment Program, as provided for in part 537 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations. The amount paid by the agency is subject to

the following maximum limits: (1) \$10,000 per employee per calendar year, and (2) a total of \$60,000 per employee. Presidential Management Fellows are eligible to receive student loan repayments; however, these programs are *agency-specific*.

Before repaying any student loans, the agency must establish a student loan repayment plan, which is to include the designation of officials with authority to review and approve repayment benefits; situations when the loan repayment authority may be used and criteria that must be met; procedures for making loan payments; a system for selecting employees to receive repayment benefits that ensures fair and equitable treatment; requirements for service agreements; and, documentation and recordkeeping requirements.

For complete details, visit www.opm.gov/oca/PAY/StudentLoan (Federal Student Loan Repayment Program). Again, this is agency-specific. You would need to ask the hiring agency if it participates in this program when interviewing for appointments as a Finalist.

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Career Development

Training has always been considered a fundamental part of the PMF Program. Agencies are responsible for ensuring that Fellows receive at least 80 hours of formal classroom training each year of the fellowship. For each Fellow, the appointing agency will provide a minimum of 80 hours per year of formal classroom training that addresses the core competencies required of the occupation or functional discipline in which the Fellow will most likely be placed upon completion of the PMF Program and conversion to a full-time, permanent position.

Hiring agencies are also to provide Fellows with at least one developmental assignment of 4 to 6 months in duration in the occupation or functional discipline in which the Fellow will most likely be placed, with full-time management and/or technical responsibilities consistent with the Fellow's Individual Development Plan.

How to Apply

Applicants will be able to apply to the PMF Program, via a vacancy announcement on USAJOBS by selecting the link, once activated, on the "How to Apply\PMF Application" webpage. USAJOBS is the Federal Government's official one-stop source for Federal jobs and employment information. Please follow the instructions provided to submit your application by the deadline, unless a school's established application/nomination deadline is earlier than the application closing date. Applicants must complete graduate degree requirements (master's, law, or doctoral-level degree) from a qualifying college or university within the specified time frame (see deadlines at the top of this page). Applicants must have also successfully defended and completed any required thesis or dissertation by that eligibility deadline as well. The application will be accessible from the "How to Apply\PMF Application" webpage between September and October annually.

NOTE: The PMF Program Office receives thousands of applications annually. Please follow the instructions provided in the vacancy announcement. This "Program and Application Overview" is subject to change and applicants are encouraged to check back frequently for any updates. A large number of applicants wait until the last day and very close to the Midnight (Eastern Time) deadline. To prevent delays and technical difficulties, applicants are encouraged to apply early.

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Notice to Native Americans of Federally Recognized Tribes

Indian preference applies to all positions within the Bureau of Indian Affairs of the U.S. Department of the Interior and the Indian Health Service of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Students who are members of a Federally recognized tribe, and who are interested in pursuing employment with these organizations (when PMF positions are available), will be required to submit a completed Form BIA 4432, Verification of Indian Preference for Employment in Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Health Service Only. If eligible, please ensure your documentation is **received** by our office no later than the **application deadline**. Claims for Indian preference are sent directly to the PMF Program Office; whereas, claims for veterans' preference are to be submitted in accordance with the instructions provided above. Applicants may utilize the

blank fax cover sheet for supporting documents found on the "PMF Application" webpage when faxing to the PMF Program Office. Send your Indian preference claim documentation to:

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Presidential Management Fellows Program
ATTN: PMF Application
1900 E Street, NW, Room 1425
Washington, DC 20415
Fax Number: 202-606-3040
Email: PMFApplication@opm.gov

The Form BIA 4432 is available on our "Forms" webpage, as a Microsoft Word (.doc) and Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) file format for your convenience. The PMF Program Office will retain the Form BIA 4432 and only provide a copy to those agencies requesting it for verification.

Contact Information

If your school has selected you as a nominee, you will be notified, and you will receive information on the next step in the application and assessment process. To ensure timely delivery of future correspondence, should your contact information change it is your responsibility to update and maintain current phone numbers, mailing address, and most importantly your personal email address. Only an official **nominee** can update their contact information. Changes to name and email address after submitting the application and prior to being nominated, up to selection as a Finalist, must be submitted to the PMF Program Office by sending an email to PMFApplication@opm.gov. Only Finalists and Fellows can access the [Information Worksheet](#) (also available on the "Forms" webpage) to update such changes.

If your school has *not* selected you as a nominee, you will be notified that your application has been removed from further consideration.

Equal Employment Opportunity

The Federal Government is an equal opportunity employer. Hiring and advancement in the Federal Government are based on qualifications and performance, regardless of your race, color, marital status, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or political affiliation. Reasonable accommodations are provided to applicants with disabilities. If you need a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and selection process, please notify us. Decisions on granting reasonable accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis.

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Common Mistakes When Applying

Below is a list of the most common mistakes graduate students encounter when applying. Each mistake includes a solution. This list is not all-inclusive.

1. *MISTAKE: Providing incomplete, inaccurate, and/or misinformation.*

SOLUTION: Some applicants will submit their application without following the directions. Once an application is submitted it cannot be revised by the applicant. **Please review all application instructions thoroughly.**

2. *MISTAKE: Incomplete and/or erroneous contact information.*

SOLUTION: Most communications from the PMF Program Office are conducted via email. Having inaccurate, outdated, and/or inaccessible contact information can delay or cause elimination from further consideration. Please ensure that you have entered all the correct information; specifically a current and accessible personal email address that will remain valid throughout the application, nomination, assessment, and selection processes.

3. **MISTAKE:** *Claiming Veterans' Preference when you are not eligible or cannot produce supporting documentation.*

SOLUTION: Please follow the instructions regarding Veterans' Preference. If you do claim preference, you will be asked to submit supporting documentation so that your claim can be adjudicated. Veterans' Preference is applied during the nomination process, as well as in the assessment and Finalist selection components of the PMF Program, in accordance with part 302 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations.

4. **MISTAKE:** *Starting the application, and then failing to submit by Midnight (Eastern Time), of the Application Deadline.*

SOLUTION: First, be sure you are eligible to apply. Second, follow the overview and instructions provided. Check with your Nomination Official for the nomination process they require and ask for assistance, if necessary. Some eligible graduate students fail to complete the application and therefore are eliminated from further consideration.

5. **MISTAKE:** *Applying from a college or university that is not accredited.*

SOLUTION: Eligible students must apply through a qualifying college or university. Generally, the institution must be accredited by an accrediting body recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education or must have acquired "pre-accreditation" or "candidate for accreditation status" that is recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. Education completed outside of the United States must be deemed equivalent to that gained in conventional/accredited U.S. educational programs to be acceptable for Federal employment.

Need Help?

The USAJOBS vacancy announcement is made available via a link on the "How to Apply\PMF Application" webpage during the application open season.

If you encounter a problem or have a question specifically about the PMF application process, **send an email to PMFApplication@opm.gov**; include your name, school, phone number, email address, and detailed description of problem/question.

[Link to PMF Application Webpage](#)

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Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program Application

Eligible students interested in applying to the PMF Program are encouraged to carefully read the information in the [Program and Application Overview](#), under the "How to Apply" webpage, and to also check with your college or university's Nomination Official (Dean, Chairperson, or Academic Program Director), on the nomination process.

The PMF Program Office solicits applicants via a vacancy announcement on USAJOBS. USAJOBS is the Federal Government's official one-stop source for Federal jobs and employment information.

Below is the link to the vacancy announcement that eligible students must utilize in order to apply to the PMF Program. Applicants will be asked to submit a resume, complete the online application questionnaire, print a Nomination Form at the end of the application, and submit any supporting documentation for veterans' preference (if applicable). If claiming Indian preference, please follow the instructions provided in the "Program and Application Overview". There are two phases in applying to the PMF Program: (1) eligible students must apply via the vacancy announcement, and (2) applicants must be formally nominated by their schools. If the applicant does not follow the instructions by the deadlines referenced, he/she will lose further consideration and the application will be incomplete.

[Link to Vacancy Announcement](#)

During the application process, applicants will be asked to print one or two fax-back teleforms to complete the application and nomination process. For example, all applicants will be required to print the "PMF Nomination Form" to be used by Nomination Officials; this is the first fax-back teleform required for all applicants. The second fax-back teleform is used by applicants who need to fax supporting documentation (e.g., when claiming Indian and/or veterans' preference). The second teleform is not required for all applicants.

In case applicants lose their original teleforms, the following **blank** forms are being provided as Adobe .pdf files. You will need the Adobe Reader to download these forms. If you do not have the free Adobe Reader application, go to www.adobe.com. If you need to use these blank forms, please download, print, fill out the empty data fields, and fax to 1-478-757-3144. This number is located at our Technical Services Group in Macon, GA, and long-distance phone charges may apply.

PLEASE NOTE: We highly encourage you to utilize the "PMF Nomination Form" generated at the time of your application. By doing so, you will be provided a pre-populated form containing your application data that will help expedite our fax server software to read your submission and associate with your application.

[Blank PMF Nomination Form](#)

[Blank Fax Cover Sheet for Supporting Documents](#)

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