



LOYOLA
UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

2026-2027 Arthur J. Schmitt Leadership Scholars Fellowship

Application

The Graduate School uses a student-initiated application process for the Arthur J. Schmitt Leadership Scholars Fellowship. If any of the application materials are missing or not presented as described below, the application will be considered incomplete by the Graduate Fellowships Committee and will not be acted upon.

The final application file must include all of the following items in the order listed below. The student must clearly indicate the component parts (A, B, etc.) of the application, and all components must be in the order in which they appear below. Items A through E are to be submitted by the student to their department (GPD and chair) by January 6, 2026. Letters of recommendation (Part G) should be submitted to the department from the relevant letter writers no later than January 9, 2026.

The department will complete section F “Department Evaluation” and submit each entire application to the Graduate School. Please ensure that the completed application is submitted to gradschool@luc.edu by midnight on Monday, January 19, 2026 and titled “STUDENT LAST NAME Schmitt Application” to avoid confusion or lost materials.

Applicant Guidelines

- A. **Applicant Information Sheet.** Please note that the Schmitt Fellowship requires that you have advanced to doctoral candidacy prior to June 1 of the year in which the fellowship is in effect. As such you must have successfully completed all required coursework, fulfilled all research tool requirements, successfully completed all comprehensive examinations, and a final dissertation proposal approved by your committee and GPD by the application deadline of January 19, 2026. If your project requires IRB approval, it *must* be approved by June 1, 2026, or the Graduate School will not award the offered Schmitt Fellowship.
- B. **Applicant’s Background.** On no more than four double-spaced pages, using 12-point font, provide the following information numbered in the order of the items given below. You may need to be selective in what you present in terms of publications and presentation in order to remain within the required page limit. Please follow this simple format and include the numbered subheadings. Do not attach a CV or resume.
 1. **Education.** List in reverse chronological order all education above the secondary-school level, including training and professional courses. Indicate institutions’ names, locations, dates attended, degrees awarded, and field of study.
 2. **Honors.** Indicate any fellowships, grants, and professional honors or awards, as well as the dates received.
 3. **Professional/Occupational Experience.** List in reverse chronological order all major jobs held, including military service. Include job titles or descriptions, employing organization, locations, and dates.

4. **Publications.** List all publications in print or accepted for publication. Give full bibliographical citation. Identify any *peer-reviewed* publications. Do not list written work that is in progress or under review (*i.e.*, not yet accepted for publication).
 5. **Conference Papers/Posters.** List all papers/posters presented or accepted for presentation at a scholarly meeting. Give full bibliographical reference.
 6. **Teaching Experience.** List courses for which you have served (a) as an instructor of record and (b) as a teaching assistant. Indicate the institution, department, course number, and course title.
 7. **Other Experience.** Describe any major educational, professional, or personal experiences not covered above (*e.g.*, academic study, service-related work, *etc.*) that are especially pertinent in qualifying you to undertake your dissertation. Explain how these experiences prepare you for doing this work.
 8. **Career Plans.** Describe your career plans and how dissertation fellowship support will contribute to them.
 9. **References.** List the name, position, telephone number, and e-mail address of each person who is writing a letter of recommendation. Letters should be sent directly to the Graduate Program Director prior to January 6, 2026 for inclusion in the application packet.
- C. **Dissertation Project Abstract.** Include an abstract of the dissertation project, **not to exceed 250 words**, written in clear and concise language. Make sure it is appropriate for those outside your discipline. Note at the top of the document your name, academic program, dissertation title, and dissertation director.
- D. **Dissertation Project Description.** On no more than **six double-spaced pages, using 12-point font** describe the work you will do if you are selected as a dissertation fellow. You may wish to make special note of how your work is evidence of your leadership in your field. The questions that follow must be numbered and addressed in your statement. **Do not submit the dissertation proposal you submitted to your dissertation committee.** In drafting your project description, keep in mind that your application will be judged by faculty members whose specialties will likely be quite different from your own, so please use language accessible to non-specialists.

Please note that this statement should demonstrate the importance of your project in the field from which it derives and potential for larger impact.

1. **Subject and Significance:** What is the basic problem or question on which your dissertation focuses? Why is the topic important? What is its significance beyond the immediate focus of the dissertation and field of study? Explain the originality of this project and the ways in which it will contribute to knowledge. Arthur J Schmitt encouraged others to use their expertise to the betterment of humankind. How does your work do that?
2. **Methods and Design:** What theories, hypotheses, concepts, perspectives, and research methods will be used? What body of materials, data, evidence, or other resources will you draw on, and how will you obtain them? Do you plan to do any field work? If so, explain.
3. **Results:** Do you plan to publish the results of your dissertation? If so, in what form (*e.g.*, a book, articles)?

4. **Work Plan and Schedule of Completion:** Describe the steps that you already have taken toward finishing your dissertation and those that remain (e.g., data gathering, data analysis, writing of draft chapters, draft revisions, final approval, etc.). What tasks and procedures are required for completing these steps? Provide a realistic timetable indicating when each of the steps and tasks will be completed.
- E. **Essay.** The Arthur J. Schmitt Foundation supports leadership development programs that ignite talented, intelligent, passionate and purposeful students to challenge themselves to “figure out a place for yourself in the world, and then do something about it.” Thus, it is appropriate for applicants to reflect upon factors underlying their research choices and to address the impact their research has on others, particularly those who are underserved. In addition, applicants should highlight how they hope to develop their leadership potential while holding a Schmitt Fellowship. On **no more than three double-spaced pages, using 12-point font**, write an essay in response to the following questions:
1. How will you and your research contribute to leadership in your discipline?
 2. How will this experience develop you as a person to become a leader for social justice and to create a more just and inclusive society?
 3. How will you develop leadership potential while supported by the Schmitt Fellowship?
- F. **Department Evaluations:** Applicants are to submit a copy of items A, B, C, D, and E to the department chair and GPD so that it is received by January 6, 2026. It is the applicant’s responsibility to meet this deadline so that the department chair and GPD have sufficient time to complete the Department Evaluation Form and submit it to the Graduate School office by the final deadline date of January 19, 2026.
- G. **Two Letters of Recommendation.** Letters of recommendation from faculty members who know you well are an important source of information for the Graduate Fellowships Committee. One of the letters must be from your dissertation director. Use the enclosed forms to request the letters. Be sure to do so in a timely fashion. The letter writers should receive a copy of your dissertation project description, and you should discuss it with them so that they may provide a thorough recommendation to the Committee. Letters should be submitted directly to the chair and program director before January 9, 2026 for inclusion in the nomination materials. All application materials should be send in an email entitled “STUDENT NAME Schmitt Letter of Recommendation” to gradschool@luc.edu before midnight January 19, 2026.

Questions can be directed to Associate Dean for Student Academic Services, Heather Sevenser, at hsevenser@luc.edu.

Instructions for Submitting the Application

Students must submit portions A through E to their department chair and Graduate Program Director by **January 6, 2026**. Completed applications (including letters of recommendation) must be submitted by the department to gradschool@luc.edu by **midnight, January 19, 2026**.

The Graduate Fellowships Committee will make its award decisions by late February.

Decision Criteria

The following criteria will be used to evaluate all applications:

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Description/Criteria Evaluated</u>
Student's Academic Record	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student's academic record• Student's progress toward and likelihood of dissertation completion in the coming year• Conference presentations, publications, research productivity
Intellectual Strength of Proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intellectual and scientific merit of the proposal• Proposal feasibility• Proposal clarity• Potential for broader impact of the research
Students' Leadership Potential in their discipline and overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Record of service/community outreach and/or mentoring• Past, current, and future career plans• Future leadership potential in academic discipline and community• Student thoughtfulness about social change in leadership• Potential to fulfill Arthur J Schmitt's goal of "<i>leadership predicated on ability, knowledge and a sense of moral values</i>"



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F: Department Evaluation Form

Instructions for the Applicant

1. Complete only the first page of this form (Part I).
2. Submit Items A, B, C, D, and E of your application materials with Part I completed to the department so that it is received by **January 5, 2026**. We recommend discussing your application with the Graduate Program Director prior to this submission. Please make sure you have requested letters of recommendation well in advance of this date, as they are due to your department for inclusion in your application by **January 9, 2026**.

Part I.

Applicant's Name: _____

Department: _____ Program: _____

Degree Requirements (as relevant)

Date Completed

Course work _____

Research Tool _____

Doctoral Exam _____

Dissertation Proposal
(approved by committee) _____

Candidacy _____

Loyola Graduate School GPA _____

Instructions for the Department

No more than two applicants per department will be accepted for review by the committee.

The Graduate Fellowship Committee requests the creation of a small (3-5 person) awards committee within the department to complete the remaining parts of this form (Parts II - IV) and submit them to the Department Chair and Graduate Program Director for final submission. It is hoped that this will avoid potential conflicts of interest within the department. If this is not possible, the Department chair and Graduate Program Director may serve as evaluators. Please **type** rather than hand-write responses. Because of the importance of the departmental evaluation, please provide complete information. *Please note that the quality of a departmental evaluation (not the rankings, but the effort) can make or break an applicant in the final selection process.*

On a scale of 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest), rate each applicant's overall potential and the quality of each applicant's dissertation project in the appropriate places on this form.



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Please do not award each proposal a straight 10. The Graduate Fellowships Committee seeks helpful advice via this rating system and requests that you reflect differences among the applicants in your department by differences among the numbers of points you award to all the applicants from your department. If you do not provide a rating, the Graduate School will assign it a score of 5.

To avoid rating inflation, consider a score of 7 as normative, with scores above that only for the most outstanding proposals. This normative scoring should be related to the evaluation of the historical cohort of your applicants to the Dissertation Fellows Program over the past five years. If you think that two proposals are of exact equal quality, you may, of course, give them both the same number of points. **Please note that your comments in support of these ratings are very important to the committee.**

Part II. Assessment of applicant's performance in graduate school.

Please rate the applicant's performance (excluding the dissertation proposal) in relation to other applicants from your department for the dissertation fellowships this year:

- A. Overall performance in graduate school Rating: _____
- B. Research productivity (both quantity and quality) Rating: _____
- C. If the applicant has either published or presented jointly authored papers, what role did they play in their preparation? What is the quantity and quality of those papers and presentations? How typical is it for graduate students in your field to publish papers and/or present papers at professional meetings?
- D. Please make any additional specific comments regarding the performance of the applicant in your graduate program, comparing the performance with other students in your department in recent history.



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Part III. **Assessment of applicant's leadership skills and potential.** Please rate the applicant's skills and potential in relation to other applicants from your department for the dissertation fellowships this year:

- A. Overall leadership ability Rating: _____
- B. Please discuss the applicant's record of service/community outreach and/or mentoring
- C. Please discuss the applicant's past leadership experience, as well as their future career plans/future leadership potential. This may include leadership in their academic discipline and leadership in their community.



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Part IV. Assessment of applicant's dissertation proposal.

- A. Please rate the applicant's dissertation project description (Item D) in relation to applicants from your department holding dissertation fellowships in previous years

Rating: _____

- B. Please discuss the strengths or weaknesses of the project giving consideration to the following questions: Is it theoretically well-conceived? Is it methodologically well-constructed? Is the approach innovative? Does it have real significance for the discipline?

Signatures

Department Chair: _____ Date: _____

Graduate Program Director: _____ Date: _____

Instructions for Submitting the Department Evaluation Form

The department is to submit a PDF of each applicant's completed file to gradschool@luc.edu by **Monday, January 19, 2026**. We have asked that letters of recommendation be sent to you by January 9, 2026 for inclusion in the package and to assist in your nomination.

We ask that you submit all materials in one pdf file if at all possible and use the naming convention STUDENT NAME Schmitt Application.pdf. If you are unable to submit as a pdf, please send all documents in word format clearly labeled.

Any questions should be directed to Heather Sevenser, Associate Dean for Student Academic Services, at hsevenser@luc.edu.



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Applicant, please use this form to request a letter of recommendation from two faculty members (one of whom must be your dissertation director). Please provide a copy of the dissertation project description. The applicant should discuss the project and Schmitt Fellowship with the faculty member so that they may provide a thorough recommendation to the Graduate Fellowships Committee.

G: Request for a Letter of Recommendation

Applicant's Name: _____

Department: _____ Program: _____

Department Chair: _____ Graduate Program Director: _____

Dear Faculty Member:

Using departmental letterhead, please write an evaluation of the Schmitt Fellowship applicant named above. In your evaluation, please comment on the following:

- your professional relationship to the applicant;
- demonstrates leadership qualities and the potential for growth as a future leader;
- the originality or innovation evident in the dissertation topic and/or its methodology;
- the potential significance of the project to the discipline;
- a realistic time estimate for the completion of the dissertation (from dissertation director only)

Please limit the length of your letter to two pages. The letters are to be **submitted to the student's department chair and Graduate Program Director before January 9, 2026** for inclusion in their materials. You do not need to return your copy of the dissertation project description with the letter.

Your cooperation in providing your letter to the applicant in a timely manner is an essential part of the application process. The Graduate Fellowships Committee places great importance on your recommendation and thanks you for your assistance. Thank you!



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