Steps for Applying to the Demers Foreign Language Fellows Program

Pre-application: Scour the fellowship website (bit.ly/ridemers) to get a sense of the program. Review the eligibility requirements and selection criteria to make sure you are a good fit.

1. Identify a program.

Select a study abroad program that fits your profile and goals well. Make sure you are eligible for it, and, if you need credit, be sure to seek assistance from the Office of International Education (OIE).

- uri.edu/international
- studyabroad.com
- iiepassport.org

Note that you will be required to attend the program you have listed.

2. Ask recommenders.

Pick recommenders who can write about your passion for foreign languages and discuss your track-record and talent as a student of languages. They should also comment on the suitability of the proposed language program at helping you to achieve a high level of proficiency. Typically the pastor of your church or your Boy Scout troop leader is not the right person to write a recommendation for the Demers, unless they can speak to your foreign language skills.

Speak with faculty (or other appropriate individuals) as soon as possible regarding letters of recommendation. It is best to meet face-to-face and to provide them with a packet, which includes:

- detailed information regarding your proposed program of study
- your resume/brag sheet
  - Need resume help? Go to: web.uri.edu/career
- your transcript (unofficial is okay; include high school if a frosh)
- a description of the fellowship program, including the selection criteria
- the deadline
- instructions on how to submit the letter
- a link to the fellowship website (bit.ly/ridemers)

3. Open application account at rifoundation.org.

The system will go live by November 1st. Once your account is set up, send your recommenders a prompt. (…but only after you have verified their willingness to provide a letter!) Then be sure to verify receipt of said link. (At this point you might attach your drafted essays.)

4. Order or download transcripts.

Unofficial transcripts from e-Campus are okay. (Make sure to wait until your Fall 2014 grades are posted.) Scan or save the transcript as a PDF and make sure it is legible. Also include any transcripts showing language coursework from elsewhere. If you are a freshman, include your high school transcript. Others may also include a high school transcript, if it demonstrates a strong long-term commitment to the language.

Kathleen Maher, Assistant Director of National Fellowships & Academic Opportunities, URI Honors Program, kmaher@uri.edu
5. Draft essays.

**Essay #1** Please tell us about yourself. Why do you wish to become fluent in another language? What experiences have you had that prepare you for foreign language study, including your academic background? (300 word limit)

- Express your **DEDICATION** and **PASSION** for the language!
- WHY do you want to do this program?
- Language Coursework: How many years total? Have you excelled? What level have you achieved thus far?
- Have you taken related coursework on the region?
- Have you already been abroad?
- Personal connection?

**Essay #2** Please tell us about your proposed program of study. What do you plan to do? Where and when will this experience take place? What are you doing to prepare? How do you expect this experience to further your long-range goals? **Please be specific.** (300 word limit)

- Describe WHEN and WHERE the program is.
- Who is the program sponsor? Is this part of your academic plan (IEP, IBP, Flagship)?
- What kind of coursework will you engage in? (**Emphasize the language component.**)
- What else about the program will help you to achieve greater fluency? Host Stay? Intermingled with native speakers? Internship?
- How are you preparing for this?
- How will knowing this language impact your future goals? Will you be able to maintain the proficiency you gain?

Once essays are drafted, review the selection criteria again. Have you demonstrated how you fit each criterion through your essays, online application and transcripts? Can your letter writers help? Send a copy to them. If there is something you couldn’t address, they might be able to bring it out.

*(Optional) COME TO DEMERS REVIEW DAY!* Tuesday, December 9th, 10AM to 3PM in Lippitt Hall 302D. Drop-in, first-come = first-served. Bring a printout of your essays.

6. Prepare program budget. Consider having someone involved with the program administration review it. Be sure it is in sync with other applicants to the same program.

7. Apply to your proposed study abroad program and follow up with the URI Office of International Education! *(Or do so as soon as possible after applying for the Demers.)*

8. Submit your online application before the **NOON** deadline on January 16, 2015 (includes an uploaded budget, transcripts and, optionally, an acceptance letter).

9. Optionally, request confirmation of your acceptance into your proposed study abroad program (if not already submitted) and submit it to the RI Foundation.

10. Thank your letter writers and inform them of the outcome once you have heard (by 4/1).

**Bonus Tip:** *For technical problems or questions not addressed online (see FAQs) which cannot be answered on campus, contact the RI Foundation. Be courteous and professional!*

Kathleen Maher, Assistant Director of National Fellowships & Academic Opportunities, URI Honors Program, kmaher@uri.edu