

Application for Fellowships at Microsoft Research Asia

Application details for the Microsoft Research Asia PhD Fellowship

Background

Now with even greater rewards and incentives, than in 2012, the Microsoft Research Asia Fellowship Program offers even more competitive benefits for the outstanding support and encouragement of your research opportunities and interests.

The Microsoft Research Asia Fellowship Program identifies the next generation of research leaders with a unique program offering a combination of mentorship, research, networking, and academic opportunities to promising young candidates. Since its inception to 2012, 351 outstanding PhD students have been awarded the Microsoft Research Asia Fellowship honors.

Mission

- To recognize and award outstanding junior PhD students in the Asia-Pacific region with an opportunity to cultivate their skills and knowledge in their respective fields
- To empower and encourage students majoring in computer science, electronic engineering, information science, and applied mathematics to maximize their potential to become future research leaders

Award Provisions

The Microsoft Research Asia Fellowship Program offers some of the industry's most competitive incentives and rewards, including:

- Cash awards of US\$10,000 distributed at one time, which can be used to support research initiatives and academic endeavors including, but not limited to, attending international research conference/events, and subsidizing paper and patent application fees
- Opportunities to attend the fifteenth Computing in 21st Century Conference—one of the most prestigious academic conferences in computer science in the Asia-Pacific region
- Opportunities for optional three-month internships at Microsoft Research Asia's state-of-the-art R&D facility in Beijing—the largest Microsoft facility outside of the United States
- Opportunities for intensive and individualized mentorship programs with a dedicated senior researcher to help facilitate research until graduation
- An honorary plaque, to be presented at a formal recognition ceremony

Eligibility

Enrollment is highly competitive and selective, reflecting the high criteria for participation. The conditions of eligibility listed below must be met:

- At the time of nomination, the candidate must be enrolled in one of the following courses of study in order to qualify:
 - A PhD program with a master's degree with a starting date during or after 2012
 - A combined program of master's degree and PhD with a starting date during or after 2011
 - Special cases may be considered at the discretion of the review committee.
- The candidate must have no more than three years of research experience before having begun their PhD degree
- The candidate must be specializing in one of the following fields: computer science, electronic engineering, information science, or applied mathematics
- The candidate must be nominated by an invited institution and recommended by a PhD supervisor and department head. Direct applications will not be accepted from individuals or universities without invitation from Microsoft Research Asia
- Candidates must be commended by their supervisor as having outstanding potential as a researcher
- Previous Microsoft Research Asia Fellows are ineligible
- A maximum of two applicants per eligible university will be accepted
- Multiple applicants from one supervisor will not be considered for acceptance

Application

The application must include the following:

1. **Application form** to be completed by nominated candidate
2. **Two signed recommendation letters** from the applicant's PhD supervisor and department head are required; each must address specific evaluation criteria
3. **Curriculum vitae (CV)**, which includes a detailed list of publications and other academic achievements
4. Either a **video or PowerPoint presentation with an audio introduction**. It must be a maximum of 20 minutes and include a statement of purpose, previous, on-going, and future projects, research interests and accomplishments, and other relevant information
5. **Transcript** with academic grades
6. **Research papers** (if candidate has published papers)

Submission Process

- Submit the completed application form by the invited institution before the submission deadline of **June 30, 2013**, by email to fellowRA@microsoft.com
- Submit the following via the [online submission website](#) by **June 30, 2013**:

- The completed application form
- Two signed recommendation letters
- CV
- Video or PowerPoint presentation with audio introduction
- Transcript with academic scores
- Research papers (optional)

Selection Process and Criteria

All applications from invited institutions and received by Microsoft Research Asia will be reviewed by the Microsoft Research Asia Fellowship Committee, which is composed of senior lab researchers and managers. A competitive review, based upon the following criteria, determines the award recipients:

- A clear research focus
- A strong academic record, including research publication, previous research experience, transcripts, honors, and awards
- Strong leadership qualities, such as demonstrated passion, commitment, creativity, cooperative abilities, and communication skills
- On-site interview with Microsoft Research Asia researchers may be arranged if needed

Schedule and Deadlines

- Application submission deadline: **June 30, 2013**, 5:00 P.M., Beijing Time
- Microsoft Research Asia review of nominees: **July–September 2013**
- Fellowship program awards announcement and ceremony at the fifteenth Computing in the 21st Century Conference: **November 2, 2013**
- Mid-term report submission deadline: **July 2014**

Commitments

Microsoft Research Asia Fellows are required to submit a progress report by July 2014 to fellowRA@microsoft.com. The report should include:

- A brief description of research projects
- Publications authored
- Conferences attended
- Microsoft Research Asia Internship interest

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the benefits of the Microsoft Research Asia Fellowship?

The Microsoft Research Asia Fellowship encourages and motivates junior PhD students to pursue their research interests while taking tangible and worthwhile steps toward building a successful

career. The internship that comes with the fellowship offers a unique opportunity for young researchers to gain hands-on research experience in China. Generous financial support offers many opportunities to attend international conferences, network with like-minded peers and potential mentors, and creatively consider and pursue research topics and interests.

If I am not majoring in computer science, can I still apply?

Yes, you can apply if your major falls within the broad scope of computer science, electronic engineering, information science, or applied mathematics. Our program is open to research areas outside core computer science, but we expect to see a strong computing component in an applicant's proposed research.

Areas of interest:

- [Internet Graphics](#)
- [Visual Computing](#)
- [Internet Media](#)
- [Wireless and networking](#)
- [Mobile and Sensing Systems](#)
- [System](#)
- [Natural Language Computing](#)
- [Speech](#)
- [Software Analytics](#)
- [Human Computer Interaction](#)
- [Theory](#)
- [Machine learning](#)
- [Web Search and Mining](#)
- [Media Computing](#)
- [Hardware Computing](#)
- [Internet Economics and Computational Advertising](#)
- [Data Management, Analytics and Services](#)

Which university departments are eligible?

This program is open to students from invited universities with eligible computer science, electrical engineering, mathematics, information science, or automation departments.

Are first year students eligible to apply?

First year students are eligible to apply if they have already enrolled as PhD student by the time of the nomination. However, PhD candidates who have already earned a master's degree must have been enrolled in an eligible PhD program during or after 2012.

Are second year students eligible to apply?

Only students who have enrolled in an eligible combined program of Master's and PhD during or after 2011 are eligible to apply the fellowship. Here are some examples:

- Example one, John is a second year PhD student on 2013 and has received the master degree already: he is not eligible.
- Example two, Lily has enrolled a combined program of Master's and PhD beginning in the fall semester of 2011, right after she received her bachelor degree on 2011: she is eligible.
- Example three, Tom has enrolled a combined program of Master's and PhD on 2009, and received his master degree on 2011 from this combined program: he is not eligible.

Do I have to be nominated by my university or may I apply on my own?

To be considered for the program, you must be nominated by an eligible department within your university.

How do I submit my application?

Complete the [application form](#) and submit it to your academic institution. Your school contact must submit the completed application form by email to fellowRA@microsoft.com before the submission deadline. In addition, you must submit your application, CV, and all required materials before the submission deadline by using the [online submission website](#).

When will the nomination results be announced?

The list of award recipients will be announced at the fifteenth Computing in 21st Century Conference held in China on November 2, 2013. Microsoft Research Asia will not notify participants individually.

If selected, am I required to complete an internship at Microsoft Research?

Internships are encouraged, but not required. You may complete a three-month internship at any time after the fellowship awards are presented in November 2013. For more information about internship opportunities at Microsoft Research Asia, please visit the [Microsoft Research Internship Program](#) website.