



Office of Graduate Fellowships

Tips and Advice:

Emerging Markets Development Advisors Program (EMDAP)

About EMDAP

<http://www.iie.org/programs/emdap> - APPLICATION DEADLINE: JUNE 7, 2013

EMDAP, the Emerging Markets Development Advisors Program, is a USAID-sponsored professional development fellowship for graduate students (or those who have recently completed a graduate degree) who wish to enter the field of international development advising, with an emphasis on small and medium-sized business / economic advising in emerging market contexts.

Administered cooperatively by USAID and the Institute of International Education (IIE), EMDAP offers graduate students and post-graduates from any field of study a 10-12 month opportunity to provide technical assistance and development consulting to local organizations in USAID-assisted countries around the world. EMDAP "advisors," are paid and provided with other forms of support (including stipends for travel, housing, insurance, and other needs) for the duration of their fellowship.

The EMDAP program offers participants the opportunity to gain experience and connections in the world or international development. It is a selective and prestigious program, and participants typically use it as a portal into a career in international development and/or international business consulting.

Who is Eligible to Apply?

- **Citizenship:** Applicants to the EMDAP program must in most cases be U.S. citizens. Non-U.S. citizens are eligible only if EMDAP has a work placement in their country of citizenship. Because the list of available placements is not always finalized until after the application due date, it can be difficult for international students to know whether or not a placement is likely to be available in their country. At a minimum, prospective international applicants should check to see if USAID is active in their country, since placements will only be offered in countries hosting active USAID missions. (For a list of these countries, see <http://www.usaid.gov/locations/>.) Placements in these countries are not guaranteed, however, so international applicants should go into the process cognizant of the fact that there may or may not be a placement available in their country that year.
- **Student Status:** Newly graduating and recent graduates (within 5 years) of a master's degree program (MA, MS, MBA, MPP, MPA, etc.) are eligible, as are currently enrolled graduate students who have completed their first full year of graduate coursework (or the equivalent.) All fields of study are eligible. Note that if you accept an EMDAP placement while still a student, you must plan to take a year off from your studies, then return to complete your degree.
- **Professional Experience:** EMDAP recruits applicants with 2-3 years of professional experience in such areas as: management, marketing, banking, finance, management, entrepreneurship, NGO or private sector experience, consulting, and so on. Note that ALL forms of relevant professional experience count: jobs, internships, volunteer experiences, leadership experiences, community service, Peace Corps, military service, and so on, so long as these experiences relate to your competence to offer advice to the business and international development communities.

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Where Will I Work?

Prospective EMDAP advisors do not apply to a specific county, and cannot choose their destination. The application asks candidates to indicate their top three *regional* preferences. The ideal applicant is one who uses these preferences as an opportunity to shed light on their language skills or regional expertise, but who at the same time expresses willingness to go anywhere, even outside the scope of their indicated preferences.

EMDAP placements are offered only in countries hosting USAID missions (<http://www.usaid.gov/locations/>). However, not all of these countries will offer placements every year. The availability of placements is driven by demand and available funding at the local level. Regional expertise or special language ability have the potential to influence your placement, but the focus is on your potential as an international development advisor, not on regional specialization. If your primary goal is to work in a specific country or region, you may prefer to look at fellowships and awards designed to cultivate country / regional / language expertise.

What is the Application Process?

The EMDAP application is submitted electronically via the EMDAP web site (<http://www.iie.org/Programs/EMDAP/Application>), with an annual due date in late May / early June. The application package includes:

- **Online Application Form:** In this section the applicant supplies contact information and educational and professional data. In this section that applicants will be asked to:
 - Specify up to three regional preferences. Expressing preferences does not harm you, and offers a chance to highlight regional expertise or language ability. If you are willing to go anywhere, you should indicate this fact in the comment box after explaining the reasons for your preferences.
 - Share information on up to three professional experiences. These need not be your 3 most recent experiences. Rather, you should choose your 3 most relevant or important experiences.
 - Share information on three overseas experiences. Work experiences, study abroad, or other longer-term academic or professional travel should be highlighted over short-term leisure travel. The point here is to highlight additional relevant experiences, and, importantly, to demonstrate your ability to adapt and function productively in a foreign environment. Choose at least one experience that highlights your resilience, adaptability, and sensitivity to cultural difference, and demonstrates your general ability to cope with ambiguity and/or difficult living conditions.
- **Application Essay:** The essay is the most crucial component of the application. Although it is short, candidates are urged to start early, plan on several rounds of revision, and share drafts with advisors, faculty and professional mentors, as well as with the Director of Graduate Fellowships – all of whom can offer valuable advice on how to highlight your strengths and make your essay more compelling.
- **Letters of Reference:** EMDAP requires two letters of reference. The applicant downloads the reference form and provides it to the letter writer well in advance of the deadline (at least 2-4 weeks.) EMDAP strongly prefers professional references to academic ones, so ideally both of your references should come from a past or present professional contact or supervisor. Academic references are also acceptable if the writer can speak to your professional skills and ability beyond the classroom setting.
- **Transcripts:** Official graduate and undergraduate transcripts are required. For the initial application, you must scan these and submit them electronically with the rest of the application. If you are later offered an award, you may be required to submit original transcripts in hard copy. Order transcripts early.
- **School Endorsement Form:** If you plan to participate in EMDAP during the course of your studies (as opposed to after graduating), you must submit a form completed by your academic program/department endorsing your participation in EMDAP and agreeing to allow you to resume your studies upon your return. The purpose of this form is to ensure that students who take time off of their program for EMDAP will not be penalized and will be able to complete their degree programs after returning.

Applications are due June 7, 2013. Awards will be announced in late summer. Those who are selected typically assume their posts as EMDAP Advisors in the fall of the same year, though start dates may vary by the location of the assignment. Questions about EMDAP may be directed to the Director of Graduate Fellowships.

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