



John S. McCain Strategic Defense Fellowship Program

Choose Service. Become a McCain Fellow.

Program Overview:

The John S. McCain Strategic Defense Fellows Program is a one-year Department of Defense (DoD) development program for recent advanced degree program graduates from across multiple academic disciplines.

Program Highlights:

- Gain DoD experience in the Office of the Secretary of Defense or the Office of a Military Service Secretary
- Develop leadership capabilities to flourish into a problem solver, strategic thinker, and future leader
- Learning and development opportunities
- Mentorship by a DoD senior leader
- Potential for a career within the DoD
- Student loan and training incentives



Additional Program Details

Application Requirements:

Applicants are evaluated on their technical and professional excellence, character, commitment to public service and academic achievement.

- Advanced degree – Master's Degree and above
- Passing background and security investigations
- Completed application package
- Resume
- Official Transcripts
- Endorsement from graduate institutions
- Letters of recommendation
- Proof of citizenship or lawful permanent residence
- Academic writing sample
- Personal statement to provide career areas of interest and motivations to serve in the DoD
- Must have graduate degree, or within 6 months of graduation upon application

Career Fields:

- Policy
- Financial Management
- Intel
- Contracting, Acquisition, and Logistics
- Program Management
- Human Resources
- Operations Research
- Cyber
- STEM Fields: Science and Technology Management, Engineering, IT, Data Science, Data Analytics

The application period for Cohort 6 will open in December 2025.

For additional program information, visit
<https://www.whs.mil/McCain-Fellows-Program>.

Contact the McCain Fellow Program Office at
whs.mccainfellows@mail.mil.

