Faculty Letter Guidelines

Applicants must provide one letter of recommendation from a faculty member at their university who is familiar with their game development work and abilities.

Request your faculty letter of recommendation early. You can begin working on your application immediately, but you cannot formally submit it until we receive the letter of recommendation.

We encourage applicants to contact their faculty member well before the application window opens to confirm their willingness to provide a recommendation. Feel free to share this page with the faculty member preparing your Letter of Recommendation before the application window opens so they have time to prepare a thoughtful recommendation. Note that university programs or individual faculty members may limit the number of recommendations they write.

When the application window opens, you must request the recommendation through the NOVA application portal using the faculty member's university email address. The faculty member will submit the letter directly to NOVA. You can request the recommendation as soon as you begin your application; you don't need to complete your application first.

The letter must include:

- An explanation of how the faculty member knows the applicant
- Confirmation that the applicant has graduated, or is expected to graduate, between September 1, 2025, and August 31, 2027
- A statement that the faculty member recommends the applicant for a NOVA Fellows Grant
- Contact information, including an email address and phone number, so that NOVA may follow up if necessary

Beyond these required points, we strongly encourage faculty members to share their perspective on the applicant's:

- Strengths as an emerging game creator
- Ability to develop, articulate, and maintain a strong creative vision
- Capacity to lead a project, working independently or with collaborators, from an initial concept through a playable prototype

Specific examples of the applicant's work, accomplishments, or potential are especially valuable.

The faculty member must submit the letter in PDF format directly through the NOVA application portal no later than January 10, 2027.