

**Arizona State University
School of Social Work (SSW)
PhD Application**

REQUIRED

1. Personal statement (5 pages, subheadings for separate sections)

- Provide a concise, well-written narrative that tells your story – why you are applying to this program, how it will help you to meet your goals, what you aim to study, why is this significant, and your academic strengths and challenges. 5 pages maximum, 12-point font, 1-inch margins. Address each of the following bolded areas in a separate subsection. Answer as many of the prompts as you wish, they are meant to get you thinking.

- ***Why a PhD in Social Work?*** Why are you interested in pursuing a research degree such as the PhD within the social work field? Discuss your relevant social work education and practice experience. You may wish to describe what experiences led you to seek a PhD. What is the story behind your decision to submit this application? Consider your cultural, educational, geographical, and financial background, or other opportunities and challenges, that influenced your decision to pursue a PhD in social work.

- ***Why at ASU?*** Many universities offer a Social Work PhD, why have you chosen to apply to ASU? What criteria did you use to make your selection? Identify two to three SSW faculty that you would like to work with as potential mentors, whose research interests complement your own. We encourage you to browse the faculty's profiles and CVs: <https://socialwork.asu.edu/content/school-directory>. We encourage you to contact them to discuss your interests prior to applying. You are also encouraged to consult with the Associate Director for Doctoral Education for suggestions. List their names, why you included them, and how you think they would be a good fit for your studies.

- ***Research Career Goals:*** What are your careers goals after earning a PhD in Social Work? How will a PhD contribute to your ability to realize those goals? What do you hope to gain personally and professionally from this program? Do you plan to seek an academic job as a professor of social work in an institution of higher education, as most PhD graduates do? If not, discuss any other professional aspirations you plan to pursue and how a PhD will help you obtain these goals.

- ***Research Interest:*** Describe the area of research you intend to pursue in the PhD program. This may be related to a field of social work practice, population, policy, social issue, or theory. What is the question that you seek to answer through social work research? Why do you believe this is an important area of knowledge development in social work? How did this research interest develop? Consider how your personal, professional, or practice experience inform your research interest.

- ***Social Justice:*** Discuss the importance of social justice to your area of research interest. How do dynamics of power, privilege, and oppression affect your area of interest? What connection do you see between your plans for research and the social work profession's ethical commitment to social justice?
- ***Writing Experience:*** Briefly describe your strengths in communicating through writing. Have you developed your writing skills over time? Consider scenarios where you have had to communicate efficiently through the written word. What is the most significant written work (academic or not) you have completed and what made the writing experience memorable?
- ***Overcoming Obstacles:*** Describe your experience with overcoming obstacles. How do you persevere during stressful times? How might you manage the academic workload and stress of a PhD program? Discuss your potential strengths and challenges in completing this program.
- ***Additional Information:*** Please share any additional information you wish to help the admissions committee better understand your interest in pursuing a PhD in Social Work at ASU.

2. Curriculum Vitae or Resume

- Provide a CV or academic focused resume that emphasizes your research experience or publications, including peer-reviewed articles, reports, blogs, creative writing, or others.

3. Funding Matrix (1 page worksheet)

- FAFSA (will submit or not?)
- Residency status (Az resident, nonresident, international?)
- GRA position interest (indicate interest Y or N?)
- Any off-campus work (FT or PT?)
- Any other financial aid obtained and/or sought?
- FT student status (Y/N)
- Relocate or commute to downtown Phoenix campus?
- Normative time is 4-5 years (how many years planned?)

4. References (3 names and emails)

- List three names and email addresses of professional contacts who will write a letter of reference speaking to your academic capacity (research, teaching, or writing), social work practice experience, and commitment to social justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion. ASU will contact them directly through the email you provide to obtain the reference. Please get each reference's consent and support prior to applying.

5. Official transcript from each education institution attended

6. ASU Graduate College application fee

- Please note ASU waives application fees for veterans of the U.S. armed forces as well as alumni of AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, Teach for America, McNair Scholars, the Higher

Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) and the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP).

OPTIONAL – NOT REQUIRED

7. Writing sample

- Some students choose to submit a writing sample to demonstrate their potential for academic work. This is not required, as not all students have had the same opportunities to develop a writing sample. Examples include but are not limited to a published or unpublished paper, book chapter, class paper for a master's program, professional or technical report, or funded or unfunded grant proposal. The writing sample should be sole-authored or first-authored; for a multi-authored writing sample include all co-authors' names (in order of contribution) and a brief explanation of your specific contributions to the piece.

8. Other supplemental materials you want the SSW PhD Admissions Committee to review