



Tips and Tools for Sociologists

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Here is a checklist for requesting letters of reference. They will increase your chances of receiving a strong reference and convey your respect for the person preparing the material. They also reflect a degree of professionalism that will be appreciated.

- Make your request for a letter well in advance of the deadline.
- Provide the forms, materials, and instructions in a manner which is convenient for your referee
- Check over the forms and materials and fill in any of the sections that are required. There are often sections that the student must fill in – name, degree sought, addresses, etc.
- Provide the following materials to your referee
 - All the forms (with your information completed)
 - A photocopy or text from the school, granting agency, or employer that describes the key details of the program or grant for which you are applying. This ensures that the reference letter will address the concerns of the school or agency.
 - A copy of your 'statement of intent' or CV that you are required to complete for the school or agency. A draft copy is sufficient, but it means that your referee can tailor the letter to your interests and representation of self.
 - A copy of your latest transcript.
 - A page listing:
 - The schools, grants, or jobs for which you are applying
 - The degree programs for which you are applying
 - The procedures to follow for each one (e.g. send the letter to you in a sealed envelope, where you will pick up the letter, send the letter directly to the school or agency)
 - The addresses required for each one
 - The deadlines for each one
 - Any other material that you feel will help your referee understand and represent you better.