Data Science Fellows Program (DSFP)
2026–27 Application Evaluation Rubric

Applications are reviewed holistically by a University-wide steering committee. Reviewers evaluate each application across four core components. Each component is scored on a 1–5 scale.

- **Each component is worth up to 5 points**
- **Maximum total score: 20 points**
- Reviewers also assign a single overall rating based on holistic assessment
- The overall rating does not need to exactly match the numerical average

When evaluating applications, reviewers consider both the strength of the submitted materials and the applicant's broader fit within the Data Science Fellows Program community.

1. Candidate Preparation, Potential, and Fit (5 points)
This component assesses readiness for participation in the fellowship and potential contribution to Yale's interdisciplinary data science community.

Reviewers consider:
- Evidence of academic and research excellence
- Demonstrated preparedness for interdisciplinary research
- Clear potential to benefit from participation in the program
- Strength and substance of the faculty/mentor recommendation

Scoring Scale:
5 – Outstanding: Exceptionally strong, no weaknesses
4 – Excellent: Strong with only minor weaknesses
3 – Good: Some strengths but also moderate weaknesses
2 – Fair: Some strengths, but significant weaknesses
1 – Poor: Very few strengths and/or major weaknesses

2. Alignment of Research Interests (5 points)
This component evaluates how clearly and thoughtfully the applicant's goals align with the mission and values of DSFP.

Reviewers consider:
- Motivation for applying and understanding of the fellowship's purpose
- Connection to the Yale graduate experience and how the fellowship complements academic training
- Clarity of future career goals and how DSFP advances them
- Interest in interdisciplinary collaboration and domain science engagement

Scoring Scale:
5 – Outstanding: Exceptionally strong, no weaknesses
4 – Excellent: Strong with only minor weaknesses
3 – Good: Some strengths but also moderate weaknesses
2 – Fair: Some strengths, but significant weaknesses
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3. Commitment to Community (5 points)

This component assesses engagement with collaboration, service, and broader impacts of data science.

Reviewers consider:
- Demonstrated interest in engaging with the data science community
- Evidence of collaboration, mentorship, outreach, or service
- Leadership potential in interdisciplinary settings
- Awareness of ethical or societal dimensions of data science

Scoring Scale:
5 – Outstanding: Exceptionally strong, no weaknesses
4 – Excellent: Strong with only minor weaknesses
3 – Good: Some strengths but also moderate weaknesses
2 – Fair: Some strengths, but significant weaknesses
1 – Poor: Very few strengths and/or major weaknesses

4. Quality of Submitted Materials (5 points)

This component evaluates the overall clarity and professionalism of the application.

Reviewers consider:
- Clarity and coherence of writing
- Organization and structure
- Adherence to application guidelines

Scoring Scale:
5 – Outstanding: Exceptionally strong, no weaknesses
4 – Excellent: Strong with only minor weaknesses
3 – Good: Some strengths but also moderate weaknesses
2 – Fair: Some strengths, but significant weaknesses
1 – Poor: Very few strengths and/or major weaknesses

Overall Evaluation

After scoring the four components above (maximum total: 20 points), reviewers assign a single overall rating (1–5) reflecting their holistic assessment of:
- Overall strength of the candidate
- Interdisciplinary potential
- Fit within the DSFP cohort
- Potential contribution to the community

Final admission decisions are made by the Steering Committee based on holistic review.