

Fulbright Scholar Programs

NEW TO FULBRIGHT?

If this is your first time to think about the Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program or to wonder about the specific opportunities it offers, here is a primer to focus your thoughts.

WHAT IS FULBRIGHT?

The Fulbright Program, the U.S. Government's flagship international exchange program, is designed to "increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries." With this goal as a starting point, the Fulbright Program has provided almost 300,000 participants—chosen for their academic merit and leadership potential — with the opportunity to study, teach and conduct research, exchange ideas and contribute to finding solutions to shared international concerns.

The Fulbright Program is an important element of our country's bilateral relationships in which the U.S. and foreign governments jointly set priorities. In addition to an annual Congressional appropriation, partner governments, corporations, foundations and academic institutions provide direct and indirect support. The various Fulbright Programs operate in more than 155 countries worldwide and has provided approximately 294,000 participants with the opportunity to study, teach, or conduct research in each others' countries and exchange ideas. Approximately 7,500 grants are awarded annually.

The Program was established by Congress in 1946 under legislation introduced by then-Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas. It is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's **Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs**, which works with private non-profit organizations in the United States and with U.S. embassies and binational Fulbright Commissions abroad to administer the Program. Policy guidelines are established by the Presidentially-appointed **J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board**, which also selects the recipients of Fulbright awards.

Since 1947, the Fulbright Scholar Program has awarded nearly 45,000 grants to support teaching and research in countries around the world. Today it includes active programs in more than 125 countries.

WHO ARE THE U.S. FULBRIGHTERS?

Fulbright Scholar grantees come from all parts of the American academic and professional landscape—community colleges, liberal arts colleges, minority serving institutions, large research universities, private industry, not-for-profits and government agencies. Approximately 500 institutions are represented in each year's competition. Grantees are drawn from every state in the Union, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Fulbrighters are teachers, administrators, lawyers, business people, artists, photographers, and independent scholars.

The majority of Fulbright grantees are new to the program. In fact, some 87 percent of grantees received their first Fulbright award during the 2009-2010 competition. For the 2010-2011 competition, beginning March 1, 2009, another 800 Americans will be added to the **Fulbright Scholar List**.

TYPICAL REASONS TO APPLY FOR A FULBRIGHT

The reasons for applying for a Fulbright grant are as varied as our applicant pool. You may want your family to experience living abroad. You may be interested in sharing your academic expertise in a classroom overseas, or want to conduct research in an archive or work with your colleagues abroad. You may be interested in the development of foreign educational systems, administration and curricula development. Or, you may be planning to globalize your institution and want to create new linkages between your home campus and a foreign institution.

Whatever your reasons, as a Fulbright grantee you will refresh your thinking, and learn about a discipline in a context other than that of the United States.

IS MY FIELD REPRESENTED IN THE FULBRIGHT PROGRAM?

All academic disciplines and many professional fields are a part of the Fulbright program. Scholars receive grants in the “traditional” humanities and social sciences, in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, in the performing arts, and in emerging interdisciplinary fields. Although many awards are intended for specific disciplines at designated host institutions overseas, many others are considered “All Discipline Awards.” These highly flexible awards allow an applicant to propose a unique approach to any topic.

The **Catalogue of Awards**, updated each year, includes indices of opportunities that request specific fields as well as those that do not. Use the catalogue’s **indices** to find what is right for you.

WHAT DOES “TRADITIONAL” FULBRIGHT MEAN, AND WHAT KINDS OF AWARDS ARE OFFERED?

The “traditional” Fulbright Award, or the core award, represents the vast majority of scholar awards and goes back to the program’s roots in 1947. These awards range from three to twelve months. Nearly 800 traditional awards are granted each year.

Traditional Fulbright awards fall into two broad categories – **Discipline Specific** or **All Disciplines**. Discipline Specific Awards identify the specializations being called for by the host country and its institutions. All Discipline Awards encourage applicants to design their own proposal. Country conditions and other factors may limit the scope of some of these awards, but most are wide open.

Most Fulbright opportunities are for **lecturing, research**, or a combination of **both lecturing and research**.

WHAT ABOUT SPECIAL AWARDS?

Beyond the traditional Fulbright award, there are some special awards you may also find of interest. These include:

Distinguished Lecturing, Lecturing/Research, Research Awards

These awards are for U.S. scholars with recognized national standing. Many applicants to the Distinguished Awards program also apply for a traditional Fulbright award.

Junior Lecturing and Junior Research Awards

Designed for recent Ph.D.s, the Junior Lecturing and Junior Research Awards are popular among scholars still early in their careers. In some cases, a Ph.D. is not required.

Seminars

These are short-term or group programs. Seminar programs of from two to three weeks in Germany, Japan, and Korea are offered for international education professionals and senior higher education officials. They provide grantees a unique opportunity to make connections and learn about the social, cultural and higher education systems of the host country.

Serial Grants

Serial grants are shorter term, in-country grants that often involve repeat visits over a specified period.

Travel-Only Grants

Much like the name suggests – these grants offer only round-trip transportation to the country of assignment.

Maintenance Grants

These grants are typically a fixed amount award to supplement or match the traditional Fulbright award. Full-Maintenance grants provide complete benefits, although the specific amounts may vary by country. Partial-Maintenance grants have a stipend or other, fixed support that is lower than the standard award benefits for a particular country.

Collaborative U.S./Visiting Scholar Lecturing or Lecturing/Research Award

This award provides funding for a joint proposal with an overseas collaborator. Currently, this award type is available only in Turkey.

HOW DO I FIND AWARDS THAT ARE RIGHT FOR ME?

There are a number of ways that you can access the information in the Catalogue of Awards.

1. You can search by World Region or Country. When accessing the catalogue, be sure to check the Alphabetical Listing of Country, Regional and Specific Programs.
2. You can also search by Academic and Professional Field. Go to the Awards by Discipline index. Awards are listed alphabetically by major disciplines, along with applicable specializations or sub-fields. Interdisciplinary fields such as area studies, ethnic or gender studies are listed under the appropriate major disciplines.
3. To search the entire range of opportunities open to any disciplines, check the Index of Awards Open to All Disciplines. This is especially useful if a particular field is not found in another index. Using this index can also help you quickly find grant opportunities in countries whose programs are entirely open.
4. Search by Research Awards. For a cross-referenced listing of research only opportunities by discipline and sub-field, access the Index of Research Awards by Discipline.
5. If you are not a scholar, you can search for Awards for Professionals. For openings specifically designed to include U.S. professionals, access the Index of Awards Open to Professionals. Keep in mind many of the awards listed by discipline will also include opportunities for professionals.

WHAT ARE LETTERS OF INVITATION, AND HOW DO I OBTAIN THEM?

Some Fulbright awards require that you obtain and submit a letter of invitation or interest from a host institution overseas. For a few awards, a letter of invitation is discouraged, but for some other awards, one is recommended.

If you do not have any relevant contacts abroad, here are some ways to obtain a letter of invitation. Look closely at the award descriptions in the **catalogue**. The descriptions often include contact information in the host country or the host institution. You may also peruse the **Fulbright Scholar List**. This list includes both U.S. and visiting scholar directories that list all grantees, along with their home institutions and host institutions. You are encouraged to contact these scholars. Remember, they have been through the application process themselves and are willing to help.

Another way to reach out to international contacts is through the Library of Congress' **Portals to the World** or **Braintrack**. In addition, be sure to check with the international offices of U.S. colleges and universities. These offices already work with students and scholars from around the world.

In addition, the international divisions of many discipline-specific organizations could provide you international contacts. These organizations often work with scholars in other countries that specialize in your field.

For additional suggestions, you can always contact the helpful **CIES staff**.

CAN I TAKE MY FAMILY WITH ME?

Usually yes! Immediate family members often accompany Fulbright Scholars abroad. Living abroad offers numerous educational and social opportunities as well as time to live together in an international environment. You will find that some country programs contribute additional funds to help pay for dependents' travel and living expenses.

Some awards, however, do not assist family members joining you on your Fulbright. Be sure to read carefully the benefits information associated with each award that interests you, and consider what you can afford.

WHO CAN HELP ME IF I THINK I WANT TO APPLY FOR A FULBRIGHT?

You should start with the helpful CIES staff. Staff members have considerable experience with the awards they administer. The names, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses of the appropriate staff can be found in a country's program overview. You can also find contact information **here**.

Former Fulbright participants gladly help prospective applicants. You may find former U.S. and Visiting Fulbright Scholars through the Fulbright Scholar List.

Your home institution's international programs office and your professional associations can also help you get information about your potential host country or host institution.

Be sure also to sign up for a Campus Workshop at an institution near you, or for an online Application Workshop. Campus event and Webinar schedules can be accessed from the front page of **www.cies.org**. From time to time, CIES also conducts Web chats to answer your questions.

HOW CAN I STAY IN THE LOOP?

Contact us directly by telephone or e-mail. A staff listing may be found [here](#).

Sign up also for our monthly e-newsletter, Global Citizen, on www.cies.org. Launching in March 2009, the newsletter will feature Fulbright scholar stories, helpful tips on applying for a grant and general updates of Fulbright developments.

The Fulbright Program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, is the U.S. government's flagship international exchange program and is supported by the people of the United States and partner countries around the world.

For more information, visit fulbright.state.gov.

The Fulbright Scholar Program is administered by CIES. CIES is a division of the Institute of International Education.

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