



## **IIE Syria Consortium for Higher Education in Crisis FAQ's for 2013- 2014**

### **Q: What opportunities are available through the 2014 IIE Syria Consortium for Higher Education in Crisis?**

A: The Consortium members are able to offer a limited number of whole and partial scholarship opportunities, test prep support, information about other scholarship opportunities, and various other resources.

### **Q: What opportunities are available for Syrian scholars, researchers, and public intellectuals?**

A: The IIE Syria Consortium is able to offer fellowship opportunities for Syrian Scholars through IIE's Scholar Rescue Fund. For more information about these opportunities, please visit [scholarrescuefund.org](http://scholarrescuefund.org).

### **Q: How do I apply for these opportunities?**

A: This year, the process to apply for consortium opportunities will be different than last year's process. It will be a multi-step process as outlined below:

**Step 1:** First, complete the initial survey to indicate your interest in studying at a U.S. college or university. IIE will then evaluate the survey responses and will determine which students are eligible to proceed to step two. If you have been selected, then you will be notified.

**Step 2:** Students who are found eligible in step one, will be provided a list of the scholarship opportunities, and asked to respond to more detailed application questions.

IIE will evaluate these short answer questions for completeness and English proficiency.

**Step 3:** Students who are found eligible (after step two) will be notified and will be instructed to apply directly to the universities who are offering scholarship opportunities that are appropriate for them.

*Universities will then determine whether or not to admit the students, and whether or not to offer them a scholarship.*

**Q: What are the eligibility requirements?**

A: To start, students must be Syrian citizens, must **NOT** be holders of American passports (or green cards), must have good English language skills, and strong grades. Please note that these scholarships are competitive. Each university will also have their own specific requirements regarding grades, standardized test scores, etc.

**Q: I am a Palestinian- Syrian; can I still apply?**

Yes, if you have a Syrian passport or other Syrian government issued travel documents, you are eligible to apply.

**Q: Which universities are offering scholarships for Syrian students?**

A: Only students who have been found eligible to proceed to step two, will be provided the list of scholarship opportunities.

**Q: How can I contact the universities?**

A: Please **do not** contact the universities directly. If you have been invited by IIE to formally apply to specific universities and you need help, please get in touch with EducationUSA Advisor Monica Ibrahim for guidance on the application process: [educationusa.syria@gmail.com](mailto:educationusa.syria@gmail.com)

**Q: I was not selected for a scholarship opportunity. What other opportunities might be available to me outside of the consortium?**

A: For a list of resources and other opportunities, please refer to: [www.iie.org/syriascholarships](http://www.iie.org/syriascholarships)

**Q: How much is covered by the scholarship?**

A: Some of the universities are providing full scholarships. Others are providing partial scholarships. Often, for the full tuition scholarships, students are responsible for covering their own housing and living costs.

**Q: Who chooses applicants?**

A: IIE will do an initial assessment of students to determine which students might be eligible for scholarship opportunities. Ultimately, applicants will be subject to each university's respected admissions process.

**Q: If many of these scholarships are only partial scholarships, and do not cover housing and other costs, are there any other external sources of funding?**

A: It is possible that additional sources of funding may become available in the future; however at this time, students should plan to cover the remaining costs.

**Q: I was enrolled in a (medicine/pharmacy/dentistry) program and would like to transfer to a school in the USA. Is this possible?**

A: In the USA, medicine, pharmacy, dentistry and law school are all professional degrees that are NOT offered on the undergraduate level. Because of this difference in educational systems, it is not possible to transfer into medical, dental, pharmacy or law school.

It might be possible to transfer to an undergraduate program, and complete a different major in another (similar) field. It is not likely that many credits would carry over, and this is something that would need to be discussed with the individual universities. Please note that there are no scholarship opportunities available for medical, dental, or pharmacy school for international students.

**Q: I already started university in Syria; how many classes will transfer? Will I have to start all over again?**

A: After you apply, and if you are admitted, then each university will determine how many credits if any will transfer over by carefully looking at your transcripts. Providing the universities with a syllabus or course descriptions in addition to your transcripts could also be helpful.

**Q: I already started my studies in university in Syria, but I don't mind starting over. Can I apply as a freshman?**

A: If you completed any post-secondary work on the university level, you should apply as a transfer student.

**Q: All of the universities require the TOEFL or IELTS. However, I am unable to take it because of the crisis in Syria. Will the university waive this requirement?**

A: The purpose of these tests is for the university to be able to evaluate your English language proficiency before admitting you.

*For Syrian students currently residing outside of Syria:* These exams are available year-round in countries outside of Syria. You should register to take the next available TOEFL iTP, IBT or IELTS exam in the country where you are. You can find information about test dates and registration info at: [www.toefl.org](http://www.toefl.org) or [www.ielts.org](http://www.ielts.org)

*For Syrian students currently in Syria:* The next available TOEFL exam in Syria will be offered on January 11th, 2014 in Damascus. You should register for the exam right away. It is offered at the ALTC (formerly the ALC) and the Damascus Language Institute. The IELTS exam is no longer offered in Syria. To register for this exam, please contact the ALTC at: 333-7936.

**Q: What about the GRE or SAT? Will universities waive this requirement?**

A: These exams are also offered year-round outside of Syria. For GRE dates and registration, please see: [www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org) for SAT dates and registration, see: [www.collegboard.org](http://www.collegboard.org)

If you are in Syria, and unable to take these exams, it will be up to the university to decide whether or not they will waive them.

**Q: What are the deadlines to apply to these scholarships?**

A: Each step in the process will involve different deadlines. Please make sure to follow the online IIE Syria consortium website for deadlines: [www.iie.org/syriascholarships](http://www.iie.org/syriascholarships)

**Q: How will we apply for the student visa, to the USA since the US Embassy in Syria has suspended operations?**

A: In order to apply for the student visa, you must first have received an official admission letter from the university as well as the official I-20 form. Students living outside Syria can apply in the US Embassy or consulate where they are currently residing. Students inside Syria can apply at the US Embassies in Lebanon or Jordan. If you have received your I-20 form, and need guidance on the U.S. student visa

application process, feel free to contact the EducationUSA Advisor for Syria at: [educationusa.syria@gmail.com](mailto:educationusa.syria@gmail.com)

**Q: I am unable to obtain original transcripts from the university, what should I do?**

**A:** Some universities may initially accept scanned copies of your transcripts. However, an original or certified copy of your transcript will most probably be required from universities in order to make an official admissions decision and send you the appropriate forms for visa. You will need at least scanned copies of your documents. You should work on obtaining these documents right away as this can take some time.

**Q: Do you have any tips for how to prepare myself to become a more competitive applicant while I wait for the survey results?**

**A:** Please refer to the blog post written by the EducationUSA Advisor for Syrian students, found here: <http://ow.ly/qw7KH>

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

**EducationUSA Syria Virtual Advising Office-** *Free, virtual guidance on the application process to U.S. universities.*

<http://damascus.usembassy.gov/eato2.html>

Contact info: email: [educationusa.syria@gmail.com](mailto:educationusa.syria@gmail.com)

Skype: educationusasyria

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/EducationUSASyria](http://www.facebook.com/EducationUSASyria)

Blog: [www.educationusasyria.tumblr.com](http://www.educationusasyria.tumblr.com)

**EducationUSA 5 Steps to U.S. Study-** *This resource will guide you through the process of applying to a U.S. Institution.*

[http://www.educationusa.info/5\\_steps\\_to\\_study/](http://www.educationusa.info/5_steps_to_study/)

## **Testing:**

- **TOEFL:** [www.toefl.org](http://www.toefl.org)
- **IELTS:** [www.ielts.org](http://www.ielts.org)
- **GRE:** [www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org)
- **ETS:** <http://www.ets.org/>
- **SAT:** [www.collegboard.org](http://www.collegboard.org)

## **College Essays and Statement of Purpose:**

- **Connecticut College's Essays that worked:**  
<http://www.conncoll.edu/admission/apply/essays-that-worked/>
- **Essay Info:** [http://essayinfo.com/essays/admission\\_essay.php#.Umq0ZirD9Ms](http://essayinfo.com/essays/admission_essay.php#.Umq0ZirD9Ms)
- **Erratic Impact:**  
[http://www.erraticimpact.com/html/writing\\_admission\\_essays.htm](http://www.erraticimpact.com/html/writing_admission_essays.htm)
- **New Common Application Essay Tips:**  
<http://collegeapps.about.com/od/essays/a/common-application-essay-prompts.htm>
- **EducationUSA Webinars:** <http://ow.ly/rx4pI>

## **Visas:**

- **U.S. Embassy Beirut, Lebanon:**  
<http://lebanon.usembassy.gov/visas.html>
- **U.S. Embassy Amman, Jordan:**  
[http://jordan.usembassy.gov/non-immigrant\\_visas.html](http://jordan.usembassy.gov/non-immigrant_visas.html)
- **U.S. State Department Student visa info:**  
[http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types\\_1268.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1268.html)
- **EducationUSA Step 4: Applying for the Student visa:**  
[http://www.educationusa.info./5\\_steps\\_to\\_study/graduate\\_step\\_4\\_apply\\_for\\_your\\_student\\_visa.php#top](http://www.educationusa.info./5_steps_to_study/graduate_step_4_apply_for_your_student_visa.php#top)

## **Pre-departure Information:**

- **Youtube video** featuring the Educational Advisor and a panel six Syrian students currently studying in the United States. They discuss topics such as: what to pack, visa

info, culture shock, academic expectations, and adjusting to life in the USA:  
<http://youtu.be/IYQ28B9SndA>

**-EducationUSA Step 5: Prepare for your Departure:** Resources and information to help you prepare for your departure to the USA

[http://www.educationusa.info/5\\_steps\\_to\\_study/undergraduate\\_step\\_5\\_prepare\\_for\\_your\\_departure.php#top](http://www.educationusa.info/5_steps_to_study/undergraduate_step_5_prepare_for_your_departure.php#top)

**-Department of Homeland Security- Study in the States:** A website from DHS, to help International students stay up to date while in the USA

<http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/>

**-Voice of America Student Union blog:** International students blog about their experiences studying in the USA

<http://blogs.voanews.com/student-union/>

**-College Survival Guide from Psych Central:** Psychological College Survival Guide

<http://psychcentral.com/college>

**-College Cures**

[www.collegecures.com](http://www.collegecures.com)

**-Study Guides and Strategies**

[www.studygs.net](http://www.studygs.net)

**-Homework Help**

[www.infoplease.com/homework/studyskills1.html](http://www.infoplease.com/homework/studyskills1.html)

**-Enhance My Writing**

[www.EnhanceMyWriting.com](http://www.EnhanceMyWriting.com)

**-Purdue's Online Writing Lab**

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu>

**Other Financial Aid Resources**

*Below is a list of funding opportunities available specifically to Syrian students- or, to all international students. Please note that EducationUSA Syria and IIE do not administer or endorse any of these programs. Please contact the individual programs for more information.*

**-*Daughters For Life Foundation***: Scholarships for Middle Eastern **women** in undergraduate or graduate study in several countries including the USA's New College of Florida.

**Deadline to apply**: Depends on the program you are applying to

**Website**: [http://daughtersforlife.com/devdfl2013/?page\\_id=3580](http://daughtersforlife.com/devdfl2013/?page_id=3580)

**- *Agha Khan International Scholarship Programme***: 50% grants, 50% loans for Syrian post-graduate students who have already been admitted to a graduate program.

**Deadline to apply**: March 31st of each year

**Website**: [http://www.akdn.org/akf\\_scholarships.asp](http://www.akdn.org/akf_scholarships.asp)

**-*United World Colleges***: Scholarship program for Syrian high school students who have completed or are currently enrolled in 10th grade in Syria. The scholarship would allow students to attend one of the United World Colleges for two years.

**Deadline to apply**: February 9th, 2014

**Website**: <http://www.sy.uwc.org/>

**-*MEROL***: Middle East Rule of Law Fellowship for Middle Eastern professionals to pursue a graduate degree in the field of law, public policy, gender/women's studies, or social work.

**Deadline to apply**: Application cycle currently closed, check website

**Website**: <http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/grants/middle-east-rule-law-masters-scholarship>

**-*Global Supplementary Grant***: The Open Society Foundations offers supplementary grants to students from select countries (including Syria). The program enables qualified students to pursue doctoral studies in the humanities and social sciences at accredited universities in Asia, Australia, Europe, the Middle East, and North America.

**Deadline to apply**: Application cycle currently closed, check website

**Website:** <http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/grants/global-supplementary-grant>

**-IREX Community Solutions Program:** This professional development program is for global community leaders working in transparency, accountability, tolerance, conflict resolution, and women's issues. It is not a degree-granting program.

**Deadline to apply:** Application cycle currently closed

**Website:** <http://www.irex.org/project/community-solutions>

**-Arab Student Aid:** Interest-free loans for Arab students currently enrolled in post-graduate study abroad.

**Deadline to apply:** for Spring semester: January 1st, 2014

**Website:** <http://arabstudentaid.org/loan-application/>

**-AAUW International Fellowships:** International Fellowships are awarded for full-time study or research in the United States **to women** who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents. Both graduate and postgraduate study at accredited institutions are supported. Several fellowships are available for study outside of the U.S.

**Website:** <http://bit.ly/rXIctn>

**-PEO International Peace Scholarships:** Scholarships of up to \$10,000, given to international women to pursue graduate studies in the USA and Canada.

**Website:** <http://www.peointernational.org/peo-projectsphilanthropies>

### **Websites to search for scholarships:**

- **EdUSA Weekly Updates Financial News Feed:**

<https://www.educationusa.info/financial-aid.php>

- **Funding US Study:** [www.fundingusstudy.com](http://www.fundingusstudy.com)

- **Finaid:** <http://www.finaid.org/>

- **EduPass:** [www.edupass.org](http://www.edupass.org)

