



Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program (TEA)

A program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), U.S. Department of State, and implemented by IREX

Application for International Teachers

The U.S. Department of State and IREX announce an open competition for a program that will bring outstanding secondary-level school teachers to the U.S. for a professional development opportunity. TEA seeks to:

- Enhance teachers' expertise in their teaching discipline and equip them with a deeper understanding of best practices in teaching methods, lesson planning, and instructional technology
- Create among educators a more nuanced understanding of the U.S.
- Develop productive and lasting relationships and mutual understanding between U.S. and international teachers and their students.
- Contribute to improving teaching in participating countries by preparing participants to serve as teacher leaders who, upon returning home, will apply and share their experience and skills with their peers and students.

ELIGIBLE TEACHING DISCIPLINES FOR TEA ARE:

- English or English as a Foreign Language
- Social Studies (social studies, civics, history, geography, etc.)
- Mathematics
- Science
- Special Education teachers in the disciplines listed above

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program (TEA) will provide international teachers with unique opportunities to develop expertise in their subject areas, enhance their teaching skills, and increase their knowledge of the United States.

The Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program (TEA) will provide approximately 160 secondary school teachers from East Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Eurasia, the Near East, South and Central Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Western Hemisphere with unique opportunities to develop expertise in their subject areas, enhance their teaching skills and increase their knowledge about the United States. TEA consists of a six-week non-degree, non-credit academic program at a U.S. University. The international participants will travel to the United States in two cohorts of approximately 80 teachers each in spring or fall 2016. TEA provides academic seminars focusing on teaching methodologies, curriculum development, lesson planning, teaching strategies, and instructional technology training. Intensive English language instruction will be offered to teachers who need additional practice. The program will also include a field experience at a U.S. secondary school where participants work closely with U.S. teachers and teach and present to U.S. students. Cultural enrichment, mentoring, and support will be provided to participants throughout the program.

After returning home, teachers will be eligible to participate in a small grants program to request funds for essential teaching materials, follow-on training for other teachers, collaborative projects between their home schools and U.S.

schools, and other activities that build on the exchange experience.

ABOUT THE BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State fosters mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries around the world. ECA strives to achieve this goal through a wide range of international exchanges as authorized by the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, as amended. ECA works in close cooperation with U.S. Embassies overseas to promote personal, professional, and institutional ties between private citizens and organizations in the United States and abroad.

ABOUT IREX

IREX is an international nonprofit organization providing thought leadership and innovative programs to promote positive lasting change globally. We enable local individuals and institutions to build key elements of a vibrant society: quality education, independent media, and strong communities. To strengthen these sectors, our program activities also include conflict resolution, technology for development, gender, and youth.

Founded in 1968, IREX has an annual portfolio of over \$70 million and a staff of over 400 professionals worldwide. IREX employs field-tested methods and innovative uses of technologies to develop practical and locally-driven solutions with our partners in more than 100 countries.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must:

- Be current secondary school-level, full-time teachers in a school that serves a primarily local (not expatriate) population;
- Have five or more years of classroom experience in TEA teaching disciplines: English, EFL, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, or special education;
- Be citizens of and residents in eligible TEA countries;
- Have earned a Bachelor's degree or equivalent;
- Obtain a minimum score of 450 on paper based TOEFL or equivalent English language examination*;
- Demonstrate a commitment to continue teaching after completion of the program; and
- Have submitted a complete application.

*A limited number of participants with TOEFL scores between 425 and 450, or equivalent, will be accepted for the program into a special cohort with additional English language training included in the professional development program.

The Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program promote diversity in the classroom and in learning. The TEA Program supports inclusion and strongly encourages teachers with disabilities to apply.

Former participants of TEA, the International Leaders in Education (ILEP) program, Partners in Education (PiE), or the Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program are not eligible to apply. If you have participated in other U.S. government-funded professional development exchange programs, please talk to the Fulbright Commission/U.S. Embassy in your country about your eligibility.

TEA is a program for practicing teachers. Ministry of Education officials, full-time principals or educational administrators, full-time teacher trainers, university faculty, private English Language tutors, are not eligible.

Staff or families of staff at a U.S. Embassy or Fulbright Commission are not eligible to apply.

Current IREX employees and consultants and their immediate family members (spouses, parents, children, and siblings) are not eligible to compete in any IREX-implemented grant programs, either as individuals or as the responsible party representing an institutional applicant. IREX does not discriminate against grant applicants because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability or any other protected characteristic as established by U.S. law.

APPLICATIONS NOT MEETING THE ABOVE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS WILL NOT BE FORWARDED TO THE SELECTION COMMITTEE. IREX reserves the right to verify all of the information included in the application. In the event that there is a discrepancy, or information is found to be false, the application will immediately be declared invalid and the applicant ineligible.

PROVISIONS OF THE FELLOWSHIP

- J-1 visa support;
- A pre-departure orientation held in participant’s home country;
- Round-trip airfare to and within the U.S.;
- A Welcome Orientation in Washington, D.C.;
- Academic program fees;
- Housing (generally shared with other program fellows) and meals;
- Accident and sickness medical insurance coverage (does not cover pre-existing conditions);
- Transportation to the practicum school (if necessary);
- A daily allowance for incidentals during the university academic program
- A book/professional development allowance;
- A baggage/shipping allowance; and
- The opportunity to apply for alumni small grants.

SELECTION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

TEA Fellows will be selected through a merit-based open competition based on the criteria below. Top candidates will be interviewed by an interview panel and must take the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or equivalent English language examination or provide valid results from within a year of the application deadline. TOEFL scores received between June 2014 and the application deadline are valid for consideration and use for selection committees to assess an applicant’s English language proficiency.

Selection Criteria (not in order of importance):

- Demonstrated commitment to teaching in the field of secondary education;
- Demonstrated leadership potential;
- Professional and educational experience and achievements;
- Potential for developing long-term linkages between U.S. and home country educational institutions and schools;
- Preparedness (including maturity, flexibility, and ability to function independently) for an **intensive** U.S.-based training program with very limited free time for personal travel or sightseeing;
- Willingness and capacity to work and live collaboratively with international peers to foster a positive learning community for professional development;
- Ability to express ideas clearly and effectively; and
- English language skills adequate to manage coursework, develop lesson plans, and team-teach in U.S. schools (a minimum paper-based or equivalent TOEFL score of 450 is required for TEA participation).
- Applicants who have had few or no opportunities to travel to the U.S. will be given priority.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AND REFERENCE FORM
 All applicants must include the Institutional Support and Reference Form, which must be completed by your supervisor at the school where you are employed. The form will appear when you first log in. Please print it out and give it to your supervisor. An English translation must be provided if the form and reference letter are not written in English. The completed form can be uploaded in the Supplemental Documents Section.

PROGRAM TIMELINE

	Application Deadline
March/April/May 2015	TOEFL Testing/Interviews
September 2015	Notification of Finalists
December 2015	Pre-Departure Orientation Cohort I
Late January-March 2016	U.S. Program Dates Cohort I

July 2016	Pre-Departure Orientation Cohort II
September-November 2016	U.S. Program Dates Cohort II