

Frequently Asked Questions about U.S. Government Educational Exchange Programs

Who can apply for these programs, and what are the specific requirements of each program?

Please click on the title of each program on the Exchange Programs page to read more about their requirements and restrictions.

What are degree and non-degree programs?

In a degree program, the participant receives a degree at the end of the exchange program (bachelor's, masters, etc.) In a non-degree program, the participant usually studies in the U.S. for one year or less and does not receive a degree at the end.

What are the age limits for each program?

Most programs do not have age limits, but focus on academic level or professional achievements. The exceptions are YEO and FLTA.

What is an "open competition"?

"Open" refers to the fact that the process of accepting applications and determining award recipients is a transparent process with clear and open criteria. The application procedure and requirements are identical for all potential applicants and not based on personal connections.

Do I have to take the TOEFL exam?

Yes, for the following programs: Hubert Humphrey, UGRAD, Muskie, and FLTA. The U.S. Embassy will pay for and arrange the TOEFL exam for you at the appropriate point in the application process, usually after the semifinalist interviews.

Do I have to take the GRE or GMAT?

Yes, only for the Edmund S. Muskie / Freedom Support Act (FSA) Graduate Fellowship Program. The Department of State determines which test is appropriate and schedules and pays for the test at an appropriate point in the application process, usually after the semifinalist interviews.

May I apply to two or more U.S. Government exchange programs at the same time?

YES, if you are eligible for both. If you are chosen as a finalist for both, you must make a choice. You may NOT accept awards from both programs. You should be open and honest about the fact that you have applied to both programs.

Can I apply again?

Provided that you did not lie or misrepresent information in your previous application, or (in the event you were ineligible) your status has changed so that you meet the eligibility requirements, you may reapply. To reapply, you MUST submit a new application with all new accompanying documents, including recommendation letters. Applications change every year, and NO application materials are kept on file or returned to the applicant.

I'm from a major city; does that help or hinder my chances?

Geography plays a limited role in determining whether or not an individual is chosen as a participant. The U.S. Embassy does not discriminate on the basis of race, nationality, creed, gender or city of residence. Individuals are chosen based on the strength of their applications and ability to impact their academic and local communities upon completion of their Fellowship.