



YOUNG AFRICAN LEADERS INITIATIVE

The application for the 2015 Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders will open on October 7th at youngafricanleaders.state.gov.

2015 MANDELA WASHINGTON FELLOWSHIP APPLICATIONS

Apply October 7–November 5, 2014 at youngafricanleaders.state.gov and email questions to WFZambia@state.gov.

MANDELA WASHINGTON FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION PROCESS TIMELINE

- October 7, 2014: Application opens
- November 5, 2014: Application deadline
- January–February 2015: Semifinalists interviewed by local U.S. embassies and consulates
- April 2015: Applicants are notified of their status
- May 2015: Visa processing for finalists
- Mid-June 2015: Fellowship starts in the United States

Selection Process:

The Mandela Washington Fellowship is conducted as a merit-based open competition. After the deadline, all eligible applications will be reviewed by a selection panel. Chosen semifinalists will be interviewed by the U.S. embassies or consulates in their home countries. If selected for an interview, applicants must provide a copy of their passport (if available) or other government-issued photo identification to verify eligibility.

Who is eligible to apply?

Applicants will not be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, socio-economic status, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity. The Mandela Washington Fellowship is open to young African leaders who meet the following criteria:

- Are between the ages of 25 and 35 at the time of application submission, although exceptional applicants younger than 25 will be considered.
- Are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents of the United States
- Are eligible to receive a United States J-1 visa.
- Are proficient in reading, writing, and speaking English.
- Are citizens and residents of one of the following countries: Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Republic of the Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique,

Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The U.S. Department of State and IREX reserve 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.

Applications not meeting the above technical eligibility requirements will not be forwarded to the selection committee. If you do not meet the technical eligibility requirements for this program, we invite you to visit exchanges.state.gov for information on other U.S. Department of State exchange opportunities.

What are the criteria for selection?

Selection panels will use the following criteria to evaluate applications (not in order of importance):

- A proven record of leadership and accomplishment in public service, business and entrepreneurship, or civic engagement.
- A demonstrated commitment to public or community service, volunteerism, or mentorship.
- The ability to work cooperatively in diverse groups and respect the opinions of others.
- Strong social and communication skills.
- An energetic, positive attitude.
- Demonstrated knowledge, interest and professional experience in the sector/track selected.
- A commitment to return to Africa and apply leadership skills and training to benefit the applicant's country and/or community after they return home.

Application Information:

The application will collect basic information and will include questions regarding the applicant's professional and academic experience, including educational background; honors and awards received; extracurricular and volunteer activities; and English language proficiency. We will also request a résumé (with dated educational and professional background), and personal information (name, address, phone, email, country of citizenship). Additional elements, such as letters of recommendation or university transcripts, are OPTIONAL and may supplement your application.

What is the Mandela Washington Fellowship?

The Mandela Washington Fellowship is the flagship program of the President Obama's Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI). This program brought 500 young leaders to the United States in 2014, and will bring another 500 to the United States in 2015, for leadership training and mentoring, and will create unique opportunities in Africa to put those new skills to practical use in propelling economic growth and prosperity, and strengthening democratic institutions.

The Mandela Washington Fellowship will:

- Invest in a new generation of young African leaders who are shaping the continent's future.
- Respond to the strong demand by young African leaders for practical skills that can help them take their work to the next level in the fields of public service and business.
- Deepen partnerships and connections between the United States and Africa.
- Build a prestigious network of young African leaders who are at the forefront of change and innovation in their respective sectors.

Welcoming Promising Leaders to the United States

Leaders will attend U.S. universities for training in one of three areas: public management and administration; business and entrepreneurship; and civic leadership. Training in each of these sectors will focus on the skills young African leaders need to run better ministries, start and grow businesses, and serve their communities. Mandela Washington Fellows will spend six weeks at American universities and colleges that will provide tailored training in the sectors above, leveraging top faculty, cutting-edge curricula, and local opportunities to impart practical professional and leadership training.

Formal university training will be augmented by workshops, mentoring, and networking opportunities with leaders in each field, as well as internships across the United States. For example, U.S. agencies such as the Overseas Private Investment Corporation and the Export-Import Bank may host Mandela Washington Fellows as interns to expose them to the U.S. workplace and practices, and build their technical skills. Washington Fellows will also benefit from partnerships with American companies like Boeing, which may provide leadership training at the Boeing Leadership Center in St. Louis to extend Fellows' campus-based training.

Investing in Critical Sectors

- **Public Management:** tailored to young Africans who work or aspire to work in all levels of government, regional organizations such as the African Union, international bodies such as the United Nations, or other publicly-minded entities or think tanks.
- **Business and Entrepreneurship:** designed for aspiring entrepreneurs who hope to take on leadership roles within the private sector or start their own business ventures on the continent.
- **Civic Leadership:** oriented to young Africans who are civically engaged and serve the public through non-governmental organizations, and/or volunteer or community-based organizations.