

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FULBRIGHT STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP

What does the Fulbright scholarship provide?

The scholarship provides grantees with the opportunity to pursue a master's degree at a university in the United States. The grant provides full tuition and fees, a living allowance, round-trip travel and health insurance.

How long is the program?

Most M.A. programs take 2 academic years to complete, although in some cases, the M.A. course will only be 10-12 months. Law students will take one academic year to complete their degrees. All grantees must remain in good academic standing to continue their program.

How many awards are there?

The number of scholarships depends on the amount of funding allocated by the US Department of State. Approximately 20 new grantees go to the U.S. each year.

Eligibility requirements

What are the minimum eligibility requirements for a Fulbright scholarship?

Vietnamese citizens from all regions in Vietnam are welcome to apply. Applicants must have at least a 4-year BA degree or the equivalent and have one year of work experience by the time of their application. All applicants must be proficient in English, as measured by a minimum 550 score on the ITP/paper-based TOEFL exam or 79 on the internet-based TOEFL. Finally, [the field of study](#) that an applicant intends to pursue must be supported by the Fulbright Program.

Do I need an offer of admission from a university in the US prior to applying for a Fulbright award?

No. All grantees will be placed at universities by the Institute of International Education after attaining finalist status.

Which fields of study are supported by the Fulbright program?

In general, most fields in the Humanities and Social Sciences are supported by the Fulbright Program. Applicants who wish to obtain a Master's degree in the Natural Sciences, Computer Sciences, or Engineering are encouraged to contact the [Vietnam Education Foundation](#).

Is there a minimum GPA for applicants?

No. Applicants will be evaluated based on the merits of their entire application, including their GPA, work experience, references, essays, and TOEFL score.

Is there an age limit for applicants?

No, although most successful candidates are at an early or mid-point in their careers.

Do I need a Bachelor's degree in the same subject that I want to study for a Master's degree?

No. Master's degree programs in the U.S. do not require that applicants have a Bachelor's degree in the same subject. However, it is recommended that applicants have substantial work experience related to their intended field of study. One exception is Law: candidates for a Master's in Law must have a B.A. in Law. A master's in Economics may also require an academic background in economics or finance.

Applying

When should I apply for a Fulbright award?

Applicants who wish to obtain the scholarship to for the fall of 2011 should submit an application by April 1, 2010.

What are the components of an application?

The formal application consists of an application form, two essays (Study Objectives and Personal Statement), three confidential letters of reference, and notarized copies of all diplomas and transcripts from undergraduate and graduate degrees.

What makes an applicant successful?

A successful applicant is someone who can show a clear connection between their study objectives and future goals and who writes a compelling set of essays that describe their goals. Successful applicants also must demonstrate a proficiency in written and spoken English that will allow them to participate fully in graduate school courses.

It is not a requirement to have an academic background in the field you wish to pursue, but it is advisable to have some experience (via work or otherwise) in the field. Successful applicants tend to have a depth and breadth of work experience in their intended field of study that goes beyond the 1-year minimum requirement. These applicants also demonstrate the potential for leadership in the future.

What purpose do the study objectives essay and personal statement serve?

Graduate admissions offices at U.S. universities place a great deal of emphasis on the essays included in an application. The study objectives essay is a chance to describe your area of interest and academic goals, with specific examples of the course of study you intend to pursue. You should also explain why a program in the

U.S. is an advantage over a similar course in another country. You may wish to present your career objectives and your specialized experience, and describe how you will use your degree upon returning to Vietnam. Your personal statement is a chance to describe yourself and provide insight into how you have made the important decisions that have shaped your life to this point.

Keep in mind that grades in a U.S.-based graduate program are not based solely on exams, as they often are in Vietnam. Many courses require a thesis or other work to obtain a degree. Your writing skills, as demonstrated by your essays, will carry as much weight in your application as your grades and TOEFL score. In addition, a good academic record will demonstrate that you are committed to learning, and a high TOEFL score will be evidence that you have made a serious effort to attain the language skills necessary for graduate study in the United States.

How many reference letters do I need? Which referees should I choose?

You must provide three reference letters. Letters of reference are a very important component of your application. You should request references from teachers who can provide a thorough assessment of your academic performance and professional promise, or from people who have supervised you in work relevant to your proposed study.

I do not have much work experience in my chosen field. Will my application be at a disadvantage?

Work experience in the field you wish to pursue is an indication of your commitment to that field and is considered additional preparation for graduate work. Work experience can often make up for any academic experience you may lack. While it is not a mandatory requirement, a lack of relevant work experience may diminish your chances to earn the scholarship.

Interviews

What happens to my application after submission?

Your formal application will be reviewed by a committee, which will decide whether to recommend your application for an interview.

How many interview slots are there?

It depends on the number of qualified applicants. In general, we usually interview 50-60 applicants per year.

When are interviews held?

Interviews are held in the fall in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.

Who is on the selection panel?

The selection committee is composed of Vietnamese and American experts in a variety of fields of study.

Receiving the scholarship**What happens after I am chosen as a finalist?**

You will be required to sit for the official TOEFL (Internet-based) and GRE exams. MBA students will take the GMAT exam instead of the GRE, and Law students will only take the TOEFL exam. The Fulbright Program will provide you with test vouchers for these exams, as well as transportation to and from the test site if necessary.

Your application will then be sent to the Institute of International Education in the United States. The IIE Placement office will review your application and send your dossier to a variety of universities. The Fulbright Program and IIE will make the final decision regarding your placement at a university, based on whether the program fits your academic needs and whether your qualifications meet the requirements of the university.

Will my score on the TOEFL/GRE/GMAT affect my placement at a university?

Yes. Each university in the U.S. has different admissions criteria, and therefore a low TOEFL score may make your application less competitive. Therefore, the Fulbright Program encourages finalists to prepare carefully for these exams. In general, the Program is able to successfully place Vietnamese grantees at appropriate university programs.

The application instructs applicants to name three universities of their choice. Will IIE honor my choice?

IIE will try to honor your choices. However, if there is no match between you and your choice, IIE will find other universities where you have a better chance of gaining admission.

Can I defer or delay the scholarship to the following year?

No. You should plan to apply for the year that you will be able to participate fully in the program.

Does the Fulbright Program provide any orientation for grantees before leaving for the U.S.?

Yes. The Program will organize a pre-departure orientation in Vietnam for all grantees in May 2011.

Are there any requirements attached to the Fulbright grant?

As part of a U.S. government-funded study program, all Fulbright grantees are subject to a 2-year home country residency requirement. This means that grantees may not apply for a work or immigrant visa to the U.S. until after two years of residence in Vietnam upon the completion of the Fulbright grant. Visit the U.S. Department of State website for more information:

http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1267.html#12.