



Guidelines to Obtaining a Letter of Invitation from a U.S. University/Institution:

All prospective applicants for Fulbright Advanced Research and Lecturing Awards and the Professional Scholar Awards need to identify a U.S. academic or professional host institution and mentor prior to applying for an award. A letter of host affiliation is a required document for the Fulbright awards application.

The United States-Sri Lanka Fulbright Commission's Educational Advising service can assist applicants to research and identify potential U.S. universities/institutions and mentors. Please visit our website www.fulbrightsrilanka.org for information about our advising services and programs. Since researching institutions and communicating with potential faculty will require time, it is recommended that you allocate about 4-6 months for this to be able to find the institution that will best fit your proposed Fulbright program objectives.

Once you have identified a host institution, write to a relevant faculty member, staff or administrator at the institution, indicating that you are applying for a Fulbright Visiting Scholar Award and that you are exploring possibilities of finding a host institution and a mentor to work with during your Fulbright tenure (Academic year 2022-2023). A copy of your curriculum vitae and a description of the proposed Fulbright program and activities you wish to pursue should also be attached, including why this particular institution, program or faculty mentor will best fit your Fulbright program objectives. If the potential collaborative mentor agrees that there is a match between what you wish to undertake, his/her work, and the host institution's ability to support this work, you may request a letter of invitation from your contact.

Below is a *Memorandum to Faculty Associates* prepared by the Institute of International Education (IIE), our cooperating partner organization that provides program administration support for the Fulbright Visiting Scholar Program. You can share the document below with your prospective U.S. host institution contact so he/she understands the role and responsibilities of the host mentor/institution and also the terms of the Fulbright Visiting Scholar Program.

There is no specific format for the letters of invitation from a host institution contact. The letter should be on an official letterhead (emails are not acceptable). The letter might include:

- The activities for which you are being invited (i.e., research activities, special lecturing needs, etc.) and confirmation that the activities can be conducted and will be supported during your Fulbright program, period including the availability of your potential mentor with whom you plan to work.
- The period of time for which you are invited – dates.
- A description of the host mentor's interest in the applicant's project and how it will benefit the host institution and any long-term collaborative plans.
- Description of any in-kind support (such as an office space, laboratories, access to university resources such as the library, and other benefits – if provided).

A single institution is free to send letters of invitation to multiple candidates, so be aware that a letter is not a legally binding pledge, nor does it guarantee an applicant a grant.



MEMORANDUM TO FACULTY ASSOCIATES

(Prepared by the Institute of International Education)

Thank you for considering service as a Faculty Associate for the Fulbright international exchange program. Hosting a Fulbright Visiting Scholar is a rewarding experience personally and professionally, contributes to diversity and internationalization on your campus and in your home department, and strengthens your, your colleagues', and your students' connections with scholars and scholarly institutions abroad. This memorandum describes the essentials of the Visiting Scholar Program and outlines the critical role of the Faculty Associate and institutional affiliation to the program's success.

What is the Fulbright Program? The flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government, widely known as the Fulbright Program, is designed to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and people of other countries. The program's primary support is provided by the United States Congress through the United States Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA). IIE administers the Fulbright Visiting Scholars Program on behalf of the Department of State. U.S. institutions and their faculty have made significant contributions to the success of the program since its inception in 1947.

What is included in a Fulbright Visiting Scholar award? All Fulbright Visiting Scholars (900-1000 annually) receive round-trip international travel and health benefits for accidents and sickness provided by the U.S. Department of State. Most scholars also receive a monthly stipend and additional allowances as benefits of their grants. Some scholars may be partially funded by their home institutions through sabbatical pay. Fulbright Scholars enter the United States under the sponsorship of the U.S. Department of State's J-1 Exchange Visitor Program.

Does it cost my institution anything to host a Fulbright Visiting Scholar? Apart from in-kind contributions detailed below, U.S. host institutions are not responsible for providing financial assistance to the scholar. Your institution should not provide the Form DS-2019 as it will be issued by the Fulbright Program. Your institution is not responsible for health insurance for scholars or their dependents, as coverage compliant with J visa regulations is provided to Fulbright scholars, and as individuals they must arrange for sufficient insurance for their dependents.

How do I and my institution determine and confirm our willingness to host a Fulbright Visiting Scholar?

It is important to determine whether your department:

- 1) has research interests and facilities consistent with the project outlined in the scholar's application;
- 2) would support consultation with department faculty, including and especially the Faculty Associate;
- 3) could facilitate access to:
 - a. an office or shared work space;
 - b. library and research facilities;
 - c. computer facilities;
- 4) could provide all of the above as in-kind contributions (i.e., without fees).

Do I have to provide housing for my Fulbright Visiting Scholar? No. The scholar is responsible for locating their own housing, but may seek your assistance and advice in identifying suitable accommodations. If you are able to assist in this regard, particularly if your scholar is eligible to pursue accommodations through your institution, this is wonderful, but any and all housing arrangements need to be done in consultation with the Visiting Scholar.

I am ready to accept affiliation and my role as a Faculty Associate! What's next?

Step 1: In consultation with your university administrative official (AO) whose name appears on the attached Institutional Reply Form (IRF), confirm the appropriate starting date for the Visiting Scholar. The date should be one when someone can welcome them to campus and help them get settled in.

Step 2: The Administrative Official and the Faculty Associate need to complete the IRF form in full, sign it (digital signatures are accepted), and return it to the IIE contact who initially reached out to you.

My institution has submitted the Institutional Reply Form (IRF) referenced above. What else do I need to do as a Faculty Associate?

Preparing for Arrival:

1. **Communicate with the Scholar:** The scholar will be encouraged to correspond directly with you before departing for the United States. However, you are also welcome to initiate communication.
2. **Planning for Arrival and Welcoming the Scholar:** We encourage that someone be at the airport to greet the scholar (that can be a faculty member or a graduate student or other representative). There is also a critical "Notification of Arrival" form that you will be asked to sign by your scholar at this time.

During the Scholar's Tenure of Grant:

1. Facilitate the Scholar's inclusion and participation in the activities of **your home department**. Note that your scholar should reside within the local community or a reasonable commuting distance from the host institution. Faculty Associates should also be present and available on a regular basis for consultation with the Visiting Scholar. If on sabbatical, for example, please recommend a colleague who could be available during this period.
2. Connect your scholar with any **area studies programs at your institution** focusing on the scholar's region. Making area studies programs aware of your Visiting Scholar's presence on campus early in the grant period (or even prior to arrival) would also allow your Scholar to serve as a resource for students and faculty interested in their home country.
3. Put your scholar in touch with your institution's **international office or foreign student/scholar advisors**. They will make the visitor aware of resources they could provide, and they may be able to suggest activities on campus or in the local community that would be of interest to a visitor from abroad.
4. If **conferences or meetings of relevant professional associations** are held during the scholar's grant period on or off campus, please advise the scholar of these opportunities so they have the option to participate.
5. Your scholar may be invited to participate in the Fulbright **Outreach Lecturing Fund (OLF)**, or **Fulbright Enrichment** activities, which provide opportunities for Visiting Scholars to visit other institutions and regions in the U.S. as part of their exchange. We encourage your support of such activities.
6. Your Scholar may have a lot of **questions about their visa and U.S. tax regulations**. The Fulbright program makes the following recommendations in these challenging areas:
 - Scholars are provided with a Social Security Number letter soon after their arrival. They are encouraged, regardless of the source of their funding, to obtain a Social Security Number and may need assistance locating the local SSN office;
 - You are neither expected nor encouraged to advise your scholar on immigration or tax law;
 - IIE advisors provide basic guidance and services on U.S. tax obligations to Visiting Scholars;
 - Fulbrighters are strongly discouraged from accepting public assistance even if they appear to qualify.

IIE provides Scholars with a wealth of information in their grant packet and they can be reminded

to consult the following resources as questions arise:

- Visiting Scholar Guide: <https://www.cies.org/system/files/private-documents/visiting-scholar-guide.pdf>
- IIE Advisor: <https://www.cies.org/program-advisors>. Your scholar's advisor will likely be the IIE staff member with whom you corresponded in confirming your Visiting Scholar's details.
- on-campus foreign scholar advisor or international office
- your local office of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)
- the Internal Revenue Service

After the Scholar's departure:

Final Survey: At the end of your scholar's exchange, you will be asked to complete an electronic survey which will ask about various facets of your experience as a Faculty Associate. We use the survey results to improve and to demonstrate the significant support that faculty across the United States provide to the Fulbright Program.

Consider applying for other Fulbright Programs! As an experienced Faculty Associate, you will be well-placed to apply for (or to encourage others to apply for) Fulbright Exchange Programs. Some programs that may be of interest include:

- **Outreach Lecturing Fund** <http://www.cies.org/olf/>
- **Fulbright Scholar Program** (US and Visiting) (<https://www.cies.org/>)
- **Fulbright US Student Program** (<https://us.fulbrightonline.org/>)
- **Foreign Student Program** (<https://foreign.fulbrightonline.org/>)