

Fulbright Scholarship Information

U.S. Fulbright Scholars

Beyond the funds related to the Fulbright Scholarship, the program also provides:

- An Enrichment Seminar for U.S. Fulbright Scholars to be held in Canberra on 22-24 August 2012 (transport and accommodation provided). The Enrichment Seminar offers a wonderful opportunity to network with Australian and U.S. government representatives, other Fulbright Scholars, Fulbright alumni and staff and to learn more about the Fulbright Program in Australia.
- An invitation to the 2013 Fulbright Presentation Dinner in Canberra on 21 March 2013 which celebrates the success of the 2013 Australian Fulbright Scholars;
- An invitation to a range of Fulbright Commission events including State Receptions;
- Support in Australia through the Fulbright Commission, to assist with administration and general Fulbright enquiries. The Commission also coordinates a number of state functions through the year to which visiting Fulbright Scholars are invited.
- Access to an Alumni Association in the U.S. to assist your preparation, and in the Australia for social and professional networks.

Answers to Common Questions

1. Administration of your Fulbright Scholarship

To date you will have had contact with either *The Institute of International Education (IIE)* for Postgraduates or *The Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES)* for Senior Scholars. These agencies are contracted to the U.S. Department of State and are responsible for publicising the Fulbright Program in the U.S.; for receiving and screening Fulbright applications and making recommendations of short-listed candidates; assisting Scholars with the medical clearance process prior to leaving the U.S.; and receiving reports from Scholars during and / or at the conclusion of your program.

The Australian-American Fulbright Commission was established in 1949 through the first treaty ever signed between the Australian and United States governments and is a non-profit organization based in Canberra, Australia. Since then, funded by the Australian and U.S. governments and a select group of sponsors, the Commission has supported Fulbright Scholarships for over 2,600 Australians to study in the U.S. and 2,000 Americans to study in Australia.

The Commission is responsible for producing your formal Fulbright Scholarship Agreement and all the documentation to support your visit to Australia. As a Fulbright Senior Scholar your primary points of contact will Ms Lyndell Wilson, Manager Scholarships and Strategic Engagement Ms Natalie Collins, Program Officer at the Commission.

2. Timing

2012 Fulbright Scholarships must be started between 1 July 2012 and 30 June 2013. Scholarships can not be deferred.

3. Length of Scholarship

The U.S. Fulbright Senior Scholarship is between 4-6 months and the U.S. Fulbright Postgraduate Scholarship is from 8-12 months. The length of stay can be extended to complete longer programs, without further Fulbright funding, however approvals must be sought from the Commission.

4. Taking up Other Scholarships as well as the Fulbright Scholarship

Fulbright Scholars may receive other Scholarships as well as the Fulbright, as long as it does not fully-fund their program in Australia. Fulbright Scholars are encouraged to seek fee-waivers or scholarships when applying to, or after being accepted by, Australian Universities. Please note that Universities Australia encourages Australian universities to waive tuition fees for Fulbright Postgraduate Scholars enrolling in courses, but each application is considered by universities on a case by case basis.

5. Payment of Fulbright Scholarship

Shorter Fulbright Scholarships (up to six months) for Senior Scholars are made in one payment prior to departure from the U.S. or upon arrival in Australia (as they choose). Fulbright Scholarships for Postgraduate Scholars are made in four payments:

- travel allowance prior to departure (or into St George account),
- first six months stipend prior to departure from America or upon arrival in Australia (as they choose);
- a second stipend payment (for four months) mid year and;
- a final stipend payment (for two months) when returning to the U.S.

To assist Fulbright Scholars, we have negotiated a facility with St George Bank that will allow you to open a bank account in Australia prior to your arrival. You will be sent an application for a St George Bank account and more details on banking and payments in your Fulbright Scholarship Agreement pack. Funds paid to Fulbright Scholars in Australia are paid in A\$'s into your St George bank account upon your arrival (unless otherwise requested).

Scholars have found this account to be extremely useful to ease their transition to Australia, however you can change banks once you are established in Australia. Alternatively, you may choose not to open an Australian account and have payments deposited to your nominated U.S. account.

6. Taxation

Fulbright Scholarships paid by the Commission are tax free in Australia. Exemption status of Fulbright Scholarship is found under section 23 (za) of the Australian Taxation Act. Scholars are encouraged to check the U.S. tax situation at the Fulbright page on the IRS website for further details: <http://www.irs.gov>

7. Medical Report

Your Fulbright Scholarship is conditional upon you receiving medical clearance from the U.S. Department of State. It is important that you attend to the medical examination at the earliest possible date. **We will be unable to activate your Scholarship (i.e. pay you any funds) until such time as we receive notification of your medical clearance.**

Please be aware that you may also be required to undergo a medical examination in order to obtain your 406 visa to Australia particularly if your stay in Australia is longer than 12 months. You will be advised if a medical is required for your visa, AFTER you have submitted your visa application form. For further details see: <http://www.austemb.org/DIMA/visiting/exchange.html>

8. Health Insurance

This is an important issue for Fulbright Scholars to clarify prior to departure from the U.S., particularly Fulbright Scholars with dependents. Fulbright Scholars are provided minimal coverage under the Accident, Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) up to a maximum of US\$100,000 (dependents are not covered by this insurance). All U.S. Fulbright Scholars visiting Australia will be covered by Medicare, the National Health Care Program. Further details on Medicare will be provided in your Welcome Pack which will enable you to register on arrival in Australia.

Note: This coverage may not be totally complete for some Fulbright Scholars. U.S. Fulbright Scholars are responsible for ensuring that they have adequate health insurance coverage to meet their needs. Please note that dependents are not covered by the Australian Medicare Program or ASPE Insurance. In addition, ASPE insurance does not cover Fulbright Scholars for any time they leave Australia during their Fulbright program.

9. Visas

The Fulbright Program is an educational exchange program. Fulbright Scholars **must** travel to Australia on a Government Agreement (subclass 406 visa) to enter and stay in Australia. As mentioned in Section 7 above, a medical examination may be required to obtain the visa, but evidence required to obtain clearance is determined by each Australian Post, depending upon what the applicant will be doing while in Australia, and how long they will be here. The 406 visa is a multiple-entry visa. Scholars are required to contact their nearest Australian Consulate to obtain the necessary application forms. Please note that you will be charged an Australian visa application fee of approx \$260. For further information contact www.austemb.org/consular/usa.post.htm

The awarding of a Fulbright Scholarship does not guarantee that a visa will be issued to enter Australia. Recipients of Fulbright Scholarships must still meet Australian Government immigration requirements in order to obtain a visa.

Please note: As a Fulbright Scholar you must enter Australia on a 406 visa when you begin your Fulbright. Entrance directly prior to this on any other form of visa may require you to return to the U.S. before then commencing your Fulbright.

Dependents: The Fulbright Scholar plus all dependents are included on the one visa application form. The passport of each person mentioned must accompany the visa application when submitted to the Australian Embassy/ relevant Consulate.

Further detailed information on obtaining your visa will be provided in the next pack of information.

10. Work in Australia during a Fulbright Scholarship

Scholars can work in Australia for a maximum of up to of 20 hours per week at their host institution or university although it is not recommended for Postgraduates in your first semester. Scholars should be aware that there is a **work limitation** placed on 406 visas, which means that holders:

- cannot cease to be employed by the employer in relation to which the visa was granted;
- work in a position or occupation inconsistent with the position or occupation in relation to which the visa was granted; or
- engage in work for another person or on behalf of another person or on the holder's own account while undertaking the employment in relation to which the visa was granted.

12. Family Dependents

Fulbright Senior Scholarships also include an airfare and small stipend for one dependent. To access these funds the dependent must be staying in Australia for a minimum of 80% of the total period of the Fulbright Scholarship. Details of accompanying dependents must be included on the *Supplementary Information Form* (Enclosed).

In addition, school age children of Fulbright Scholars who enroll in the public school system in Australia are eligible to receive a tuition fee waiver. If you will be accompanied by school age child/ren, please contact, Ms Lyndell Wilson, Manager Scholarships and Strategic Engagement who will organise a letter of support from the Fulbright Commission for you to present to the relevant school administration on enrolment.

13. Accommodation

Fulbright Scholars are expected to organise their own accommodation. Please note that the rental market in most Australian capital cities is very tight at the moment, so we do advise you to consider you options and start making approaches some months prior to your arrival in Australia. We will put you in contact with current and recent U.S. Scholars who may be able to assist.

14. Host Universities

If you have not already contacted the institution in Australia with which you are to be affiliated, you are urged to do so as soon as possible, so that you can reach an early agreement on the length of your stay and the requirements necessary for admission (if required).

As mentioned earlier, all higher education institutions in Australia are required by the Federal Government to charge full tuition to overseas students. In the past, most universities have agreed to waive these fees for American students holding Fulbright Scholarships. Please be aware that waiving of fees is NOT automatic and it is your responsibility to confirm the university to which you are applying is prepared to waive fees for the program of study or research that you will undertake.

Should you wish to change your host university from the one nominated in your Fulbright application, you will need to seek approval and authorisation from Fulbright Commission in Canberra.