

Information for your visit to Australia

Highlighted below are some important matters that need attention prior to your arrival in Australia.
Please read this information carefully.

Your host Institution

It is your responsibility to finalise arrangements with your host institution. This includes all matters related to your enrolment, waiving of tuition fees, preferred course, research timetables, access to office space including phone, email, copiers etc

In the past, Australian universities have agreed to waive tuition fees for Fulbright Postgraduate Scholars enrolling in coursework. However, the waiving of tuition fees is at the discretion of your host institution and considered case-by-case. This should be negotiated with your host institution prior to accepting their offer of affiliation.

The Fulbright Commission is happy to assist with negotiations if required.

Obtaining a visa

As a Fulbright Scholar, you should apply for a Government Agreement (Subclass 406) visa to enter and stay in Australia.

Please note the following:

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

Information about applying for this visa and a copy of form 147 *Application for a temporary residence visa (non-business)* can be obtained from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship website at:
<http://www.immi.gov.au/visitors/special-activity/406>

Alternatively, if you are currently resident in the United States you can contact the Embassy of Australia in Washington for assistance. **Please tell Consulate staff that you are a Fulbright Scholar and as such, you wish to apply for a Subclass 406 visa.**

Dependents travelling with you should be included on your visa application form. Passports for all persons included under the visa should be submitted to the Consulate with the visa documentation. You may be required to undergo a medical examination (check the abovementioned visa web site). Note - this is a separate medical examination to the one required by the U.S. Department of State.

Tips for completing your visa application – Form 147

Part A – Visa information

- Q1 Enter 'Government Agreement (Subclass 406) visa' as the subclass you are applying for
- Q3 Enter 'Fulbright Agreement' as the Name of agreement
- Q3 Enter 'Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and U.S. Department of State' as the Australian and overseas government bodies party to the agreement
- Q5 Answer 'No'

Part C – Visa details

- Q24 Enter the dates as shown on the first page of your signed Fulbright Scholarship Agreement

Part F – Employment /Activity details

- Q28 Enter Fulbright Scholarship as the activity you propose to undertake in Australia
- Q31 Enter Australian-American Fulbright Commission as Name of individual or organisation

Part J – Health and character details

- Q39 You are required to ensure that you have made adequate arrangements in Australia for health insurance for yourself and all accompanying dependents. As a Fulbright Scholar you are eligible for Medicare which is sufficient to meet this criterion. Therefore, if you are travelling alone it is sufficient to answer 'Yes' and enter 'Medicare' as the type of health insurance cover. If, however, you will be accompanied by dependent family members you must also provide evidence regarding the health insurance arrangements you have made for them.

Please attach a copy of your letter of support from the Australian-American Fulbright Commission and one of the five copies of your signed Fulbright Scholarship Agreement to your visa application form.

Once your visa has been issued, please post or fax a copy of the visa page from your passport and sign the bottom of the page to certify that this is a copy of a page from your passport. I am then authorised to forward funds to pay for your travel, so long as you have received medical clearance from the Department of State.

Medical clearance

Your scholarship is conditional upon you receiving medical clearance from the U.S. Department of State through CIES. It is important that you attend to the medical examination at the earliest possible date. We are unable to activate your scholarship (i.e. make any scholarship payments) until we receive notification of your medical clearance.

Travel arrangements

You are responsible for organising your own travel. Where possible, you should travel on either Australian or American carriers.

Prices vary greatly between travel companies, so it pays to shop around for the best travel deal. Please note that no further travel funds will be paid. The amount provided under the scholarship assumes the most economical fare by the most direct route to your destination. We have no objections to you including stopovers or variations to your travel route, so long as any additional costs are born by you. **Please provide a copy of your travel itinerary as soon as it is confirmed.**

Domestic air travel within Australia is very expensive so we would advise you to consider purchasing domestic air travel prior to departing from the United States. International travellers have access to large discounts on domestic travel, which are not available once you have entered Australia. **Note: Included in your Travel Allowance is US\$300 to assist you to attend Fulbright related events and \$500 for travel to conferences, presentation of papers, while in Australia. You will be required to report on how you've utilised these funds in your Fulbright Final Report.**

Payment of the travel allowance

We recommend you organise your own flights once you have received your 406 visa. Your travel allowance will be deposited into either your U.S. account as nominated by you, or your St George bank account in Australia. (Please see accompanying Payment Process Form for further information on standard payment and variations.) Payment of the travel allowance and other benefits is conditional on receipt of your visa confirmation and travel itinerary.

If you require the travel allowance paid in USD prior to your departure, we will need the following information by email:

Account Name; Account Number; Bank Name; Bank Address (Physical); Your U.S. Address; Routing or Swift Number

Note: Funds usually take 24-48 hours to reach your account once sent.

A Travel Allowance Acknowledgement Form will be included in your Welcome Packet (see information at end of this document). This form is an acknowledgement by you that you have received Fulbright funds which are to be applied to your travel. You are required to sign the Form and return it to the Commission on receipt of your travel allowance. If you have elected to receive all payments, including your travel allowance to your St George Account, you will be asked to complete a Payment Acknowledgement Form, which will be included in your Welcome Packet.

Health insurance while in Australia

(i) Medicare

Medical coverage in Australia is different from the United States. We have a national health care scheme, called Medicare, which entitles all Australians to basic medical services.

Fulbright Scholars are eligible to receive Medicare coverage. A scholar is covered free of charge provided application is made to Medicare. The coverage provided by Medicare is usually adequate for most scholars' needs. See Medicare website for further information: <http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/>

Instructions on how to apply to Medicare are provided by the Commission on your arrival in Australia.

Supplementary cover above the services provided by Medicare is available from private health insurance companies in Australia.

(ii) US Department of State Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges

As a Fulbright Scholar, you are also covered by the Department of State's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE). A brochure explaining this program is enclosed. Please read this brochure carefully as it contains important information on the cover provided, schedule of benefits, how to make a claim, etc.

An ASPE identification card will be included in your Welcome Packet.

The ASPE is not an all-inclusive health policy. It is subject to specific limitations and does not cover any costs associated with pre-existing conditions. Under this program, a scholar is automatically covered for injury or sickness up to a limit of US\$100,000. Coverage begins at the time you depart from the United States and continues until you return. **However, it does not cover stopovers while en route to Australia nor stopovers while returning to the United States at the completion of your scholarship. You will need to take out travel insurance for this purpose.**

Supplemental insurance may also be purchased through the manager of ASPE, see the enclosed brochure.

(iii) Dependents

Dependents are **not** covered by ASPE, **nor** are they eligible to join Medicare. Therefore, health insurance should be obtained to cover any accompanying dependents from the day they depart the United States to the day they return.

As a courtesy, the Department of State makes a policy available for purchase through the Institute of International Education (IIE), known as Liaison International. Information about this supplemental insurance will be forwarded by IIE. In addition, health insurance for dependents may be taken out on arrival in Australia through the insurer, MBF.

It is your responsibility to ensure that adequate medical coverage is provided for dependents.

Banking arrangements in Australia

The banking system in Australia is quite different from that in America. To assist Fulbright Scholars, we have negotiated a facility with St George Bank that will allow scholars to open a bank account in Australia prior to arrival. This is an option only and it is recommended that you read the enclosed *US Senior Scholar Payment Process* forms for additional details. Should you opt to open a St George account, you can transfer funds and open up another account in Australia when you arrive or alternatively, you can have funds paid into your US account.

With regard to the St George account, only you may activate the account. The Commission will pay into the account prior to your arrival the following:

- Travel allowance (AUD)
- stipend (calculated from your Australian arrival date);
- establishment allowance; and
- baggage allowance.

The bank account will come with an Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) Card that will be included in your Welcome Packet. Once the account is activated, you will be able to use your card to access the funds.

To activate the account you need only telephone the branch (the contact person at the branch and the telephone number will be provided in your Welcome Packet) and identify yourself. The bank officer, to establish a positive identification, will ask you some questions relating to the attached form. Once this is done, you will be issued with a pin number for your ATM Card and you will be able to use the Card to access money anywhere in Australia through either the ATM network or the Electronic Funds Transfer at Point of Sale (EFTPOS) network.

The EFTPOS system allows you to pay for goods and services via your ATM card and funds are withdrawn from your account and deposited to the merchants' accounts electronically. EFTPOS is used widely in supermarkets, petrol (gas) stations and other retail stores in Australia. Cheques are not usually accepted at retail stores or supermarkets without prior arrangement.

Unfortunately, bank fees in Australia are considerably higher than in the United States but we believe the charges associated with this account are reasonable when compared to the rest of the market.

In order to take advantage of this facility, you must complete the enclosed Identification Reference Form and the Request for Account Form and return them to me. The following points may assist you.

Completing the Identification Reference Form

Read carefully the instructions on the back of the Form.

The following details should be completed as listed:

Account number: leave blank

CIS number: leave blank

The referee needs to see two of the three primary documents listed. These are generally your passport and your driver's licence. A birth certificate is also acceptable.

If you would like a joint bank account opened with two signatories, the bank requires another Identification Reference form to be completed by the second signatory. Simply photocopy the current form and complete as necessary for the second signatory.

Completing the Request for Account Form

Complete on the following sections as indicated by coloured stickers.

1. Applicant 1 (on inside Left page)

You will need to complete the following details:

Full Name:

Other Names:

Address: Enter the Commission's address as follows:

**PO Box 9541
DEAKIN ACT 2600**

Birth Date:

Marital Status:

ABN: leave blank

Home telephone: leave blank

Business telephone: enter the Commission's telephone number (02) 6260 4460

Mobile telephone: leave blank

Facsimile number: enter the Commission's fax number (02) 6260 4461

ACC REL: leave blank

CARD No leave blank

The Commission's address is used for the purpose of opening the account, however please notify the St George bank of your Australian address as soon as possible, as regular statements will be posted to you.

2. Declaration by each applicant and each signatory

If there is only one signatory to the account (ie you), sign at bottom of page in box *Signature Applicant 1*.

If there are two or more signatories to operate the account, you will need to complete the *Signature Applicant 2* - complete as above. You will also need to complete the *Method of Operation* section within the *Declaration* indicating that you would like *Anyone to Operate* the account. You will also need the second signatory's signature in the box *Signature Applicant2/Signatory*.

If you decide not to take advantage of this facility, a cheque will be included in your Welcome Packet. You will need to provide the Commission with banking details as soon as you have established an account so that future stipend payments may be paid directly into it.

The Welcome Packet

On arrival in Australia, you will find waiting for you at your host institution a Welcome Packet which will be posted to your supervisor or colleague as nominated on the Supplementary Information Form. This packet will contain the following:

- The St George ATM Card and account details. The amount paid will include your travel, stipend, the establishment allowance and the excess baggage allowance
- Confirmation of Arrival in Australia Form
- Travel Allowance Acknowledgement or Payment Acknowledgement Form
- Instructions on how to enrol in Medicare (the Australian National Health Care Scheme).

- US Department of State Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) ID card and claim form.
- List of current US Fulbright Scholars in Australia (this will be an update on the enclosed list).
- Updated contact details for the Fulbright Alumni association in Australia, the Australian Fulbright Association (AFA).
- A copy of the latest edition of *The Fulbrighter*, a quarterly newsletter for Alumni.

In order to arrange health insurance and for funds to be available on arrival, I require a copy of your travel itinerary as soon as it is confirmed.

Accommodation in Australia

Information on what accommodation is available at universities in Australia is available on their websites. Many universities can also assist in finding off-campus housing.

If you do not have accommodation to go into on arrival, please ensure that you have booked temporary accommodation prior to arriving for your first few nights. Don't assume that you will be able to get cheap accommodation easily at short notice. Your travel agent or host institution will be able to organise a hotel booking for you.

Current and previous US Fulbright Scholars

I am also enclosing for your information; the names and addresses of Fulbright Scholars currently in Australia and some recently returned Fulbright Scholars that you might like to contact. All have agreed to the distribution of their contact details so that they can offer any assistance, which might ease your transition into living in Australia. I encourage you to accept their offer of help. I also encourage you to go to the Fulbright website, under Scholar Resources, where you will find tips on living and travel within Australia which has been compiled from previous scholars Final Reports. Also enclosed for your interest is a booklet published by Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Australia in Brief*.

The above information is designed to make your preparations to come to Australia as smooth as possible. If you do not understand any of the above, or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me e-mail: **ncollins@fulbright.com.au**