

2013-2014 BURKINA FASO COUNTRY GUIDELINES FOR U.S. FULBRIGHT SCHOLARS AND STUDENTS

The Fulbright Program is sponsored and administered by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the United States Department of State, and awards scholarships to lecture, conduct research, and study abroad. The program is managed in country by the Public Diplomacy Section (PD) at U.S. Embassy Ouagadougou.

Country guidelines contain **summary** information about the Fulbright award, and logistical and program support provided through ECA, contact information for PD or the U.S. embassy, and advisory information about your host country. These guidelines are an important resource, and should be reviewed prior to departing for your host country. This document may be supplemented by PD during your arrival orientation at post. Please note that this information is subject to change.

THE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY SECTION OF U.S. EMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

The Public Diplomacy Section (PD) is responsible for managing Fulbright in Burkina Faso. PD offices are located at the U.S. embassy. Embassy hours are 08:00 am to 05:00 pm from Monday to Friday. The Embassy website is ouagadougou.usembassy.gov.

Public Affairs Officer Meg Riggs: riggsme@state.gov
Assistant Public Affairs Officer LaSean Brown: brownlw@state.gov
Cultural Affairs Assistant Yolande Kabore: kaboreye@state.gov

PD via Embassy switchboard: (226) 50 49 53 00
Tel: (226) 50 49 53 00 ext. 5730; Fax: (226) 50 49 56 32
Embassy after-hours number: (226) 50 49 53 00

Fulbright scholars/students in the U.S. may write to PD at:

Public Affairs Officer
2440 Ouagadougou Place
Dulles, VA 20189-2440

All Fulbright grantees must register with the embassy in case of emergency. This can be done on this website at any time: <http://www.travel.state.gov/>

YOUR FULBRIGHT GRANT AND THE BINATIONAL NATURE OF THE PROGRAM

The Fulbright Program is administered in accordance with regulations established by the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FSB). The Board has ruled that Fulbright grant funds cannot duplicate benefits received under other auspices. Therefore, grantees who receive

host government or host institution financial contributions (for example, international travel, per diem/subsistence/housing allowance) in cash or kind do not receive allowances for these grant benefits. Grantees who receive a concurrent grant to the same country under other auspices may have their Fulbright grants reduced if Fulbright grant benefits are duplicated by the other grant.

Host country governments and institutions support the exchange program through two ways: (a) *monetary contributions*, which result in a sharing of program costs, or (b) *non-monetary assistance* to enhance the exchange experience for the guest scholar.

WHAT THE FULBRIGHT GRANT PROVIDES

For Student Grantees

Fulbright student grants have two components: (1) a base amount, and (2) a monthly maintenance allowance. Additional funds may be included in your grant as allowances and are described separately. Benefits authorized by ECA are paid in U.S. dollars through the Institute of International Education (IIE).

1. The **base amount** is provided to cover initial or one-time start-up expenses such as:
 - a. Unaccompanied and/or excess baggage.
 - b. Miscellaneous costs, such as visa fees, permits, medical exams, immunizations, etc.This is a fixed sum in each grant and may not reimburse all expenses completely.
2. A monthly **maintenance allowance** is provided to cover recurring subsistence needs such as housing, fuel, utilities, and food. The allowance is based upon the estimated standard living costs in the country of assignment.

For Scholar Grantees

Fulbright scholar grants have three components: (1) travel and relocation, (2) a monthly maintenance allowance, and (3) a monthly stipend. Additional funds may be included in your grant as special allowances and are described separately. Benefits are based upon the estimated standard living costs in the country of assignment, and are not intended to duplicate U.S. salary levels or the standard of living of U.S. diplomatic personnel. Benefits authorized by ECA are paid in U.S. dollars through the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES).

1. Travel and Relocation
 - a. Unaccompanied and/or excess baggage.
 - b. Relocation allowance for expenses such as visa fees, permits, medical exams, immunizations, etc. This is a fixed sum in each grant and may not reimburse all expenses completely.
2. A monthly **maintenance allowance** is provided to cover recurring subsistence needs such as housing, fuel, utilities, and food.
3. Monthly **base stipend**

PRIOR TO YOUR ARRIVAL

Travel to and within Burkina Faso

Grantee air travel is coordinated by the travel agency, HRG Worldwide, which will bill IIE or CIES directly for the costs of your tickets. HRG staff will assist you with your reservation and then send your reservation to IIE or CIES for approval. You must book a round-trip ticket with a return date that corresponds to the grant end date. All air travel and all air shipments paid for with United States Government funds must conform to the Fly America Act, which requires that all such travel and shipments be on “U.S. flag” airlines where such service is available.

Visas and Residence/Work/Research Permits

Grantees should take copies of all identification certificates and documents, including marriage and birth certificates, driver's licenses, etc., to your assignment country. Make photocopies of the first two pages of your passport, which should be kept separate from your passport in case of loss or theft. Also bring extra passport photos for obtaining visas and conducting other business.

Visas

Fulbrighters are responsible for obtaining their own visas before leaving the U.S. Fulbrighters and their families should obtain visas at the Embassy of Burkina Faso in Washington, DC. The Embassy is located at 2005 Massachusetts Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20036; Tel: 800-345-6511; 202-558-2216; Fax: 202-318-0771. For further information, consult the Embassy's web site at www.burkinaembassy-usa.org or email info@VisaHQ.com

After your arrival, and before your entry visa expires, you must obtain a long-term visa (normally valid for renewable one-year periods) for the duration of your stay in Burkina Faso. You will need two identical photographs for this visa. You can bring these photographs with you or have them taken in town after you arrive.

Research Permits and Research Clearance

Fulbright lecturers and Fulbright researchers should seek an affiliation with a Burkina Faso ministry or governmental institution before they arrive in Burkina Faso. If an affiliation is established, the ministry or institution can have a letter of introduction issued to the Fulbright researcher after the Fulbrighter arrives. The nature of letters of introduction varies, but they generally describe the work the Fulbrighter is doing and indicate that the government of Burkina Faso supports the work. Past Fulbright researchers have found such letters to be extremely helpful in gaining access to people and places for research purposes. Most Fulbright researchers seek an affiliation by sending a letter (in French) to the Minister of Scientific Research and Innovation in Burkina Faso and to the institution with which they wish to affiliate. These letters should include the following information: passport data (name, date and place of birth, passport number, expiration date, date and place of issuance); regions and cities where research is planned; anticipated length of stay in Burkina Faso; and nature of research and a brief description of the planned research activity. Establishing an affiliation takes at least two months and should be initiated well before the Fulbrighter's anticipated arrival in Burkina Faso. Absent an affiliation with a Burkina Faso ministry or governmental institution a Fulbright researcher may have difficulty obtaining an official-looking letter of introduction or other piece of paper. Such researchers may find that their ability to get access to the people and places important for

their research may be limited.

Sending and Receiving Mail

Personal mail

Fulbright grantees have been approved for access to the diplomatic pouch to receive first-class letter mail only (maximum of two pounds). Magazines, newspapers, DVDs, and package mail are not authorized. Take sufficient U.S. postage stamps with you for first-class mail to the U.S. The Department of State accepts no liability for loss or damage. First-class mail via the pouch can take up to two weeks or more for delivery.

The address format for correspondence is as follows:

Your name (Fulbrighter)
C/o Public Affairs Officer
2440 Ouagadougou Place
Dulles, VA 20189-2440

Books and Educational Materials Sent by Diplomatic Pouch

Fulbrighters have access to the diplomatic pouch for sending a maximum of four 8.5"x11" copy paper-size boxes of books and other educational materials. These pouch privileges are provided by the U.S. Embassy on a one-time, one-way basis only; materials cannot be sent back to the U.S. by pouch at any time during your stay. Package mail in excess of the four permitted boxes will be returned to the U.S. at your expense. For additional information on the exact dimensions, address information, and recommendations, consult the *Instructions for Shipment of Books and Educational Materials by Fulbright Scholars* document included in your pre-departure orientation packet.

CAUTIONARY NOTE: In the past, abuse by several Fulbright scholars caused near revocation of privileges for all program participants. Anyone who violates pouch regulations will be barred from use and will have to make other arrangements for handling personal and professional correspondence.

Customs Restrictions on Professional and Personal Affects

Besides the limited pouch shipment and airline excess baggage, grantees may airmail materials addressed to themselves via international mail, but are subject to paying customs duty at the local post office before taking possession of the materials. All goods taken into the host country must be declared. There are no duties levied on equipment, such as computers, that are imported for personal use. Firearms may not be brought in without prior arrangements with the Department of Customs and the host country police department. Pets require special handling and prior clearance with the Department of Animal Health before they can be imported into the host country. Please be aware that additional transit stops may also require clearance when traveling with pets. The Community Liaison Office at the U.S. Embassy can provide additional information.

Schooling for Dependents

The International School of Ouagadougou (ISO) is an independent day school that offers an English language education program to children aged 3 through 19 (pre-school to grade 12). ISO's program is fully accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. ISO is also a member of the Association of International Schools in Africa (AISA), and its education is highly transferable. Placement should be arranged in advance by contacting the school at one of the following addresses:

Administrative Officer/ISO
2440 Ouagadougou Place
Dulles, VA 20189-2440

OR:

International School of Ouagadougou (ISO)
c/o U.S. Embassy
01 BP 35
Ouagadougou 01
Burkina Faso

The ISO office telephone number is (226) 50-36-21-43; fax (226) 50-36-22-28. The ISO staff can also be contacted at director@iso.bf. The school website is www.iso.bf.

PD AND EMBASSY SUPPORT

In an effort to support U.S. Fulbright scholars/students and their families, the following services are provided by PD and the Embassy:

Security

All Fulbright grantees will receive a security briefing upon arrival in the host country. Care should be taken in arranging for a secure apartment, with solid doors and bars on accessible windows. Street crime and residential burglaries are an increasing problem in Africa. Fulbrighters are advised not to walk downtown or in parks after dark, as muggings occur frequently. As in any major U.S. city, people are cautioned to watch valuables at all times. Women should maintain the same "street smarts" for their personal safety they would use in any U.S. location. Men should carry wallets in a front trousers pocket; women should carry tightly closed purses held securely to their sides. There are frequent reports of thieves snatching jewelry and other objects from open vehicle windows while stopped in heavy traffic. Carjackings are not uncommon but seem to come in spurts, so use caution, particularly when driving at night. Travelers' checks, passports and other valuables should not be left in a hotel room; check all important documents and valuables in a hotel safety deposit box. Better yet, leave non-essential jewelry and irreplaceable items at home in the U.S.

Use caution when traveling to national parks or nature preserves. Travelers should only use the services of reputable travel firms or knowledgeable guides when traveling on safaris or to nature preserves. Safaris are best undertaken with a minimum of two vehicles so that there is a back-up in case of mechanical failure.

Arrival and Temporary Lodging

All grantees will be met by Embassy staff upon arrival at the airport and assisted through customs and immigration. It is preferable for grantees to arrive on weekdays rather than weekends. Grantees must provide CIES or IIE with their final itineraries **at least 3 weeks in advance**.

For Fulbright lecturers, the Embassy will encourage the University partner to have permanent housing ready for you when you arrive. If permanent housing is not ready for you when you arrive then the university may put you temporarily in university guest housing.

Fulbright students and researchers are expected to locate and make arrangements for their own temporary and permanent housing. If needed, PD will arrange for temporary accommodations, at the grantee's expense, for a few days until the grantee finds permanent lodgings. **Please be aware that the Embassy can provide only limited assistance in helping you get settled.**

U.S. Embassy Access

Fulbrighters are not authorized personal access badges to the Embassy offices. All meetings must be planned in advance to be cleared through security and arrange for necessary escorts. Please arrange to visit the Embassy within one week of your arrival.

Check Cashing and Local Banking Arrangements

Fulbright grantees have been approved for check cashing facilities at the Embassy. Fulbright grantees may also open bank accounts at local commercial banks if they have resident permits. ATMs are readily available.

Prior to their departure from the U.S., Fulbrighters should consult their U.S. banks concerning overdraft privileges. When mail is delayed, scholars and students may not have current information about account balances. Additional U.S. dollar travelers' checks and a major U.S. credit card (Visa, MasterCard, Diner's Club, etc.) are valuable for travel and emergencies

Local Health Services and Access to Embassy Health Facilities

Fulbright grantees should ensure you have current yellow fever vaccination and tetanus immunizations. Vaccines for hepatitis A, hepatitis B, typhoid, and current booster/vaccines against childhood diseases (tetanus diphtheria, polio, and measles/mumps/rubella) are also strongly recommended for adults, as well as children. For additional information, consult the Centers for Disease Control's website: www.cdc.gov/travel.

Grantees should carry copies of complete medical records and basic information that will enable quick and efficient medical assistance, if necessary. Seek the guidance of your personal physician prior to departure from the U.S. in selecting basic health information records to bring with you. Grantees should carry a good supply of aspirin, vitamins, band-aids, and preferred over the counter medications. Grantees should either bring enough prescription medications to last through their assignment or find out the international name of each prescription, since drug names often differ from those used in the U.S.

Fulbright grantees have health care benefits under the Department of State Group Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE). ASPE is a health benefits program; it is not an all purpose health insurance, and it is subject to limitations. Grantees should review *Accident and Sickness Program for Exchange Participants in Programs Sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs*. Traveler's medical insurance, particularly emergency evacuation coverage is strongly recommended, especially for grantees based outside the capital city. The Fulbright grant provides limited medical and medical evacuation (medevac) coverage for the grantee only. The cost of medical insurance and medevac insurance for dependents must be paid by the Fulbrighter. Fulbrighters based outside the capital should explore membership in a local medical evacuation service that transports injured or ill members from rural areas to the capital or another city; these may be less expensive than worldwide services. Fulbrighters are strongly encouraged to provide copies of their medical evacuation coverage documents with PD in the event of an emergency.

Access to the U.S. Embassy's Health Unit is not extended to U.S. Fulbright grantees or their dependents. Health Unit personnel can provide information concerning local health care resources for primary care. Local healthcare can be expensive. Emergency paramedical services are available through Medical Rescue International (MRI).

Malaria is a serious problem in Sub-Saharan Africa, especially for grantees traveling outside urban areas. Take precautions and be familiar with the symptoms so that you seek treatment early. Proper precautions, such as malaria prophylaxis, boiling and filtering water, washing fruits and vegetables, etc., should be taken. Grantees are advised to check with their physicians to ensure that these medications are compatible with other medications that they might be taking.

Meningitis is endemic in Burkina Faso, and cases are most frequent during the drier, dustier months of January through June. Travelers should confirm that their meningitis A, C, Y, W, 135 inoculations are up to date.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Permanent Housing and Household Goods

The Host University provides furnished housing for Fulbright lecturers and their families. Fulbright lecturers should communicate with their department heads regarding housing and other facilities.

Fulbright researchers and students are responsible for finding their own housing. Housing can be very expensive. PD can provide contact information for these upon request.

Food is not expensive by U.S. standards, and grocery stores are plentiful. Water cannot be safely drunk from the tap.

The television system used is PAL. Because the U.S. uses the NTSC system, DVDs brought from the U.S. will not be viewable on locally-acquired TV sets, unless they are multi-system. Satellite television service is widely subscribed to at a reasonable cost per month for a package

that includes news, sports and movie channels.

Computers and Other Electronic Equipment

Fulbrighters do not have duty-free privileges, so all computers and electronic equipment brought into the country must be taken out of the country when the grant is completed or duty must be paid. Previous Fulbrighters have donated computer equipment to host universities at the end of their stay in exchange for the university's obtaining duty-free entry. Do not send computers as unaccompanied baggage.

Power outages and power fluctuations are common and can destroy a computer. The best solution is to bring a laptop which does not require a transformer and can easily convert from 120 to 220 volts. Another option is to purchase a transformer to convert your computer from 110 to 220 volts, and a heavy-duty surge protector and a voltage regulator. All can be purchased in-country. A previous Fulbrighter also advised that by bringing his own laser printer on his grant, he was able to avoid the tedious process of getting copies made at the university.

Larger cities offer a variety of email and Internet service providers at reasonable rates. Direct Internet access is available, though a bit more expensive, and is becoming more widely used, particularly in the NGO and business communities. Many Fulbrighters invest in an internet thumb drive for their laptops to have access throughout the city. Unlike the U.S. where the universities were in the forefront of providing Internet service, universities in Ouagadougou lag behind in both email and Internet.

Cameras intended for personal use are allowed into the country duty-free.

Academic Life

Burkina Faso's university campuses are the hub of social activity. Most students commute from their lodging throughout the city to campus. The University of Ouagadougou is the largest and centrally located, but many private universities are quickly filling in the gaps of the currently available tertiary education. Professors often divide their time teaching at several universities during any given semester.

Academic Calendar

The academic year runs from October through June. There are three quarters: October-December; January-March April-June. Fulbright lecturers should plan to arrive in mid September. While classes may not actually start on dates scheduled, course assignments are often decided during the last semester of the previous academic year. Given this, lecturers must be present before classes are scheduled to start.

Teaching Requirements, Attendance, and Staff Hours

Lecturers may be assigned up to four courses, due to staff shortages in various departments. As stated in the Fulbright grant, PD expects all lecturers to fulfill their professional responsibilities, including class attendance, faculty meetings, special projects, etc. Lecturers should communicate with their department heads as soon as possible to get an idea of classes to be assigned; however, Fulbright lecturers should also take note of workload assigned to them, and advise PD if the host department is unbalanced in assignments.

Phoning Home and Mobile Phones

1-800 numbers cannot be accessed from Burkina Faso. Many private mobile phone companies provide international long-distance calling cards. PD can provide information on these services.

Most Fulbrighters find it impossible to live without a mobile phone. There are several companies – TELMOB, AIRTEL AND TELECEL and mobile networks are expanding. American phones, unless compatible with the GSM900 system, will not be compatible with the host country system. Mobile phones purchased in Europe should work. Ouagadougou has a certified Apple distributor and for a price smartphone technology is supported.

Local Transportation and the Used Car Market

Fulbrighters who plan to drive should obtain an international driver's license from AAA before leaving the U.S. Ford and Japanese vehicles are common here, and therefore spare parts are easily available. Excessive speed, unpredictable local driving habits, poor vehicle maintenance, and the lack of basic safety equipment on many vehicles are daily hazards. Vehicle travel outside major cities at night should be avoided due to the poor condition of the roads and the threat of banditry. High clearance or four-wheel drive vehicles are essential for driving outside major cities and to game parks. During the rainy season, many roads are passable only with 4W drive vehicles.

Fulbrighters are not granted duty-free privileges to purchase or import vehicles. For that reason, Fulbrighters are advised not to import vehicles, as import duty is very expensive and delays are common in clearing vehicles through customs. The Embassy and PD cannot assist with customs clearance.

Scholars who plan to drive are advised to look for a used vehicle upon their arrival in the host country. Prices are high by U.S. standards (US \$8,000 or more depending on the type of car), but most grantees can sell the vehicle for approximately the same amount upon departure. Car rental is possible but also expensive. PD cannot provide official vehicles for personal use.

Depending upon where you live, it may be possible to call for a taxi by phone, especially if you can identify a reliable driver. Public transportation is not considered to be safe. Even long distance travel in modern buses can be unsafe, both because of criminal activity aboard the buses and because of hazardous driving conditions.

Roads are generally poorly maintained, with numerous potholes even on major thoroughfares. Travel via passenger train is unsafe, particularly during the rainy seasons, because of the lack of routine maintenance and safety checks.

Other Websites or Resource Material

Consular Information Sheet

<http://travel.state.gov>

Fulbright Association

<http://www.fulbright.org>

State Alumni

<http://alumni.state.gov>

Public Holidays

Please contact PD for the 2013-14 holiday schedule.

FULBRIGHT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Fulbright award requires submission of two reports: 1) at the interim or mid-point of the grant, and 2) a final report prior to departing the host country. Grantees will receive instructions from CIES or IIE, as appropriate, on filing these reports on-line.