

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

For Danish applicants

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## Understanding the Fulbright program

### **Q. Why is the Fulbright Program unique?**

**A.** The Fulbright Program is a prestigious international exchange initiative, supported by the U.S. State Department and partner nations for over 70 years. It is known worldwide as the flagship program for students and scholars – studying, researching and working with the best in their fields. Our grantees are a diverse group of individuals, who all share a commitment to advance the betterment of the world and to work for the ultimate goal of the Fulbright program – world peace.

### **Q. Who is Fulbright for?**

**A.** The Fulbright Program is for students, scholars, researchers, professionals, and teachers with diverse backgrounds. Fulbright Denmark encourages all qualified individuals to apply to the program and can assure that everyone will get a fair and equal treatment. You can read our Diversity Statement [here](#).

### **Q. What is the difference between a Fulbright student and a Fulbright scholar?**

**A.** Fulbright "students" are participants in the Fulbright Student Program, which allows Master and PhD level students to study or conduct research. A Bachelor's degree (or equivalent) is required by the start of the Fulbright grant period.

Fulbright "scholars" are participants in the Fulbright Scholar Program, which allows college and university faculty members with a PhD (or equivalent terminal degree), post-doctoral researchers, and senior professionals to teach and/or conduct research.

### **Q. Are Fulbright Denmark grants available for study and research in other countries?**

**A.** No. The Fulbright Program cannot fund your studies in another country. The Fulbright program operates on a bi-national basis. The Denmark-U.S. Fulbright Program only funds Danish citizens for study, research and teaching in the U.S., and U.S. citizens for study, research and teaching in Denmark.

### **Q. What is expected from Fulbrighters?**

**A.** In addition to carrying out their proposed projects, Fulbrighters are expected to involve themselves in the host community, sharing their culture while at the same time observing the host culture. After their grant periods, Fulbrighters are encouraged to bring what they have learned through this cultural exchange home and teach others about the cultures they have experienced. Fulbrighters are also encouraged to continue the Fulbright experience by reaching out to their home communities, participating in alumni activities and networking with other Fulbrighters through the Fulbright Alumni Network (FAN).

**Q. What level of achievement is required to be considered for a Fulbright grant?**

**A.** The Fulbright Program does not have a grade baseline or requirement. Successful applicants have generally scored very high in all course work. Most successful applicants are normally in the top tier of their respective classes and fields. However, we use a holistic approach when evaluating applications, so many factors of an applicant will be considered, for example extra-curricular work, community engagement, volunteering etc.

**Q. What are Fulbright Denmark's focus areas and are the grants only intended for these areas?**

**A.** We currently have three focus areas: Sustainability, Space/Arctic and Life Sciences. Denmark and the U.S. have much to offer but also learn from one another within these fields. On top of this strategic focus, we continue to support studies and research within all other fields.

If your studies are within the Arts be sure to see our [special grant for arts](#). If your studies are within an academic field related to music please see our [Victor Borge Music Scholarship](#).

## Eligibility

**Q. May I enroll in a medical degree on a Fulbright grant?**

**A.** No. However, you may conduct research related to medical fields, as long as it does not involve clinical or direct patient/animal contact. Any students and scholars ultimately nominated in medical and clinical fields, will have to acknowledge and sign, and have their host university representative sign a form acknowledging these policies.

**Q. Can I apply to a graduate program which may take more than one year to complete?**

**A.** Yes. A grant for the Fulbright Student program will support your first academic year. While the Fulbright grant is not renewable, your visa can either be extended or transferred to your host institution until the end of your studies. Please note that you might have to renew your visa from Denmark in these situations.

**Q. I am nearly finished with my PhD studies, should I apply for the student competition or the scholar competition?**

**A.** If you expect to hold your PhD at the time you begin your stay in the U.S., you must apply under the scholar competition, for the Postdoc Scholar Grant. Otherwise, you can apply under the student competition, but please note that you cannot complete your PhD while under the Fulbright program.

**Q. I want to conduct post-doctoral research, can I apply?**

**A.** Yes. Fulbright scholar grants are granted to scholars at all stages of their careers. In Denmark, we offer the specific Postdoc Scholar Grant. For this grant, it is not a requirement to be employed in Denmark, but the applicant must be residing in Denmark.

**Q. If I already had a Fulbright, can I get another one?**

**A.** Yes. The Fulbright Program has lifted the limit on the number of Fulbright grants that students and scholars can take up during their lifetime. As a general matter, preference for Fulbright opportunities will be given to applicants who have not previously received a grant, however, repeat applications will be considered. We would encourage repeat applicants to emphasize a strong justification for receiving another grant.

**Q. I have already begun my stay in the U.S. or I am planning to have started my stay in the U.S. before the application deadline. Can I still apply?**

**A.** No. You can only apply for a stay starting in August or onwards, after the application deadline in February of the same year.

**Q. I plan to be away for three months. Do I have to extend my visit, in order to be eligible for a Fulbright grant?**

**A.** Unfortunately, we can only support visits of minimum 4 months duration.

## Nationality/residency

**Q. I am living and studying/working in Denmark but do not hold Danish citizenship, can I apply for a Fulbright grant?**

**A.** Only applicants who hold Danish citizenship are eligible for a Fulbright grant from the Fulbright Denmark Commission. This is due to the bi-national nature of the Fulbright Program. However, you are welcome to look for opportunities through the Fulbright Commission in your country of citizenship.

**Q. I am a citizen of both Denmark and the U.S., can I still apply?**

**A.** Dual Danish-U.S. citizens are unfortunately not eligible for a Fulbright Denmark grant.

**Q. I am a Danish citizen currently living in another country. Am I eligible for a Fulbright grant despite not living in Denmark?**

If you are currently living in another, you may still be eligible for a grant, but please note that applicants living and residing in Denmark are preferred. If not residing in Denmark, you should be sure to highlight your connection to Denmark in your application.

**Q. I am a Danish citizen living in Denmark now, but I have had a previous stay in the U.S. Does this affect my eligibility?**

**A.** Preference will be given to applicants who have not had extensive recent experience in the U.S. For instance, an applicant who has recently completed a Bachelor's degree in the U.S., will most likely not be considered for a grant. Note that a applicant who has lived in the U.S. for nine months or more during a calendar year is deemed to have resided in the U.S. for that year. If you are unsure of your eligibility in regards to your time spent in the U.S., please contact [info@fulbright.dk](mailto:info@fulbright.dk) with details of your time in the U.S. within the past six years.

## Affiliation/U.S. Host University

**Q. Do you only grant grants to applicants planning to study/do research at an Ivy League University?**

**A.** No. Our grants can support stays at any U.S. university or research institute. We encourage applicants to carefully choose an institution that aligns with their specific goals and needs. While Ivy League schools are often considered, we suggest considering universities outside of these elite institutions, as they may offer better financial value. Institutions in smaller cities or regions outside of the major coastal hubs tend to have lower tuition fees and a more affordable cost of living.

**Q. Do I need to have a Letter of Invitation?**

**A.** Students who plan to formally enroll in a U.S. graduate program do not. They should instead provide a copy of correspondence that acknowledges their application to the host institution. Students should keep Fulbright Denmark updated on their admissions status.

Students who plan to conduct research or register as guest students in the U.S. should include a letter of invitation in their applications. Scholars must include a letter of invitation. Letters of Invitation are normally signed by a professor or department head, who will be overseeing the applicant's work. Normally, affiliation includes access to library and research facilities, use of a computer and network, and a workspace.

**Q. I am a PhD student, and I have not received a letter of invitation by the time of the application. Can I still apply?**

**A.** Yes, but proof of an established contact with your host would be an asset to your application. If you do not yet have an official Letter of Invitation, you can include a copy of your correspondence with your host. When your formal letter of invitation arrives, please forward this to Fulbright Denmark. If your application is successful, you will be offered a grant on the condition that you are accepted at your host institution.

**Q. I am applying for the Fulbright Scholar grant, and I do not know how to approach the "Teaching" element of the application. What is your advice?**

**A.** It is important that scholar applicants include some element of teaching in their application. It is rarely possible to conduct a full course in the U.S., so we mainly see activities such as a seminar series, co-teaching, workshops, supervising etc. You should confirm your plans of these activities with your host as part of your affiliation process. Please include the teaching plans briefly in your project proposal. You should also include a sample syllabus from your previous teaching experience with your application.

## The application process

### Q. What is needed for the Danish application process?

A. You can read more about what is needed specifically for the Danish application process on the following pages for [Students](#) and [Scholars](#).

### Q. I am overwhelmed by the many steps and questions in the application portal. How can I get help?

A. You can follow the application instructions found on our website – in the box, right before you click Apply. They contain step-by-step instructions to the portal, including how to respond to the different sections in the Danish application context.

### Q. I am a PhD student in Denmark – what do you mean by “Documentation from Danish university confirming academic and financial support during the stay in the U.S.”?

A. You need to upload a document in which your home university confirms their support of your plans in the U.S. It is not sufficient to upload a copy of your PhD contract. The letter is often written by an advisor, PhD coordinator or HR. A typical wording could be: *“This is to confirm that NAME is enrolled as a PhD student for the period DATES at UNIVERSITY, DEPARTMENT. NAME is employed as a full-time PhD student with a monthly gross salary of AMOUNT. A research visit abroad is a mandatory part of NAME’s PhD studies and employment. Therefore, NAME will continue working on the PhD project during their stay – and will receive supervision from their academic supervisor, NAME.”*

### Q. Who should I ask to write my two letters of recommendation?

A. We recommend that you get recommendations primarily from within the academic field. While it is useful to have someone with a known reputation in the field, the best criteria for recommendations is someone who knows your work and character. You may also contact a professional reference who knows you well. You should not include a recommendation from your U.S. host (if applicable), since they will already be commenting on their connection to you and the project in your Letter of Invitation. If you have another contact in the U.S. who can provide a relevant recommendation for you, you are welcome to include that.

### Q. Should the Personal Statement be directed towards my specific project or more about me in general?

A. Your personal statement should show your personality/your personal history and preferably in the light of your profession. It could be a description of your professional development, a story about the background of your interest in your field, or anything else that can link your personality to your profession. In addition, you are also welcome to reflect on the Fulbright program's basic idea of cultural exchange to show how you will take this into consideration during your stay.

**Q. How can I make my application more successful?**

**A.** There is no "formula" for a successful grant. Each individual's application should be about the applicant, their plans for their stay in the U.S., what outcomes can be expected, and how an applicant sees themselves as a cultural ambassador. What is successful for one applicant may not be effective for another applicant.

**Q. How is my application reviewed and how am I notified?**

**A.** Your application will be reviewed in several stages. The first review will be for eligibility and completeness. You might be called to an online interview with members of the Danish selection committee. Then, the selection committee will decide who they want to nominate for the final approval. The final approval will be made by the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board in the U.S. All applicants will be informed in writing of the status of their application. Notification of the final decisions will be in the spring.

## Visa

**Q. Do I need a special visa to study/work/do research in the U.S.?**

**A.** Yes! If selected for a Fulbright grant, you must travel on a J-1 visa sponsored by Fulbright. We will help you and potential dependents throughout the visa process.

**Q. I already began the process of getting a visa through my host institution. What do I do if I receive the Fulbright grant?**

**A.** If you receive a Fulbright grant, you need to stop the process with the host university so that your visa can go through Fulbright instead. You will have to start over with your paperwork, but many documents can be reused. Unfortunately, we cannot take over from your host university. We will guide you through all the necessary steps.

**Q. What is the “Two-year home country physical presence requirement”?**

**A.** Since the Fulbright program is an exchange program, all grantees will have to comply with the “Two-Year Home-Country Physical Presence Requirement” that is associated with the J-1 visa. This means that they must return to Denmark for two years after their stay in the U.S. ends, before being able to obtain certain types of visas for work and immigration. It may also be possible to receive another J-1 or F-1 Student Visa before the two years end. Scholars will in most cases have to wait two years before being able to return on a similar visa. However, one can easily travel back to the U.S. on conference and tourist trips.

## Finances/Economy

### **Q. What are the sizes of your grants?**

**A.** Fulbright students can apply for 50,000 DKK for one semester (up to six months) or 100,000 DKK for two semesters (from seven months and onwards). Fulbright scholars can apply for 200,000 DKK, regardless of the duration of their stay.

The amounts are generally fixed, but it might be possible to receive additional grants on top of the Fulbright grant. We will screen all applications for potential applicants for additional grants.

Fulbright Denmark can offer double grants with certain U.S. partner universities. In most cases, the host universities will offer a tuition waiver, paid health insurance or similar subsidiaries. You apply for the double grant simultaneously with your regular application.

### **Q. How soon can I receive the grant?**

**A.** Fulbright grants are announced in the spring for the cohort which starts in the following academic year (August – May). Upon confirmation of the grant, several administrative steps and processes are involved in preparing for your Fulbright experience. Typically, grantees have their visas in order in June, and they can receive their grants no earlier than two weeks before their travel date.

### **Q. Based on past Fulbrighter experiences, does the financial value of the grant cover tuition, living, travel and visa expenses?**

**A.** You will very likely require additional funds to cover all of your expenses, and it is important that you create a realistic budget for your stay. Additional funds could be salary (for PhD students and scholars), teaching assistantships (for degree-seeking students), savings, other scholarships, stipends from the U.S. university, etc.

To make the money last longer, we recommend our applicants to consider host universities that aren't Ivy League. Also, the geographical location of your host university will determine the cost of living.

### **Q. How much funding should I expect to raise?**

**A.** Fulbright Grantees must provide financial documentation in order to be eligible for a Fulbright sponsored J-1 visa to the U.S. We will let you know of your individual amount when you receive the grant, but you can start by finding more advice on funding [here](#).

## Bringing family

### **Q. If I am selected, can I take my family with me?**

**A.** Yes. Many Fulbrighters bring their families and report that this experience benefited all family members. Your dependents will enter the U.S. under a J-2 visa. Please note that you should be prepared to show a higher amount of additional funding, if you plan to bring your family.

### **Q. How do I get a visa for my spouse or children?**

**A.** Fulbright Denmark will prepare supporting documentation for your dependents. More details will become available if you are selected for a Fulbright grant.

### **Q. My partner and I plan to get married before my departure to the U.S. Would this make my partner eligible for the J-2 visa?**

**A.** Yes, if you get married, your partner will be eligible for a J-1 visa. However, your eventual marriage must take place well in advance of your departure to the U.S., as we need to get your partner included in the visa process in due time.

### **Q. If my partner and I do not wish to get married, what are our options?**

**A.** Your partner can apply for a B-2 visa which will cover a stay for up to six months. It is up to your partner to arrange for this themselves, but they can read more [here](#). Otherwise, they can join you for up to three months through the ESTA program. Either way, they should be prepared to explain and have proof of the temporary nature of their stay in the U.S. – either at a visa interview (for the B-2 visa) or at the border control.