



U.S. Embassy Argentina

Notice of Funding Opportunity: Friends of Fulbright Undergraduate Student Exchange Program

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement

Key Date/Application Deadline: June 20, 2016

Program Description/Executive Summary:

The Embassy of the United States of America in Argentina, in cooperation with the U.S.-Argentina Fulbright Commission, invites proposal submissions from accredited Public and State controlled institutions of higher education; Private institutions of higher education; and University Systems (see definition in Section A.5) in the United States to host participants for the 2016-2017 Friends of Fulbright (FoF) Undergraduate Student Exchange program.

The Friends of Fulbright Undergraduate Student Exchange program is a 5-7 week educational exchange program that takes place in the United States anytime between January 9 – March 1, 2017 and/or June 26 – August 4, 2017 for Argentine undergraduate students. This program helps achieve the goals of President Obama's *100,000 Strong in the Americas* initiative. The goal of the program is to expose high-achieving Argentine students to the U.S. educational system, as well as increase cross-cultural communication between Argentina and the United States.

Each participant attends classes at a U.S. institute of higher learning, receives at least one academic credit from the host institution, and lives in campus housing. In addition, the participants take part in cultural programming, whether a standalone cultural immersion, or through regular cultural programming throughout. There will be between 100-200 participants in total placed in universities that represent the diversity of U.S. campus experiences.

It is the intent of this program to award up to ten cooperative agreements of up to \$110,000 to accredited institutions of higher learning to host these students and/or cooperative agreements of up to \$275,000 for university systems to host these students on multiple campuses. Noting regional variations in cost of living, the maximum per student cost should be no more than \$5,800 per student. Should the per student cost be higher, the proposal should include information to justify the increased cost.

Pending successful implementation of this program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, there is the intent to renew these agreements for one additional consecutive fiscal year before openly competing it again.

Eligible Applicants:

Accredited Public and State controlled institutions of higher education in the United States; Accredited private institutions of higher education in the United States; University Systems in the United States.

Additional Information on Eligibility:

Applicants should have valid bank account and ability to obtain a DUNS number.

A. Program Description:

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the Act is "to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries...; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations...and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world." The funding authority for the program above is provided through legislation.

A.1. Purpose:

The goal of the Friends of Fulbright Undergraduate Student Exchange Program is to send between 100-200 undergraduate students in their third or fourth year of university (the majority of Argentine undergraduate programs are five year programs) to higher education institutes that represent the diversity of U.S. educational systems for five- to seven-week programs during the U.S. "January" term or during the U.S. summer term in order to learn more about the U.S. educational system, U.S. culture, and in order to create a new generation of Argentine leaders who have had direct contact with the United States. It is important that the dates of the program do not overlap with the Argentine university calendar.

A.2. Goals

1. Strengthen knowledge of the U.S. educational system so that when students are ready for graduate and post-graduate degrees, they have a level of familiarity with the U.S. system;
2. Provide opportunities for Argentine youth and U.S. counterparts to collaborate, network, and share ideas, approaches, and strategies;
3. Foster a deeper understanding of the United States culture and society in the next generation of Argentine educators, leaders, activists, etc.;
4. Help fulfill the goals of President Obama's 100,000 Strong in the Americas initiative.

A.3. Program Details

As detailed below, the program will include an educational program, as well as a cultural component. In addition, there should be a virtual pre-departure component with the educational institutions. The next participants will travel to the United States in early 2017, between January 9 – March 1, 2017, or during June 26 – August 4, 2017.

Each cohort will be composed of 15-25 undergraduate students. The program will recruit students from all majors. Therefore, proposals should include any limitations on courses/majors the university can best accommodate during the January term and/or U.S. summer session.

Each foreign participant will have a five- to seven-week program in the United States. The program must include at least one academic credit hour of classes and there should be a full schedule of classes aside (whether for credit or not for credit). It is preferred that the for-credit class be in the participants' major. It is also advisable that the other classes either be English classes (for credit or not for credit) or classes on general topics of U.S. culture, society, and/or political system.

In addition, there should be a cultural component to the program. This could include field trips, seminars, home stays, or other events/gatherings that fosters a better understanding of United States culture in general. Proposals that demonstrate how they will bring the university's regular student population and these students together are encouraged.

The proposal should also address on-campus housing, meal plans, insurance, health requirements, transportation once on-campus and pick up and drop off at the airport.

Proposals that include cost-sharing are encouraged, but not required.

A.4. Program Responsibilities

Embassy's level of involvement: The Embassy and Fulbright Commission will be substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. Their activities and responsibilities for this program are as follows:

1. Participating and providing guidance in the design, direction, and execution of all program components and activities;
2. Approving and providing input on program timelines and agendas;
3. Approving decisions related to special circumstances or problems throughout the duration of the program, including assisting with participant emergencies;
4. Recruitment and selection of all foreign Fellows;
5. Implementing a pre-departure briefing;
6. Arranging all transportation to/from the international location in Argentina to the receiving airport;
7. Assisting with SEVIS-related issues;
8. Issuing participant DS-2019 forms;
9. Liaising with relevant U.S. government offices, and other relevant offices at the State Department particularly in terms of recruitment, selection, web-based publicity efforts, etc;
10. Working with award recipients to publicize the program through various media outlets (such as the social media platforms), including approving all program publicity, outreach efforts, and other materials;
11. Monitoring and evaluating the program through regular communication with the award recipient, meetings, possible site visits, and debriefing sessions.

Award Recipient Responsibilities will include but are not limited to the following:

1. In close collaboration with the Embassy and Fulbright Commission, design, plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate an educational exchange program for one cohort of participants that will expose them to the U.S. educational system; in the case of a proposal from a university system, design, plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate an educational exchange program for multiple cohorts of participants that will expose them to the U.S. educational system;

2. Proposing institutions should be able to demonstrate institutional capacity to host an international group like this. Citing specific examples of similar programs will be useful in the evaluation of proposals;
3. Provide an academic program for each participant;
4. Provide on-campus housing and a campus meal plan for each participant. In universities where meal plans are not offered, organizations should propose a plan and budget for meals;
5. Provide health insurance for participants (should include comprehensive illness and accident insurance policy that includes repatriation and medical evacuation). Proposal should include specifics on coverage;
6. Provide a list of all required vaccinations in advance of program;
7. Provide cultural programming;
8. Provide all required books/materials OR allowance for same;
9. If required by the host institution, provide English language testing upon arrival;
10. Conduct short (one hour) pre-departure virtual orientation for participants, answering their questions on programmatic issues, including, but not limited to, program responsibilities and expectations, travel in the United States, accident and sickness benefits, housing, etc.;
11. Utilize the Web and other outreach tools to facilitate communication among participants and host organizations prior to their arrival in the United States, including the posting of program and community resources, any pre-program assignments, etc.;
12. Arrange local travel to/from the airport of arrival in the United States to the host institution and note mode of local transportation (and associated costs) for participants;
13. Consult closely with Embassy and Fulbright Commission on developing a comprehensive outreach strategy for highlighting participant achievements while in the United States and after their return home, including the use of online and other social media platforms;
14. Monitor participants during duration of the Program;
15. To the extent possible, create meaningful cross-cultural opportunities between the Argentine students and the host's regular student population;
16. Manage financial aspects of the program (including timely disbursement of participant stipends, housing allowances, accident and sickness benefits, hosting agreements, and other activity costs) and promptly report any irregularities in the budget or spending to Fulbright;
17. Participate in a pre-, mid-, and post-program review with Embassy and Fulbright Commission (in person, by telephone, or video-conference) to identify any programmatic and/or budgetary matters of concern;
18. Provide programmatic, financial and statistical information to the Embassy and Fulbright Commission outlining general programmatic activities conducted during the program;
19. Respond fully and promptly to ad hoc requests for program information from the Embassy or Fulbright Commission;
20. Ensure compliance with the terms of the Agreement, including, but not limited to, submitting timely financial and program reports and proper budget oversight; and

A.5. Program Components and Definitions

1. Program Participants

“Program participants” are defined as those individuals who travel under award funding from Argentina to the United States. For this NOFO, program participants are also referred to as “Friends of Fulbright Participants” or students.

2. University System

A university system is a set of multiple, affiliated universities and colleges that are usually geographically distributed.

3. Cohort

A cohort is a group of students traveling to one institute of higher learning.

A.6 Recruitment and Selection of Participants

The Embassy and Fulbright Commission will recruit and select participants. Participants will represent the cultural and geographical diversity of Argentina. In addition to a written application, finalist will receive an oral interview. In addition, participants must provide proof of English proficiency. Please note, participants of this program will not be required to provide TOEFL scores.

Anticipated profile of students to be recruited:

Age – 20 – 26

Major: All majors

Year: Third and fourth year (roughly equivalent to junior year)

English: Advanced English (equivalent to 80 in the IBT and 550 in the ITP)

GPA: Very good grades, at least “7” in the Argentine scale

Travel: No previous travel to the United States. In the case that there are not enough qualified applicants, this may be amended to minimal travel to the United States.

Employees of the award recipient and any sub-award recipient staff are not eligible to participate in this program and should not be included as program participants. Embassy and Fulbright Commission employees and their immediate family members are ineligible for this program.

Questions can be sent to bacultural@state.gov by May 23, 2016.