How to Sponsor a Visiting Fulbright Scholar

The Fulbright Visiting Scholar Program awards about 800 grants annually to international scholars to conduct research, lecture, or pursue combined lecturing and research in the United States.

To initiate the process of sponsoring a Visiting Scholar:

- Invite an overseas colleague to consider spending a period of two months to an academic year at UMASS Boston
- Suggest the scholar contact his/her Fulbright commission or U.S. embassy to obtain Fulbright application guidelines and determine deadlines that apply in his/her country
- Provide the scholar with a detailed letter of invitation that spells out the tenure of the affiliation and the nature of the proposed endeavor and its relationship to the interests and activities of your department. The letter becomes part of the scholar's Fulbright application
- Approximately 75% of the grants awarded are for research; 25% are lecturing or lecturing/research

Selection Criteria

In 51 countries the Fulbright Program is administered by bi-national commissions or foundations. Applications for Fulbright awards are received by the commissions, and preliminary selections are made by the commission board, with final approval by the presidentially appointed. In approximately 90 countries, the competition is run by the public affairs section of the U.S. embassy. In most countries, there is a very stiff competition for awards, and priorities may exist regarding disciplines, career level, type of activity, etc. In many countries, particularly those with bi-national commissions, scholars are expected to submit evidence that they have identified a host affiliation in the United States as part of the application process, well before an actual grant is awarded. Scholars usually include a letter of invitation from the host institution in their application materials.

In other instances, often in countries where the competition is conducted by the public affairs section of the U.S. embassy, scholars apply for awards and identify their specializations. This information is used to determine placement at U.S. host institutions. For these grantees, the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES) is active in confirming affiliations or arranging placements based upon the scholar’s interests and needs.

In addition to the basic program, Fulbright offers the Occasional Lecturer Program, which enables campuses to take advantage of international scholars who are already in the United States on Fulbright grants. The program provides funds for visiting scholars to guest lecture at different colleges and universities for short periods of time. Special attention is given to small institutions with little chance of sponsoring international lecturers. To request the Directory of Visiting Fulbright Scholars and Occasional Lecturers, published in the Fall semester, contact CIES.
Detailed information on any of the Visiting Scholar programs is available on the CIES Web site at http://www.cies.org/vs_scholars/. CIES program officers can also provide advice and information on how to apply, including the Fulbright point of contact in the home country.