

Fulbright Foreign Student Program Application FAQs

The West Bank and Gaza

Program Information

Q. What is the Fulbright Foreign Student Program?

A: The Fulbright Program is the U.S. government's flagship international educational and cultural exchange program, creating connections in a complex and changing world. Led by the U.S. government in partnership with 160 countries worldwide, Fulbright offers programs for passionate and accomplished students, scholars, teachers, artists, and professionals of all backgrounds to study, teach, and conduct research, helping to build mutual understanding and find solutions to critical international concerns. Fulbrighters enrich their educations, advance their careers, and make meaningful contributions to communities abroad and at home. As Fulbrighters, they join a network of thousands of alumni serving as leaders across the globe.

The Fulbright Foreign Student Program enables students to pursue graduate study at a master's degree level in the United States of America. Participants also have the unique opportunity to experience life in the United States and share their unique culture and traditions with Americans.

Please visit the following link for more information about how to apply: <https://www.amideast.org/our-work/find-a-scholarship/graduate-study/fulbright/how-to-apply/how-to-apply>

Q: Can Fulbright participants stay in the United States after their program, or do they need to return to their home country?

A: Upon completion of their program, Fulbrighters are required to return to their home country to complete the two-year residency requirement before becoming eligible to apply for other visas.

Q: Can I participate in Fulbright if I have a disability?

A: Applicants from all backgrounds, including those with disabilities, are encouraged to apply! Please contact your Amideast office or the U.S. Office of Palestinian Affairs to discuss any assistance you may need getting information for or applying to the program. Once selected, your Amideast advisor will also help advise on accommodations on U.S. campuses.

Q: What are the benefits of the Fulbright Foreign Student Program?

A: Besides earning your master's degree at a U.S. university, there are many benefits of the Fulbright Program, including, but not limited to:

- Learning about the United States and American culture, and share your own culture and traditions
- Improving employment prospects with a graduate degree and a global alumni network

- Participating in optional Pre-Academic Training and Enrichment Seminars
- Obtaining opportunities for professional development and research at U.S. universities

Covered costs include tuition, living stipend, and round-trip travel.

Q: When does the Fulbright Program start?

A: The academic year in the United States typically runs from July-August until the end of the following Spring (May or June). However, if you are selected to complete an LTE (Long-Term English) program, you will travel to the United States before your Fulbright Program begins.

Q: What is the Long-Term English Program?

A: Qualified Fulbright applicants who need to enhance their English language skills may be nominated to participate in a Long-Term English (LTE) Program before the start of their Fulbright academic program. LTE Programs are 6-8 months in duration and begin in January and March.

Please note that you must first apply to the Fulbright Program in order to be nominated for the LTE Program. The Fulbright Program will inform eligible candidates. Dependents cannot accompany LTE participants.

Q: Can I take my spouse/dependents with me on the program?

A: Please call your local Amideast office to confirm if dependents are permitted for your program before entering any dependent-related information in your application. For Gaza, call 08-2824635, and for West Bank, call 02-2408023.

Q: Is there is a specific number of annual Fulbright grantees, or does the number vary each year?

A: The number of Fulbright awards varies year to year, subject to funding and other factors.

Eligibility Information:

Q: Are high school students or recent high school graduates eligible for the Fulbright Program?

A: No, the Fulbright Foreign Student Program supports graduate-level studies only.

However, the U.S. Department of State offers many other educational and cultural exchange programs, for various audiences. To find out more, please visit the website of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural: <https://exchanges.state.gov/>

Please also visit the website of the U.S. Office of Palestinian Affairs for additional details on specific programs for Palestinians.

Q: Does the Fulbright Program provide support for PhDs?

A: Most Fulbright Foreign Student Program awards are for master's level studies. However, a few countries provide one- to two-year opportunities for Ph.D.-level research or non-degree programs. Please see your country's page for further information.

Q: Which nationalities can apply?

A: Amideast administers awards for students from select countries and territories throughout the Middle East and North Africa. Applicants from the following countries and territories are invited to apply: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, West Bank and Gaza, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates. Please note that you must be a national and current resident of the country/location which nominates you.

If you are from another country or region not listed above, please check the U.S. embassy or Fulbright Commission in your country for details regarding Fulbright Program opportunities.

Q: I am currently living outside my home country. Can I still apply?

A: Applicants may only apply through the country or territory of their citizenship and must remain physically resident there for the duration of the application, nomination, placement and selection processes.

Q: What are the eligibility requirements?

A: The requirements are:

- Must be a Palestinian resident of the West Bank, Jerusalem, or the Gaza Strip;
- U.S. citizens or green card holders are not eligible to apply;
- Must reside in country/location throughout the application, selection and placement process;
- Must have at least one year of professional work experience (after graduation);

- Must hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution;
- Must have a strong academic background;
- Preference is given to students who have little or no previous experience studying or living in the United States;
- A candidate who has resided in the United States for five or more consecutive years in the six-year period preceding the date of application is ineligible for the program.
- Persons of all backgrounds, including those with disabilities, are encouraged to apply.
- Be proficient in English or able to attend a Long-Term English (LTE) program prior to the start of your study program. Recommended English language test scores for U.S. university admission are at least 80 on the iBT TOEFL or 6.5 on the IELTS, but those who test at slightly below, who have strong credentials, may be eligible for LTE. Candidates are strongly encouraged to independently study for the TOEFL in advance of taking it.

Please note: Amideast staff members and consultants, employees of U.S. missions who work for the U.S. Department of State or the U.S. Agency for International Development, and their immediate family members, are ineligible to apply for the Fulbright Program during the period of their employment and until one year following the termination of employment.

Q: Can I still apply if I have previously received other State Department-sponsored scholarships?

A: Applicants who do not have significant experience in the United States are preferred, but outstanding applicants who have previously received other U.S. government-sponsored scholarships may be considered.

Q: I completed my undergraduate degree in the United States. Can I still apply?

A: Yes, but preference is given to those applicants who have not had significant experience living in the United States.

Q: Does the Fulbright Program support medical or dental degrees?

A: The Fulbright Program does not support clinical studies in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, or veterinary sciences due to legal restrictions on the U.S. visa category issued for Fulbright Program participants. However, applicants with undergraduate degrees in clinical fields may pursue relevant master's degrees in related subjects such as public health, global health, biology, chemistry, pharmaceutical sciences, and more. Please contact the U.S. Office of Palestinian Affairs or Amideast office for answers to specific questions you may have on the eligibility of the degree you wish to pursue.

Q: What are the fields of study to which I can apply?

A: Applicants may apply in most fields of study, including the humanities, social sciences, science, technology, and engineering. However, programs involving clinical studies, such as medicine and nursing, are not permitted. Non-clinical programs, such as public health and nursing administration, are permitted.

Q: Is there an age limit for the Fulbright Program?

A: There is no age limit for the Fulbright Program.

Q: Is there a minimum GPA requirement?

A: There is no minimum required GPA, but applicants should have a strong academic record.

Q: Can I apply to the Fulbright Program to do a second master's degree?

A: Applicants may submit an application for a second master's degree, provided that it is not a repetition of work or research of the first master's degree. The research or the focus of the second master's degree must be different from that of the previous master's degree.

Q: What is the work experience requirement?

A: Applicants must have completed at least one year of work experience AFTER graduation by the time they apply. Employment can be with the government, an NGO, or in the private sector. Employment does not need to be directly related to an applicant's academic field of study.

Application Information:

Q: How do I apply?

A: The most up-to-date information on how to apply, including eligibility requirements, is available here: <https://www.amideast.org/our-work/find-a-scholarship/graduate-study/fulbright/how-to-apply/how-to-apply>

For the 2024-2025 cycle, the link to the application is: <https://apply.iie.org/ffsp2024/>. Please ensure that you are selecting the **2024-2025 cycle** if you are applying in 2023.

Q: When can I apply/ when is the deadline?

A: The application for 2024-2025 opens on February 1st, 2023. The application deadline for West Bank and Gaza is May 1, 2023.

Q: Can I resubmit an application that I used last year?

A: Unfortunately, you cannot re-use an application that you have submitted in previous years. Old applications are archived and cannot be retrieved. To be considered, you must submit a new application with new supporting documents.

Q: What level of English do I need to apply?

A: Applicants of all English language skill levels are invited to apply for the Fulbright Program. There is no minimum TOEFL score required; however, graduate study in the United States typically requires students to have an IBT TOEFL score of 80 to be successful.

Qualified applicants with TOEFL scores slightly below this level, and therefore who need to enhance their English language skills, may be nominated to participate in a Long-Term English (LTE) program before the start of their Fulbright grant.

Q: What are applicants required to submit?

- Official academic transcripts and diploma certificates in English;
- An up-to-date CV detailing all prior education and work experience;
- Three letters of reference, in English;
- A personal statement, in English, up to 600 words in length;
- A study/ research objective, in English, relating to field of study (if applicable);
- A copy of applicant's identification card (ID) and passport (if available);
- TOEFL, IELTS, or Duolingo scores no more than two years old (if available, but not required).

Q: How many recommendation letters do I need to submit?

A: You need to submit three recommendation letters online. These may be recommendation letters from professional supervisors or professors with whom you have studied or worked in the past.

Q: How can I register my recommenders?

A: You must complete the Reference Materials Waiver in order to register your recommender. You do not get to see this section until you reach the waiver part on the online application.

Q: Can my recommenders submit recommendation letters in French or Arabic?

A: The recommendation letters must be submitted in English.

Q: Do you have any tips on the application?

A: Here are a few tips:

- Write clearly, using professional and understandable language;
- Demonstrate why you have chosen your field of study and how you are qualified;
- Proofread all materials for grammatical errors and spelling mistakes;
- Refrain from using sarcasm, jokes, or inappropriate humor;
- Cite any outside sources used in your essays. Plagiarism will result in disqualification.

Q: What is plagiarism?

A: Plagiarism is copying or using someone else's work or ideas as your own without giving credit or referencing the original author/writer.

Examples include:

- Copying from a source, word for word.
- Copying a sentence or paragraph from a source and using it in your writing.
- Using a theory or example from someone else's work without giving them credit.
- Copying text from an online sample essay and using it as your own.

Plagiarism is like stealing or cheating. It is a serious academic offense in the American educational system. If plagiarism is detected anywhere in your application or supporting documents, you will be immediately disqualified.

Q: What can I upload in the Additional Documents section?

A: Candidates can submit certificates, previous university admissions, and other documents to strengthen their Fulbright applications.

Q: How long does it take the Amideast field office and the U.S. Office of Palestinian Affairs to review applications?

A: In general, applicants are notified of their nomination status in the Fall. However, as the selection process is a comprehensive, merit-based, and multi-step process that takes place over several months, the U.S. Office of Palestinian Affairs or your local Amideast office determines the timeline.

Testing Questions

Q: Will my TOEFL score affect my interviews? If I have a high TOEFL score, am I more likely to get an interview?

A: A number of factors are considered when selecting nominees. TOEFL scores are taken into consideration, but are not a primary factor in the final selection.

Q: Can I submit an application without a TOEFL test score?

A: Yes. You can apply with or without a TOEFL score. The absence of a TOEFL score will not negatively affect your application. If your application is selected for further consideration, you will be required to take the TOEFL test and any other tests required for admission such as the GRE/GMAT exam. At that time, the test fees will be covered by the Fulbright Program.

Q: Do I need to submit GRE/GMAT scores with my application?

A: It is not required to submit a GRE/GMAT score with your application. If you are selected after the interview, the Fulbright Program will cover the cost of your taking the GRE/GMAT, if required.