

FAQs

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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General Information

For whom is this program intended?

This program is designed to award Pakistani citizens the opportunity to study for a master's or Ph.D. degree program at a US university beginning in fall of 2011. Applicants must be citizens Pakistan who permanently reside in Pakistan. Persons who have a completed 16 years of formal education to be eligible to apply for a master's. Those with 18 years of formal education can apply for the Ph.D. All disciplines except for clinical medicine are eligible to apply. The Fulbright organization especially seeks applications from individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds and remote areas who would not otherwise have such an opportunity. Women, minorities and people with disabilities are also especially encouraged to apply.

Because one of the major goals of Fulbright programs is to promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and Pakistan, in addition to academic work, persons selected for Fulbright programs are expected to share information about Pakistani life and culture with their U.S. colleagues and with community groups in the U.S. On returning to Pakistan, Fulbright grantees are expected to share their U.S. experiences with colleagues and community groups in Pakistan. All Grantees are contractually bound to return to Pakistan immediately upon the completion of their programs.

What is included in a Fulbright award?

The grant also funds tuition, textbooks, airfare, a living stipend, and health insurance.

If I'm selected when will I begin studies in the US?

Fall 2011

Application

I received an application form/printed out an application form from the website <http://www.usefpakistan.org>. Now what do I do?

Before beginning to fill out the application form, it is imperative that you read the application in its entirety as well as the general information pages and instructions that accompany it. The general information pages give an overview of the program and application review process. The instructions provide specific information about completing certain points of the application. Be sure to fully complete the application form. If a section does not apply to you, please write "Not Applicable".

Can I submit my application online?

Yes, but we also request that you send a hard copy of the application along with the supporting documents so that we receive it at USEFP by May 18.

Do I really have to take the TOEFL and GRE?

The GRE is a requirement in Pakistan. Applications without a valid GRE score report attached will not be considered. Please take the GRE before the May 18 deadline. If you have not received your scores by the deadline, please attach proof of registration showing that you have already taken the exam. Short-listed applicants will be required to take the TOEFL within two weeks of being notified and to bring proof of registration for the TOEFL with them to the interview. Please check the USEFP website for a package deal discount on the combined GRE and TOEFL.

I'm applying for business; can I take the GMAT instead of the GRE?

The GRE is a scholarship requirement. Even if you are applying for business you will have to take the general GRE. If you are selected, you may be asked to take the GMAT. If you want to take it earlier, that's great, but we do not require GMAT scores with your application.

Do I need to take the GRE subject test in my field?

With the application we need a GRE general score report. If you are selected and your field is computer science or engineering, you will be advised to take a GRE subject at that time.

Do I need any particular score on my GRE to qualify?

The minimum requirement is 300 on each section of GRE. However, the GRE is only one part of the application. The applicants with the highest scores are not necessarily those who are selected. Many factors are taken into account. The portion of the GRE most relevant to your field is given more weight so that English Literature applicants, for example, should not be discouraged by weak scores on the quantitative section and applicants in heavily quantitative fields, such as Computer Science, will require relatively higher quantitative scores.

Will I need any particular score on my TOEFL to qualify?

If you are asked to take the TOEFL, you will need a minimum score of 90.

I'm graduating in December 2010, am I eligible?

As long as you will have completed your degree by the time we have to seek admission to a university.

How do I decide whether to apply for a PhD or Masters?

If you have completed only 16 years of education in Pakistan, you should apply for a Master's. If you have completed at least 18 years of education, you should apply for the Ph.D.

Can I apply for a masters leading to PhD program?

No.

I already have a foreign Masters degree, can I apply for another Masters?

No, you cannot apply for another Masters in your field if you have already obtained one abroad.

Can I apply in a field other than the one I have my degree in?

Yes, you can apply in a field other than the one you have your degree in, but you should justify it in your personal statement and study objectives in the application. You should present a strong case for a change of field.

I understand that I must write a statement concerning my study objectives. What should I include?

Your statement of study objectives provides you the opportunity to explain what kind of study/research you wish to pursue in the U.S. and why. Do not mention specific universities at which you would like to study in your statement of study objectives. Your statement must be clear, concise and detailed. Without a clear understanding of your study objectives, your application may not pass to the next stage of the selection process or may be misunderstood by universities in the U.S.

How important is the Personal Statement?

The personal statement is a very important part of the application. It is used not only in the selection process for the Fulbright scholarship but also by universities in deciding whether or not to admit an applicant. American students spend a great deal of time perfecting their statement of purpose as well as their study objectives and you will ultimately be competing against them for placement in a U.S. university. If you Google "personal statement" you will get an idea of the importance of this piece of writing. Many links with advice for writing these will come up. Just a few are given here for you to get started: www.petersons.com, gradschool.about.com, www.essayedge.com.

What kind of additional info should I give under Additional Information?

Attach your CV in this section. The space given for additional information should also be used to note anything pertinent to your application that has not been covered elsewhere in the application. For example, certain aspects of your application may call for an explanation,

such as grades, standardized examination scores, lack of work experience or extracurricular activities, gaps in the chronological account of your previous education or employment, disciplinary action.

I understand that I must submit three letters of reference. Whom should I ask to write such a letter?

Consider asking teachers, advisors, or other professionals who are familiar with you and your work and who can objectively evaluate your study objectives. At least one academic letter must be included among the three you provide. If you are currently working, ask your supervisor or other professional. Family members or other relatives are not eligible to write letters of reference. Please do not write the reference letter yourself and just ask your referee to sign it. It is usually obvious when this has been done and it reduces the value of the reference.

Should referees send our reference letters directly to USEFP, or can they be sent with our application form?

Reference letters should be sent directly to USEFP by your referees in sealed envelopes. It is important that your referees should clearly mention the name of the program the applicant is applying for and the applicant's name.

How will I know that my application was received?

The Fulbright Office will notify you of receipt of your application by email. This may take some time as there are many applications to process.

Should I send my original documents with my application form?

Please send **attested photocopies** of all your documents (transcripts, degrees, certificates, etc.)

I'm interested in doing an MBA, why am I being required to submit a GRE instead of a GMAT score?

Although it is true that most business programs require the GMAT rather than the GRE, USEFP has to evaluate business applicants against applicants from a variety of fields other than business. The GRE is an important tool enabling USEFP to compare applicants coming from diverse backgrounds, academic disciplines, and geographic regions. If a business applicant succeeds in the selection process in competition with applicants from all over Pakistan in other fields, he or she will then most likely be required to take the GMAT. The GMAT will be required for placement at a U.S. university where an applicant will be competing only against other applicants in the business field.

Selection

How does the selection process work?

Applications will be reviewed in four stages:

Round 1: All applications will be screened by USEFP staff for completeness and minimum qualifications.

Round 2: Complete applications that meet the minimum qualifications will be evaluated according to a set of established criteria and short listed.

Round 3: In-person interviews of short-listed applicants will take place in Islamabad between June and September 2010. The interview panels are made up of both U.S. and Pakistani citizens.

Round 4: Final candidates and alternates will be selected in October 2010. Applicants who have become finalists or alternates will be notified by telephone. Those who have not will be notified by mail.

Final approval is given by the Foreign Scholarship Board in Washington, D.C.

I don't know where I want to study. What should I do?

You may suggest schools at which you wish to study. Although your preferences will be kept in mind, there is no guarantee that USEFP can secure your admission to the institution(s) of your choice. If you have already applied to a university in the U.S., you are required to mention that on your application.

Does USEFP place students at any university or are there restrictions, for example, on cost?

USEFP will make every effort to have you placed at the best possible university that matches your academic qualifications and field of study.

After Selection

Will I need to submit any additional documents if I become a finalist?

Yes, finalists will be required to submit a completed Medical History and Examination Form.

Can I defer my Fulbright grant to the following academic year?

No, generally you may not defer. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis where circumstances are genuinely difficult. You can, however, decline the grant and reapply at a later date.

If I decline a Fulbright grant, and reapply, will my application be given preference?

Although you are welcome to apply again, your application will not be given preferential treatment.

Can I take my dependents?

Fulbright grantees go to US alone, initially. Once they are settled in their program in the U.S., usually after the first semester, grantees can bring their dependents. However, they will need to demonstrate financial ability to support their dependents while they are in the U.S., including obtaining medical insurance. Please note that only spouses and children up to the age of 21 are considered dependents.

Will I have to get admission to a university on my own?

No, the Institute for International Education in New York will find an appropriate placement for you. They will apply to the universities (usually 4-5 in number) that their experienced placement professionals think best matches your profile and suits your program needs. IIE will take your stated preferences into account, but it is not always possible to or appropriate to submit the application to a grantee's preferred university.

How soon do I have to return to Pakistan after completing my program?

You will need to return within 30 days of finishing your program.

Will I need to post a bond?

Successful Applicants are **only** required to post a bond if they are selected for a **HEC funded program**. The bond can be up to the amount of \$250,000. However, the bond is fully redeemable on a year to year basis. As long as a grantee returns to Pakistan and contributes productively for an amount of time equivalent to the time spent in the U.S. on their program of studies, **they will not have to pay anything**. Grantees for the Master's program have to **sign a contract with USEFP** stating that they will **immediately return to Pakistan** upon the completion of their program. This contract places legal liability on the applicant of Pakistan, the U.S. or any third country for the cost of their program, should they fail to return for a time equivalent to the length of their program.

If I'm married to another Fulbrighter and I finish my program in the U.S. before my spouse, can I convert my J-1 visa to a J-2 dependent visa and stay to the end of my spouse's program?

No, you are obligated to return to Pakistan when your program ends even if your spouse continues to study in the U.S.