



Fulbright New Century Scholars Program

The University as Innovation Driver and Knowledge Center

The Fulbright New Century Scholars Program (NCS) is a global program that annually brings together 25-30 research scholars and professionals from the U.S. and participating countries around the world. Through a series of three plenary seminar meetings and a Fulbright exchange visit, scholars engage in collaborative thinking and multi-disciplinary research on a theme of global significance. NCS Scholars engage in multidisciplinary collaboration under the leadership of a Distinguished Scholar Facilitator and work together to seek solutions to issues and concerns that affect all humankind and deserve the attention of researchers, policy makers and practitioners.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the US Department of State is pleased to announce the competition for the sixth Fulbright New Century Scholars Program (NCS). The 2009 program will focus on the role of higher education in national and global economic development with a specific focus on “The University as Innovation Driver and Knowledge Center.”

Background

In an ever more complex and interdependent world, the knowledge and solutions needed to address many of the major public policy issues we face must increasingly be generated across borders and through the synergetic efforts of governments, the private sector, and the academic community. The Fulbright program has long supported exchange programs that promote cooperation among these sectors to increase mutual understanding and address critical global issues. Accordingly, the New Century Scholars Program offers a collaborative model for scholarly exchange that is multinational and multidisciplinary in scope, encourages the formation of new global networks of scholars and professionals, and pursues the development of collaborative activities with a long-term regional and global impact.

The NCS Program will engage scholars involved in research and project initiatives that advance understanding of the university as innovation driver and knowledge center and contribute to advancing economic prosperity. Sub topics in which scholar applicants might have particular expertise and interest could include the examples listed below. Other sub-topics may emerge based on specific interests and expertise.

- Opportunities for and barriers to university-based partnerships for innovation, entrepreneurship, and economic development.
- Partnerships in science and technology research and development that move ideas and solutions from the laboratory to the marketplace in fields with global reach such as energy security, food production, the environment, health, transportation, and nanotechnology.
- Partnerships (clusters) that contribute to economic development and improving quality of life in local communities and regions;
- Partnerships that apply multidisciplinary research and social entrepreneurship to community issues (historic preservation, crime and drugs, needs of children and the elderly)
- Partnerships that extend the innovation pipeline to K-12 and adult education and lifelong learning.

As economic and social interaction become increasingly global, the United States and nations around the world are facing shared opportunities and challenges that will require societies to be open to

innovation, entrepreneurship, and the generation of global knowledge. Rising prosperity and national well-being require that nations utilize the full creativity and dynamism of all sectors of their economies and societies.

Universities provide the natural nexus for collaboration among government, industry, academic institutions, individuals, and civil society. The world's exemplary universities underpin market productivity and economic growth, sustain civil society, and contribute to an improving quality of life. They are safe harbors for communities of joint research and open exploration and for individual creativity and free expression. In high-achieving societies, these institutions produce the human capital leadership, the theoretical breakthroughs, and the practical solutions necessary to meet global challenges, such as energy and food security, global health and disease management, and environmental protection.

Countries that create the right policy and regulatory conditions to foster public private partnerships centered in the university community are able to speed the transformation of innovative research into useful product applications, often with a global impact, and contribute significantly to the improvement of the daily lives of the nation's citizens.

A number of universities in the U.S. and other countries have gained worldwide recognition for their ability to combine cutting edge theory with meaningful applied research in an array of fields, from business and economics to the sciences and technology. Universities with the highest quality programs play an important role serving as knowledge centers that attract private sector enterprises with an interest in building on the research and innovation capacities of the university. Colleges and universities have long been regarded as economic engines of their local communities and regions; universities contributing to the global network of knowledge are now emerging as drivers of global innovation, problem-solving, and widening prosperity.

The 2009 New Century Scholars Program (NCS) "The University as Innovation Driver and Knowledge Center," will build on this body of research and experience and will advance knowledge and practical solutions to the role higher education can play in national and global economic development.

Program Design

The Program will begin in May 2009 and conclude in April 2010. A total of 25-30 subject experts from the U.S. and participating countries will be selected as Fulbright New Century Scholars. Approximately one third of the participants will be U.S. scholars who will do research in a number of countries worldwide. The remaining two thirds of the program's participants will be visiting scholars from outside the United States. Participants may be academics or professionals in the academic, public, or private sectors in their countries. During the program year, all participating scholars from outside the United States will be expected to participate in the three plenary seminar meetings, make a research exchange visit in the United States with colleagues at an institution with which they have pre-arranged collaboration and a formal affiliation, and maintain contact and intellectual exchange with fellow NCS Scholars during the program year. Research visits may be two to three months in duration, and all visits should be completed prior to April 2010.

- a. In May 2009, at the beginning of the grant period, an orientation and seminar meeting for all grantees led by the NCS Leader will familiarize participants with program goals, establish the basis for informal communication and interaction throughout the grant period, and initiate collaborative work towards a set of illustrative case studies that might inform government, higher education and private sector policies, activities and practices in both national and global settings. An agenda, program roster, contact information, and a summary of Individual research interests will be provided to all NCS grantees.
- b. In October of 2009, at the program's midpoint, all New Century Scholars will be brought together again to further the work begun at the orientation. The locale for the meeting will be determined in consultation with the scholars at the orientation meeting.
- c. In April 2010, the NCS Scholars will meet in a final, plenary seminar again under the direction of the NCS Leader, where they will share the results of their collaborative interactions and report on the accomplishment of NCS Program objectives and their relevant global implications of those findings. We anticipate that this gathering will result in collaborative work towards a set of illustrative case studies that might inform government, higher education and private sector policies, activities and practices in both

national and global settings and in the opening of new avenues of research and inquiry, the formation of new international and transnational collaborations, and the development of significant policy-relevant recommendations.

The NCS Program is carried out under the guidance of a distinguished Scholar Leader, selected for his/her interdisciplinary expertise and professional standing in the area of the research topic. This Leader will ensure productive, cross-disciplinary discussion and the development of collaborative activities among the multi-national group of grantees chosen to participate.

Program Participant Requirements

New Century Scholars will be expected to:

1. conduct research both within and outside of their home countries including a two- to three-month international visit.
2. participate in all NCS Program seminar meetings of approximately one-week's duration each. Throughout the program year, Scholars will be expected to maintain contact and interact with other participants in the program in order to expand their own research and to explore comparative approaches to the program topic.

General Eligibility Criteria

All candidates for the program must be able to demonstrate outstanding qualifications and a record of experience and accomplishment in an area clearly related to the New Century Scholar research theme. Individuals in all disciplines are welcome to apply so long as they are conducting current research directly relevant to the theme and are open to exploring international and interdisciplinary approaches to their investigations. Since individuals designated as Fulbright New Century Scholars will have attained a level of national or international recognition for demonstrated professional accomplishments, including mastery of English and currency in their relevant disciplinary areas, their selection will be based primarily on their potential to contribute to the overall Program objectives rather than on a need or desire to receive further training or exposure to developments and trends in their particular field.

Application Procedures

Application is a two-tier process that requires a tight time schedule this year because this program was announced relatively late. In the first, relatively informal phase, Austrian scholars interested in applying are asked to submit (1) a statement of intent/project abstract outlining their scholarly interests and research objectives as they pertain to the theme of the New Century Scholars Program (maximum 5 pages), (2) a letter of invitation from a prospective US host institution, and (3) a curriculum vitae to the Fulbright Commission by October 15, 2008 (postal date).

The Commission will review applications and nominate a finalist, who in a second more formal phase will be required to complete a standardized application form, including letters of recommendation, that the Fulbright Commission will submit to the Council for International Exchange of Scholars by November 15, 2008. CIES will review applications submitted by Fulbright Commissions and/or U.S. embassies from all over the world and announce the finalists in January 2009.

New Century Scholar awards include individual travel/research funding in the amount of \$30,000, which is intended to support travel to all program meetings, travel and maintenance for the exchange visit, research materials and assistance, and some partial salary. Accommodations and meals for program seminar meetings are covered separately.

Program Activities

To create a platform for collaborative thinking and pursuit of tangible solutions, NCS provides participants with opportunities to come together during the program year. These include:

- An orientation and goal setting meeting
- A mid-term meeting
- A final plenary meeting
- International exchange opportunities of two/three months
- Ongoing discussion and interaction among NCS fellows throughout the program year

NCS Scholars are expected to participate actively in all these activities and to contribute to the collaborative goals of the program throughout the program year.

Details

For details on the New Century Scholars Program, including the application guidelines and application cover page, please consult: <http://www.cies.org/NCS/>

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