

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TRANSATLANTIC FELLOWSHIP 2023 CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The U.S. Embassy Bucharest is pleased to announce the 2023 Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellowship (BFTF).

The program is scheduled to take place in-person from June 24-July 22, 2023, contingent upon the feasibility and safety of in-person programming, which we will continue to monitor.

The four-week program addresses U.S. foreign policy priorities such as youth engagement, democracy and civil society development, and economic prosperity.

The program will be hosted by Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana.

The deadline for candidate nominations to be received by Embassy is on Monday, February 20, 23.59 hrs, 2023.

If the nomination form will not be provided by the respective high school director, principal or teacher of English, interested candidates should ask for the nomination form at the following e-mail address: alexandrescui@state.gov.

If the candidates do not receive the requested form in a term of 24 hrs. during working days (Mon-Fri), they should call 0040-721 288 797 from Monday to Friday, 10:00 – 16:00 hrs.

The nomination forms must be sent at the following e-mail address: alexandrescui@state.gov **in a Word format only** no later than Monday, February 20, 2023, 23:59 hrs.

Project Overview: The Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellowship is an intensive short-term exchange program, created to foster relationships among young Europeans and Americans to build strong linkages and awareness of shared values. The four-week program will enable students, **ages 16-18**, to explore U.S. foreign policy priorities such as youth engagement, support for democracy and civil society, and economic prosperity. The program will consist of a series of lectures, seminar discussions and presentations, and a broad assortment of practical, faculty- and mentor-led workshops. The coursework and classroom activities will be complemented by community service activities, site visits, social and cultural activities, and homestays with American families to deepen participants' experience of U.S. society during their exchange.

During the program, participants will have the opportunity to discuss other topics such as democratic practices, conflict resolution, problem solving, communication skills, critical thinking, tolerance and respect for diversity, youth leadership, team building, disinformation, and the media. The program will explore how freedom of expression provides rights to, and imposes responsibilities on, citizens. Upon their return home, participants will implement service projects in their communities and present an alumni project plan to a youth-serving or

youth-centered organization in their home country. These organizations may include U.S. Youth Councils, American Spaces, and exchange alumni associations.

Funding: All costs will be covered for all U.S.-based activities of the exchange, including in-country and international travel expenses.

Participant Recruitment and Selection: Considerations for selection will include leadership potential, a commitment to or interest in civic action, strong academic and social skills, and interest in community service. Participants must have strong English skills to participate in this program.

One candidate per country will be selected. Up to 45 fellows will be selected globally.

Embassies will make all travel arrangements and provide international airline tickets for their participants to fly round-trip to Indianapolis airport in Indiana and return from Washington, D.C. Since most participants will be minors and will be traveling from their home country alone, Purdue University will provide adult chaperones to accompany participants on flights between one or two selected European airports to the United States and back. The selected candidates will be provided a pre-departure orientation to review the details of the program, cross-cultural issues, and travel and financial matters.

U.S. Program Requirements and Restrictions: Candidates must demonstrate interest in pursuing leadership opportunities in their home countries and convey a genuine desire to learn about the United States and its people, society, and institutions. They are expected to fully participate in the academic program and the follow-on activities in their home countries. They should attend all lectures and organized activities, complete assigned readings, and be ready to share their culture with Americans. They should be made aware that the program is very intensive and that there will be no time for personal pursuits unrelated to the program.

Follow-On: The program includes a strong emphasis on follow-on projects. Participants will be taught to develop plans for follow-on activities and are expected to implement them in their schools and communities upon return home. Embassies will follow up with the participants after the U.S.-based exchange, maintain contact, and support them in alumni activities appropriate to the program goals. Purdue University also will provide support to alumni.

J Visa Issuance: All foreign participants funded by this cooperative agreement must travel on J-1 visas. No fees will be applied to visa applications. Participants will travel to the United States on J-1 visas, under the International Visitor government designation held by ECA/PE/C/PY. Participants are not allowed to arrive in the U.S. prior to the start date of the program or to remain in the U.S. after

its end date. Violations of program rules, host institution rules, or local, state, or federal laws can be grounds for immediate dismissal from the program.

COVID-19 Information: The implementing partner organization requires that all participants be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 with a vaccine approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) prior to travel to the United States. Please note: While we remain hopeful and anticipate that the in-person exchange will take place in 2023, the health and safety of program participants, staff, and host families are our top priority. Should logistical, administrative, and/or health-related challenges associated with the global pandemic deteriorate and make the exchange unfeasible, an alternative plan for virtual programming/participation will be developed.

Participants will be covered by the Educational and Cultural Office's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) health benefits program; Purdue University is responsible for enrolling participants. ASPE is a limited, health benefit program (not insurance) that covers medical expenses associated with each illness or accident up to \$100,000 per occurrence. ASPE does not cover routine examinations or pre-existing conditions.