



Fulbright Foreign Student Program in the MENA Region 2026 Application FAQs

Program Information

What is the Fulbright Foreign Student Program?

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 talented and accomplished students, scholars, teachers, artists, and professionals 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 alums serving as leaders across the globe.

The Fulbright Foreign Student Program enables graduate students, young professionals, and artists from over 160 countries and territories worldwide to research and study in the United States for one year or longer at U.S. universities or other appropriate institutions. Participants also have the unique opportunity to experience life in the United States and share their unique culture and traditions with Americans.

Visit the [Amideast website](#) for more information about the Fulbright Foreign Student Program and how to apply.

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

Upon completion of their program, participants must return to their home country or territory to complete a two-year home residency requirement before they may apply for immigrant and certain nonimmigrant U.S. visas.

Can I participate in the Fulbright Foreign Student Program if I have a disability?

Fulbright Program opportunities are available to qualified individuals. Please contact the Amideast field office or the Office of Palestinian Affairs to discuss any assistance you may need to apply to the program. If selected, Amideast will help advise on accommodations on U.S. campuses.

What are the benefits of the Fulbright Foreign Student Program?

Besides earning your master's degree or pursuing graduate-level study at a U.S. university, there are many benefits of the Fulbright Foreign Student Program, including, but not limited to:

- Learning about the United States and American culture and sharing your own culture and traditions.
- Enriching your knowledge and improving employment prospects with a graduate degree.
- Forging lasting connection and joining a global Fulbright network.
- Participating in Pre-Academic Programs and Enrichment Seminars.
- Obtaining opportunities for professional development and research at U.S. universities.
- Covered award costs include tuition, a living allowance, and round-trip travel.

When does the Fulbright Foreign Student Program start?

The academic year in the United States typically starts in the fall (autumn) in August or September and runs until the end of the following spring in May or June. However, if you are selected to be part of a Long-Term



English program or Pre-Academic Program, you will travel to the United States before your academic program begins.

What is the Long-Term English program?

The Long-Term English (LTE) program helps qualified Fulbright nominees to enhance their English language proficiency and strengthen their applications for admission into a U.S. university. LTE programs are six to eight months with start dates in January and March. These intensive English programs are hosted by university partners.

To be considered for an LTE program, you must first apply to and be nominated for the Fulbright Foreign Student Program. Dependents cannot accompany LTE participants.

Can my dependents (spouse and/or children) join me during the Program?

Dependents are not permitted during LTE programs. During the normal course of their Fulbright Foreign Student Program (non-LTE part), applicants must contact their local Amideast office to confirm if dependents are permitted for your program before entering any dependent-related information in your application. For Gaza, call 02-2408023 Ext (106), and for West Bank, call 02-2408023 Ext (112 or 111). Or email westbank-gaza@amideast.org.

Is there is a specific number of Fulbright participants, or does the number vary each year?

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

Eligibility

Are high school students or recent high school graduates eligible for the Fulbright Foreign Student Program?

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. To find out more, visit the [U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' website](#). The U.S. Embassy or Office in your country or territory may also have additional information on country-specific exchange programs.

Does the Fulbright Foreign Student Program provide support for PhDs?

Most Fulbright Foreign Student Program awards for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region are for master's level studies only. However, some countries provide one- to two-year opportunities for doctoral-level research. Visit [West Bank and Gaza Fulbright page](#) for further information.

Which nationalities can apply?

Amideast administers awards for participants from select countries and territories in the MENA region. Applicants from the following countries and territories are invited to apply: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Gaza, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, the West Bank, and Yemen. You must be a national and current resident of the country or territory that nominates you from the time you apply until Fulbright award decisions are made. If you are from another country or region not listed above, please check with your local U.S. Embassy/Office or Fulbright Commission for details regarding Fulbright Program opportunities.

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

Applicants may only apply through the country or territory of their citizenship and must be physically residing there for the duration of the application, selection, nomination, and placement processes. Gazan



applicants currently outside of Gaza should contact Amideast to confirm eligibility. For Gaza, call 02-2408023 Ext (106) or email westbank-gaza@amideast.org.

What are the eligibility requirements?

The requirements to apply for the Fulbright Foreign Student Program are:

- Must be a Palestinian resident of the Gaza Strip, Jerusalem, or the West Bank.
- U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents are not eligible to apply.
- Applicants must reside in the West Bank, Jerusalem, or Gaza throughout the application, selection, nomination, and placement processes. Gazan applicants currently outside of Gaza should contact Amideast to confirm eligibility.
- Must have two years of professional work experience after graduation.
- Must hold a degree equivalent to a U.S. bachelor's degree from an accredited institution.
- Must have a strong academic background.
- Preference is given to applicants who have little or no previous experience studying or living in the United States.
- Must be proficient in English or able to attend a Long-Term English (LTE) program prior to the start of the academic program. Recommended English language test scores for U.S. university admission are at least 80 on the TOEFL iBT, 6.5 on the IELTS, or 120 on the Duolingo English Test. However, those who test slightly below these scores and who otherwise have strong credentials may be eligible for the LTE program. Candidates are strongly encouraged to independently study for the TOEFL and the GRE/GMAT in advance of taking these tests.

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.

Can I still apply if I have previously received a U.S. Department of State or other U.S. government-sponsored scholarship?

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.

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

Preference is given to applicants who have not had significant experience living in the United States.

Does the Fulbright Foreign Student Program support medical or dental degrees?

The Fulbright Foreign Student Program does not support clinical studies in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, or veterinary medicine due to restrictions on the U.S. visa category issued for Fulbright Foreign Student 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. Contact the office of Palestinian Affairs, your local Amideast field office, for additional guidance on restricted fields of study.

What fields of study can I apply for?

Applicants may apply for most fields of study, including but not limited to 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, but not limited to, public health and nursing administration, are permitted.



Is there an age limit for the Fulbright Foreign Student Program?

There is no age limit for the Fulbright Foreign Student Program.

Is there a minimum GPA requirement?

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

Can I apply to the Fulbright Foreign Student Program to pursue a second master's degree?

Applicants may apply to pursue a second master's degree, provided that it is in a different field and 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.

What is the work experience requirement?

Applicants must have completed two years of work experience after graduation by the time they apply. Employment can be with the government, a non-governmental organization, in the private sector, or elsewhere. Employment does not need to be directly related to an applicant's academic field of study.

Application

How do I apply?

The most up-to-date information on how to apply, including eligibility requirements, can be found on the [Amideast website](#). Complete an application on the 2026 Fulbright application website. Make sure that you select the **2026-2027 cycle** when completing your application.

When is the deadline for the 2026-2027 application?

The application opens globally on February 1, 2025, and closes for West Bank & Gaza on May 5, 2025.

Can I resubmit an application that I used last year?

No, you cannot re-use an application that you submitted in previous years. To be considered, you must submit a new application with updated supporting documents, as applicable.

What level of English do I need to apply?

Applicants of all English language skill levels are invited to apply for the Fulbright Foreign Student Program. There is no minimum TOEFL score required to apply; however, graduate programs in the United States typically require a specific TOEFL score to be considered for admission. The required score varies by institution and academic program and is typically equivalent to at least 80 on the TOEFL iBT, 6.5 on the IELTS, or 120 on the Duolingo English Test.

Qualified applicants with TOEFL scores below 80 or IELTS scores below 6.5 may be nominated by Amideast to participate in a Long-Term English program in the United States before the start of their academic program to improve their English language skills and increase their chances of receiving admission to a graduate program.

What documents are applicants required to submit?

Applicants are required to submit electronic copies of the following documents with their application:

- Original academic transcripts and certified translations if originals are not in English. If you have questions about obtaining original academic transcripts, contact the Amideast office for further guidance.
- TOEFL, IELTS, or Duolingo scores (*if available*)
- A current résumé or CV detailing all prior education and work experience.
- Three letters of recommendation, in English or certified translations into English.



- A personal statement, in English, up to 600 words in length.
- A study/research objective statement, in English, relating to the field of study or research.
- A copy of applicant's identification card (ID) and Passport (if possible and available)

How many letters of recommendation do I need to submit?

You must submit three letters of recommendation with your application. You will register your recommenders when completing your application. These may be letters from professional supervisors or professors with whom you have studied or worked in the past.

How can I register my recommenders?

You can add as many recommenders as you want in the "Recommendations" page of the online application.

Can my recommenders submit letters of recommendation in French or Arabic?

The letters of recommendation must be submitted in English. Letters in Arabic or French must be submitted with an English translation.

Do you have any tips for completing the application?

When completing your application, keep the following tips in mind:

- Write clearly, using professional and understandable language.
- Demonstrate why you have chosen your field of study and how you are uniquely qualified to participate in the Fulbright Program.
- Use specific examples from your previous academic and professional experience.
- 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 is a serious offense and may result in disqualification.
- All submitted work should be your own, based on your own original thoughts, ideas, and level of English language proficiency.

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is copying or using someone else's work or ideas as your own without giving credit or referencing the original author. Examples of plagiarism include:

- Copying word-for-word from a source.
- Copying entire sentences or paragraphs 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 a serious academic offense in the U.S. higher education system. If plagiarism is detected anywhere in your application or supporting documents, you may be disqualified.

What should I do with the supplemental forms?

There are no specific supplemental forms for applications for West Bank and Gaza.

What can I upload in the "Additional Documentation" section?

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



How long does it take the Fulbright Commission, Amideast field office, or the U.S. Embassy/Office to review applications?

In general, applicants are notified of their nomination status in the fall (autumn). However, as the selection process is a comprehensive, merit-based, and multi-step process that takes place over several months, the U.S. Embassy/Office, Fulbright Commission, or Amideast field office determines the timeline each year based on the number of applications received.

Testing Questions

Will my English proficiency score affect my chance of being nominated for the Fulbright Foreign Student Program? If I have a high English proficiency score, am I more likely to be nominated?

Several factors are considered when selecting nominees. A selected applicant must be able to attend an interview which will be conducted in English. TOEFL, IELTS, and/or Duolingo scores are taken into consideration but are not the only factor in the final selection.

Can I submit an application without an English proficiency test score?

Yes, you can apply with or without a score. The absence of a score will not negatively affect your application. However, you must be able to speak and understand English if you are invited to a selection panel interview. If you are nominated for the Fulbright Program, you must take tests required for admission, such as the TOEFL, GRE or GMAT. Fees for nominee testing will be covered by the Fulbright Program.

Do I need to submit GRE or GMAT scores with my application?

No, it is not required to submit a GRE score with your application. If you are nominated for the Fulbright Foreign Student Program, you may need to take the GRE or GMAT. Fees for nominee testing will be covered by the Fulbright Program.