

## Widening Participation, Fair Access and the Fulbright Opportunity Fund



*UK Scholars and Postgraduates, 2018-19 cohort*

The US-UK Fulbright Commission is committed to widening access to the UK Fulbright Postgraduate programme.

We do this by maintaining equitable application and selection processes and by providing the opportunity -- for students who otherwise could not afford to participate in the programme -- to apply for additional financial support.

### **What is the Fulbright Opportunity Fund?**

We recognise that the cost of taking up a US Education, even with a Fulbright Award, is a barrier for many UK students.

As part of our commitment to increasing participation of under-represented groups and continuing fair access, the Fulbright Opportunity Fund is available for the first time in the 2020-21 application cycle. This fund is designed to provide financial support for students who are selected to receive a Fulbright Award, but who cannot afford to fully fund their US study after exhausting all options to find funding.

We encourage applications from students of all backgrounds to apply for Fulbright Awards. The Opportunity Fund exists to help students overcome the financial barriers which might prevent them from taking up an Award.

### **Who is eligible for the Opportunity Fund?**

To be eligible to apply for the Fulbright Opportunity Fund, you must meet the following criteria:

- Have been awarded a Fulbright scholarship in the current application cycle

*“Creative leadership and liberal education, which in fact go together, are the first requirements for a hopeful future for humankind.” – Senator J William Fulbright, founder of the global Fulbright programme*

- Provide evidence of the specific financial need
- Provide evidence that you have applied to a broad range of US universities for your degree
- Provide evidence that you have applied to other external funding bodies
- Provide evidence that you have negotiated with your US University for additional funding
- Provide information on your income for the past 3 years as well as your assets, and declare if and how much personal or family funds can contribute

### **What is the process of applying for the Opportunity Fund?**

The Fulbright Opportunity Fund is available in the event that Fulbright Award recipients are unable to take up their Fulbright opportunity due to financial challenges.

We expect students to exhaust all other options for funding before applying for the Fulbright Opportunity Fund. This may involve focusing their applications on programmes that offer other sources of funding, such as graduate assistantships. It may also include making applications to external funding bodies, and negotiating additional funding with their chosen destination university. In addition to the Opportunity Fund, we have introduced several support mechanisms to help students find financial resources that will enhance their Fulbright scholarship.

The final decision to award Opportunity Fund funding rests with the Fulbright Opportunity Fund Committee.

### **What other kinds of support mechanisms do you provide?**

In addition to the Fulbright Opportunity Fund, we provide other types of support to students to help them navigate the process of finding funding for their US study while on the Fulbright programme. On top of our core funding contribution **of up to \$45,000**, we offer one-to-one sessions on looking for additional sources of funding and share case studies of former grantees who succeeded in negotiating funding from a variety of sources.