



BFTF - Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellows

Summer Institute

SUMMARY

The four-week institute addresses U.S. foreign policy priorities such as youth engagement, democracy and civil society development, and economic prosperity. The program will take place in June and July of 2020; exact dates will be communicated later. The institute will be hosted by **Purdue University** in West Lafayette, Indiana.

The deadline for candidate applications is Wednesday, **January 15, 2020**.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

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 teenagers, 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.

- **All basic costs of the program are fully covered by the State Department and sponsoring institutions.**

During the academic residency, participants also 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, and the media. The institute 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 the U.S. Mission Youth Councils, American Spaces, and exchange alumni associations.

APPLICANT DESCRIPTION

Applicants should have a strong interest in learning more about diplomacy, the transatlantic relationship, the role of a free press in a democracy, and public or community service. They should have a strong demonstrated interest in communications, advocacy, debate, or civic participation. They should have the academic aptitude for a program of this nature and personal qualities needed to be successful participants, including maturity, strong social skills, flexibility, and open-mindedness. English fluency is required. Applicants must exhibit serious interest in pursuing leadership opportunities in their home countries, and demonstrate a genuine desire to learn first-hand about the United States and its people, society, and institutions. Applicants must also understand that, if selected, they will be expected to fully and seriously participate in all program components during the month, as well as in follow-up activities afterward in their home countries. In addition, Fellows should be ready to inform and educate Americans about the cultures and societies of their home countries in non-structured gatherings and in public presentations.

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CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

All candidates are expected to have a strong interest in learning about diplomacy, the transatlantic relationship, the role of a free press in a democratic society, and public or community service. They should have a strong demonstrated interest in communications, advocacy, debate, and/or civic participation. They should have the academic aptitude for a program of this intensity and the personal qualities needed to be successful, including maturity, strong social skills, flexibility, and open-mindedness.

- demonstrate a commitment to community and extracurricular activities;
- have had little or no prior U.S. study or travel experience in the United States;
- be mature, responsible, independent, confident, open-minded, tolerant, thoughtful and inquisitive;
- be willing and able to fully participate in an intensive summer program, with community service and educational travel;
- be comfortable with campus life, shared living accommodations, travel and interaction with a multinational, coed group of participants from across Europe and the United States;
- be comfortable engaging with the Americans they meet in the host communities; and
- be able to adjust to cultural and social practices different from those of their home countries.

CANDIDATES NOMINATED FOR THIS FELLOWSHIP WILL

- be born between June 22, 2002, and June 22, 2004 (i.e., be 16, 17, or 18 years of age at the time of the program start);
- be highly proficient in English, as demonstrated in a personal interview or the results of a standardized test;
- be committed to enrolling in high school or university in their home countries in fall 2020, following completion of the institute;
- demonstrate strong leadership potential and interest in transatlantic relations and diplomacy;
- indicate a serious interest in learning about the United States;
- demonstrate a high level of academic achievement, as indicated by academic grades, awards, and teacher recommendations;

HOW TO APPLY

In order to apply, please submit the completed Application form and the Essay

“How can youth help improve their community or country?”

by **January 15, 2020**

via e-mail to: contact_bratislava@state.gov

Application form: <https://sk.usembassy.gov/education-culture/academic-exchange-programs/ben-franklin-tfsi/>

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