



Annual Report 2016-2017

Introduction

The first bilateral agreement promoting educational exchange between the US and The Netherlands was signed and put into effect in 1949. The Netherlands America Commission for Educational Exchange was formed in 1972 as a successor to two separate entities: the US Educational Foundation (USEF) in the Netherlands (active since 1949) and the Netherlands-America Institute (promoting educational exchanges with the US since 1946). From 1949 until 1972 the US government provided the major part of the support to the Fulbright Program and related activities, from 1972 onwards, the Dutch government supported the activities with a contribution of an approximately equal amount. The treaty provides that both governments should contribute 50% of the Commission's operating costs. The US government covers the sizable administrative expenses for the Fulbright Program in the US.

The Commission's Board of Directors adopted a proposal to use the name Fulbright Center in all communications starting June 1, 2004, although the official name of the Commission remains the same. The objective was to increase name recognition and to better convey the idea of the Commission as a national center of expertise. Name recognition is high in academia, but much lower in other sectors of society.

Period covered

This report covers the period October 1, 2016 until September 30, 2017.

Primary Objectives

The Fulbright Center's primary objective remains the creation and administration of educational exchange programs in order to promote mutual understanding between Dutch and American citizens. The Center strives to maintain the prestige of the Fulbright Program, to pursue opportunities to offer additional grants and develop programming consistent with its mission, and to reach out to underrepresented populations.

Fulbright Program

The Fulbright Center administers the Fulbright Program from its office in Amsterdam. The program promotes mutual understanding between Dutch and American citizens. A measure of Fulbright's success in the Netherlands is the fact that many leaders in Dutch politics, journalism, education, science, and industry are program alumni. Similarly, many American alumni have achieved success either back in the United States or in the Netherlands. Since 1949, more than 4,650 American and Dutch citizens have been awarded Fulbright grants. The Fulbright Center continues to work toward strengthening contacts with Dutch institutions of higher education and enhancing program support. The Center also pursues opportunities to work with appropriate institutions on projects conducive to enhancing mutual understanding.

Meaningful engagement

The Fulbright Center provides a high level of service to the recipients of Fulbright grants and tries to ensure that they have meaningful experiences and are able to fully engage both in their studies and with their local communities. This is crucial to the mission of promoting mutual understanding at the individual level. Participating in the Fulbright Program means much more than simply receiving grant

funds in a bank account. Fulbright grantees are expected to act as ambassadors for their country and as such, they are given a great deal of support to facilitate this role. Dutch students receive support in the form of orientations and preparatory courses in the US. During their stay they are invited to regional conferences and events and can participate in seminars, conferences, and special social and cultural events organized by their host institutions. American students and scholars receive assistance in the form of orientations, mid- and end-of-year evaluation sessions, and other events. They participate in social activities offered by the Fulbright Center and the Netherlands Fulbright Alumni Association (NFAA). Both in the US and in Europe, grantees can take part in enrichment activities. In the Netherlands, Fulbright students may take part in a speakers program and are invited to high schools to speak about topics such as American politics, immigration, or diversity issues. In 2016 – 2017, Fulbright grantees visited 16 Dutch high schools, reaching approximately 1,350 students. The Fulbright Center also offers similar enrichment opportunities to participants in its teacher programs.

Basic support from both governments

The Fulbright Center receives structural financial support from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the US Department of State as well as from the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science. The Educational Advising branch of the US Department of State provides a small amount of additional support. The legal basis for these subsidies is the Bilateral Agreement between the Dutch and American governments signed in October of 1972.

Substantial in-country support from the US government

At the request of Executive Directors of Fulbright Commissions, the Bureau for Educational and Cultural Affairs has provided insight in the costs of the Fulbright Program incurred in the United States and funded by the US government. These costs include the administrative fees paid to the two cooperating agencies, namely the Institute of International Education in New York (IIE) and the Council for the International Exchange of Scholars in Washington D.C. (CIES), as well as the costs made for insurance, conferences, day-to-day support, evaluations, impact studies, and other expenses. The estimated costs for the Dutch grantees to the US and the US grantees to the Netherlands is USD289,450. This figure is not reflected in the Center's financial report and is based on data provided by the US government.

Close cooperation with the Netherland-America Foundation

Since 2001, the New York-based Netherland-America Foundation (NAF) and the Fulbright Center have worked closely together in supporting a number of Fulbright grantees each year who receive hyphenated NAF-Fulbright grants. The organizations also collaborate on other programs. In 2016 – 2017, the NAF funded a total of five Dutch and seven US students. The NAF-Fulbright grants are paid directly to the Dutch students in the US, but are now properly recorded in our books. The NAF organizes special enrichment activities for the Dutch grantees during their stay in the US and social events for its alumni both in the US and in the Netherlands.

Holland American Friendship Foundation

The Holland America Friendship Foundation, a private foundation in the Netherlands, has for many years provided financial support for Dutch graduate students receiving Fulbright grants. In 2016 – 2017, the HAFF instead provided support for the new ETA program, enabling that program to get started in the Netherlands. The HAFF receives its income from a bi-annual fundraising dinner under the title 'Night of the Stars'. Traditionally, the stars were the Fulbright grantees. Although there has not been a HAFF gala for a few years, the support for the ETA program came from funds previously raised by the HAFF through the gala or through smaller events.

Direct support from corporate sponsors

This year, Elsevier B.V. supported two Fulbright grants for Dutch PhD students to carry out research for their dissertations. Although we have other corporate sponsors including law firms, no suitable candidates were found for the grants they offered this year.

Small foundation support

The Fulbright Center does not actively seek support from small foundations. However, if foundations wish to hyphenate their grants to students or researchers, the Center is open to doing so on the condition that the grant is consistent with the mission and criteria of the Fulbright Program and the funder is willing to let the Center manage the grant. Although two hyphenated grants were offered in this year, namely the Fulbright-Tjallingh Roorda Foundation Grant and the Fulbright - New Netherlands Research Center Grant, they were not filled. These are highly specific grants and it is therefore difficult to find suitable candidates. The first is a small private foundation that supports medical research; the second is a research institution focused on Dutch-American history. These grants were filled last year and may again be filled in the future.

The earlier donation of almost EUR200,000 from Mees Pierson McKinsey Foundation was exhausted this year. When this foundation ceased operations in 2010, it donated the balance of its funds to the Fulbright Center and the funds have supported Dutch student grants since then. The remaining funds were sufficient to fund 2.5 grants this year and the Center supplied the remaining funds to fully support three grantees. This program is now closed.

Hyphenated grants

Dutch universities support the Fulbright Program by 'hyphenating' one or more grants for international students to the Fulbright Program. Maastricht University was the first to do so in 2010. Other universities have followed suit. In 2016 – 2017, the following universities offered hyphenated grants: VU University Amsterdam (4 grants), Maastricht University (2), Radboud University (2), Technical University Delft's Faculty of Applied Sciences (1). A special new grant in this category was developed in cooperation with the Mauritshuis in The Hague and enabled a US painting restoration student to take courses at the University of Amsterdam's Restoration Department and practice her skills in the Mauritshuis, funded by the US based Friends of the Mauritshuis. The first grantee in this category arrived for academic year 2017 – 2018.

Decision to increase the grant level for Dutch students

The grant level for Dutch students was the same for over ten years. During that time, the costs of study in the US increased, diminishing the relative value of these grants. In the last few years, the Center also noted a decline in the number of Dutch applicants and found that this might have been caused by the lower value of the grant, among other factors. The Board of the Center decided to increase the grant level from USD12,500 to USD25,000 for the 2017-2018 academic year. This will continue moving forward. This increase was partially made possible by a one-time allotment of USD720,000 from the Department of State specifically given for this purpose. All sponsors have been asked to increase their grant levels accordingly. This has resulted in some changes. The Netherlands America Foundation (NAF), for example, has raised the size of its stipends, but will provide fewer grants. The NAF raised the size of its stipends to USD20,000 for academic years 2017 – 2018 and 2018 – 2019 and the Center is providing an additional USD5,000 per grantee so that the amount of the NAF grants is consistent with the other grants.

Teacher programs

Over the last three years at the behest of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science, the Center has been involved in organizing a group visit exchange program for Dutch teachers to the US to

learn best practices and enhance their professional development. The Bureau for Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State has also been funding the Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program, which provides US primary and high school teachers the opportunity to conduct research in the Netherlands while being hosted by Dutch educational institutions. During the period this report covers, the Center organized the third and final group visit of Dutch teachers in November 2017 and arranged for four American grantees to start their grant in The Netherlands in January 2018. This year, the Center also introduced the English Teaching Assistants Program, a part of the Fulbright Program that is already running in 76 countries and enables US students to gain teaching experience while at the same time offering support to schools in teaching English. The ETA program launched in the Netherlands in academic year 2017 – 2018 with eight ETAs spread throughout the country. Launching the ETA program required an expenditure of Fulbright Center funds, but the program has been well-received and will expand in the coming years.

Fulbright Program alumni

The Netherlands Fulbright Alumni Association (NFAA) is based in the Netherlands organizes events for alumni, such as a Thanksgiving dinner and various smaller meetings and gatherings. The association functions independently from the Fulbright Center. The NFAA no longer charges membership fees so as to avoid conflicting with fundraising efforts of the Fulbright Center. The Center also provides financial and logistical support for certain activities of the NFAA. NFAA members are welcome as members of the Ivy Circle, an organization in the Netherlands for alumni of prominent US universities that provides some financial support to Fulbright Center programs, and can fully participate in Ivy Circle events and activities.

Fulbright Association

US-based alumni of the Fulbright Program may become members of the Fulbright Association, a national organization based in Washington, D.C. This organization has developed into an important lobbying institution to help protect the Fulbright Program from budget cuts and to strengthen the program in the United States.

Other Activities

Educational Advising

The Fulbright Center has developed into a national center of expertise regarding American higher education. It adheres to the high quality and ethical standards of EducationUSA, a network of 400 advising centers in 170 countries, supported by the US Department of State. These standards require that the Center provide objective, impartial, and complete information in an accessible way. Therefore, receiving money from US institutions to recruit students is not acceptable and staff and volunteers must work in the interest of the client by giving suitable advice and assistance. Basic information on study in the US is given for free, but a fee may be charged for individual advising.

The Center offers expertise on subjects including admission tests, visas, financing, suitable placement at US colleges and universities, health insurance, and recruiting Dutch students, and collaboration between Dutch and American higher education institutions. In 2016-2017, representatives from 65 US colleges and universities visited the Center. The adviser also trained a volunteer corps to visit high schools and assist the staff during large events, as well as four senior volunteers to host the Center's information sessions.

The Center's website received an average of 5,035 unique visitors per month, slightly less than the year before. During the spring and fall, the Center organized a total of 14 regional information sessions,

which attracted 945 visitors. Staff and volunteers were present at educational fairs organized by high schools and universities and reached out to 9,641 visitors. The staff of the Center actively engaged with people seeking information, answering 1,382 emails and taking 935 phone calls.

The Ivy Circle, an organization for alumni of prominent US universities, together with the Fulbright Center, organized a college fair in Amstelveen. A total of 25 US fee paying colleges were present and 212 students and parents from 58 high schools visited the fair. From the proceeds, two scholarships of € 2,500 each were awarded to high school seniors to help them prepare for admission to US colleges.

This year, the Center was again asked by the EducationUSA section of the Department of State to organize a fair for law schools. The fair took place in early November of 2017 and attracted 26 law schools. The Center also collaborated with the *BuitenlandBeurs* to organize a presence, with the US Consulate General, during a two-day event about study abroad for Dutch high school and university students, also in November 2017. The Center cooperated with NWS (*Nederlandse Wereldwijde Studenten*) both through lecture series during the *BuitenlandBeurs* as well as presence during the annual *NWS Scholierendag*, as well as for a vlog month featuring Dutch students in four nations, including the US. The Center also visited several Study Abroad events at Dutch higher education institutions to talk about opportunities for research and study, as well as funding. In March 2017, the Center was invited to participate in the first KNAW Loopbaandag for PhD-students.

Campus Scholarship Program

The Campus Scholarship Program targets Dutch senior students at vwo-schools to enable them to study at an American liberal arts college by arranging a placement and a sizable reduction of the costs. These are not placements for degree-granting programs, but for a year of study in the US. Although private exchange organizations offer similar programs, what distinguishes the Fulbright Center from all other programs is that the Center operates on the basis of fees from parents and does not accept fees from host institutions, so that it can offer participants a choice of universities suited to the needs and preferences of the students. The high level of service to both students and parents is another distinguishing feature of this program, much valued by the families. The program has a number of prominent alumni, ranging from writers and journalists to CEOs and politicians. The costs of this program are covered by income received from participation fees. In 2016 – 2017, 43 students participated in the program. This is a decrease of four compared to the previous year.

Special programs and services

The Center offers students a number of special services including advising services and assistance in obtaining visas for internships, which help Dutch students study in the US in degree-granting or other programs or pursue internships in the United States.

Internship Visa Program

The documentation required to request the proper exchange visa is daunting for many international students. The Fulbright Center has an Agreement of Cooperation with the Council for International Educational Exchange (CIEE), based in Portland, Maine, the largest US provider of services for international students who wish to do an internship in the US. Students who have arranged a work placement in the US are offered the chance to participate in the Internship Visa Program for assistance in obtaining the proper visa. They are charged a fee which covers the costs of the program. In 2016-2017 the Center arranged visas for 58 Dutch students. This is a decrease of 13 compared to the previous year.

In the spring of 2017, the Center, together with the NAF and Stichting Giving Back, launched a new internship program: the Dekker-Padget Dutch2USA Internship Program (DPDIP). DPDIP is a scholarship program for students seeking to do an internship in the United States but requiring financial assistance, with priority given to alumni of Giving Back programs. Six grants were awarded for academic year 2017 – 2018, and the first two grantees began their internships in autumn 2017.

Intensive Summer Program

Since 2006, the Fulbright Center participates in the Intensive Summer Program for European Student Leaders, now called Study of the US Institute for European Student Leaders, a program sponsored by the Department of State and open to participants from 19 European countries. A total of six Dutch students participated in 2017 in three different programs. One program was offered in the field of environmental stewardship, one in the field of civic engagement and the third in the field of social entrepreneurship. There are typically five Dutch students in this program but one additional student participated this year because one of the alternates was such a promising candidate that she was also selected.

Prometric Test Center

The Fulbright Center started this service in April 2014, offering students the opportunity to take admission tests such as the GRE, GMAT and TOEFL. Prometric, one of the largest test developers in the world, developed and sold these tests and guaranteed a steady flow of test takers. In late 2016, Prometric decided to close the test center. It ceased operations as of January, 2017. In previous years, we have noted that the income from the test center covered its costs. The income did indeed cover the operating costs of the center, but unfortunately the test center was not in operation long enough to completely return the costs of the initial investment made by the Fulbright Center.

Board Members of the Fulbright Center

Executive Committee

Ms. Marjan Oudeman (Chair), President, Utrecht University (retired on 30 June 2017)
Ms. Jill Adler J.D. (Co-Chair), East-West Parliamentary Practice Project, Amsterdam
Mr. Jan Petit (Treasurer), owner and director of ProFonte, a philanthropy consultancy company
Mr. Adrian Pratt (Alternate Treasurer), Deputy Public Affairs Attaché, US Embassy, The Hague,

Other Board Members

Dr. Paul Broholm, Director of Investments, Theodoor Gilissen Bank, Amsterdam
Dr. Jan Willem Gunning, Emeritus Professor of Economics, VU University, Amsterdam
Dr. James Kennedy, Dean of Utrecht University College, Utrecht
Dr. Ruth Oldenziel, Professor TU Eindhoven, Associate Professor Universiteit van Amsterdam
Ms. Hollis Kurman, Chairperson Ivy Circle NL, Write, Moderator, Strategy Advisor, Amsterdam

Staff

The Fulbright Center has a highly qualified staff of eight people.

Ms. Mattie Bekink– Executive Director
Ms. Rose Bishop - Program Officer, Teacher Programs
Ms. Fabienne van den Bor – Deputy Director and Educational Adviser
Ms. Esther Fris – Program Assistant
Ms. Marion Haring– Financial Administrator
Ms. Manon Kolsteren – Campus Scholarship Program Coordinator and Educational Advisor

Financial facts and figures

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
<i>Income</i>				
US government contribution	€ 242.357	€ 293.726	€ 292.603	€ 338.021
Dutch government contribution	€ 388.000	€ 368.000	€ 368.000	€ 368.000
Third party income	<u>€ 435.956 +</u>	<u>€ 604.069 +</u>	<u>€ 616.633 +</u>	<u>€ 961.718 +</u>
Total income	€1.066.313	€1.265.796	€1.277.236	€1.667.739
<i>Expenses</i>				
Fulbright grants	€ 383.108	€ 418.973	€ 413.816	€ 698.467
Operational expenses	€ 666.264	€ 743.302	€ 793.305	€ 992.992
Exchange loss/profit	<u>€ (17.580)+</u>	<u>€ 3.670 +</u>	<u>€ (4.680)+</u>	<u>€ 19.162 +</u>
Total expenses	€1.033.791	€1.165.945	€1.202.441	€1.710.620
<i>Result for the year</i>	€ 32.522	€ 99.851	€ 74.795	€ (42.882)
<i>Total equity</i>	€ 668.034	€ 767.885	€ 842.679	€ 799.797

General comments

Apart from the government contributions, the Center has two other main sources of income named 'third party income', i.e. contributions from sponsors such as friendship organizations like the NAF and the HAFF and universities, and income received for non-Fulbright programs and activities. In the first category, there are 20 sources of income; in the second 8 more. The general government contributions have remained stable compared to the year before and third-party income has increased. In October 2016, the US government provided an additional USD720,000 stipulating that the funds be put towards increasing the size of the Fulbright grants over three years. This was a one-time allotment from the US side. Although the Department of State requested that the Ministry match these funds, the Ministry declined to do during this financial year. Of these funds, approximately EUR56.000 has been spent. The result for the year was less than the year before mainly because of the starting up costs for the ETA program. Equity is still at a comfortable level. Around 50% of the equity is a buffer that can be used in case the main sources of income would suddenly dry up and commitments still needed can be used at the discretion of the organization, to use for various purposes such as program development, staff training, or eventualities.

Financial year 2016-2017 closed with a loss. There are a few reasons for this. There were significant costs incurred in launching the ETA program. While perhaps better characterized as an investment in a promising and significant program, the start-up costs for the ETA program contributed to difference in performance between last fiscal year and this fiscal year. There was also an increase in administrative expenses as a result of an increase in pension costs. And finally, there was a loss incurred as a result of the depreciation of the dollar and the exchange rate.

Grants

Compared with previous years, this year's grant amounts are considerably higher for a few reasons. First, there was a higher stipend provided to Dutch students. The stipend was increased to from USD12,500 to USD25,000 for academic year 2017 – 2018. This increase was made possible by the

additional funding from the US government. The stipends will remain at this higher level for academic year 2018 – 2019 and, ideally, moving forward. Second, the grant amounts paid directly by the NAF are now properly recorded in our books. Finally, the ETA program grants are now also part of the grant amount.

Operational expenses

Operational expenses consist of administrative expenses, but also expenses incurred in carrying out all the Center’s activities (non-grant program expenses). This year the staff expenses for the Fulbright Program are included as part of the non-grant program expenses. This is done to promote consistency so that all staff costs are recorded in one place rather than having some staff expenses recorded as part of the Fulbright Program and others recorded elsewhere. As a result, the EUR312.086 in administrative expenses includes the staff costs not directly covered by activities as well as all the office costs.

It is important to emphasize that our students receive many benefits, in the form of contributions covering activities, opportunities and other support, that are not included in our books. These benefits include costs paid directly by others, in-kind contributions, and other benefits. Please see below for a detailed overview of costs associated with these benefits.

Total amount of core program grants	€ 698.467
Directly paid by sponsor or subsidizing government	€ 237.020
Benefits provided in the US	€ 243.245
In-kind contributions to grantees	<u>€ 174.339</u>
Total	€1.353.071

Last year these costs were estimated at EUR1.089.086.

Summary of program participants and users of services

Fulbright Awards

Dutch scholars	3
Dutch graduate students	12
Dutch ‘promovendi’	10
US Teachers	4
US scholars	9
<u>US students</u>	<u>17 +</u>
<i>Total number of grants:</i>	55

Other Programs

Ivy Circle Grant	1
Campus Scholarship Program	43
Individual Counseling Service	4
Teachers Exchange Program	20
Summer Institutes	6
<u>Internship Visa Program</u>	<u>58+</u>
<i>Total number of participants/grantees:</i>	132

Educational Advising

<i>Direct advising contacts:</i>	
Number of visitors	98
Number of mail responses	1,382
Information session visitors	945
Phone calls / Skype sessions	935
<u>Fairs, schools visited</u>	<u>9,641 +</u>
<i>Total direct advising contacts:</i>	13,001

Indirect advising: website and social media

Website visitors	60,431
Facebook friends	2,034
<u>Twitter followers</u>	<u>1,062 +</u>
<i>Total indirect advising contacts:</i>	63,527

