

Annual Report 2020-2021

Preface

This has been another challenging year. After the global pandemic had prompted the suspension of the Fulbright Program globally in March 2020, there was a delay to the start of the Fulbright Program for academic year 2020-2021. Only degree-seeking students were permitted to travel for the start of the academic year in August/ September. All other programs were postponed to start in January 2021. Once those US students able to travel were in the Netherlands, we were unable to organize programming and activities for the Fulbrighters as usual. Similarly, Dutch students in the United States were unable to participate in the programming and events typically organized for them.

Almost all meetings we have organized since March 2020, also in the academic year 2020-2021, have been virtual. However, two important events were in person: the Fulbright Award Ceremony for the Dutch Fulbrighters leaving for the United States in the academic year 2021-22, which was hosted by the US Embassy in The Hague on 8 June 2021. The other event was on 23 September 2021. It was the introductory meeting for the new cohort of US Fulbrighters who had arrived by then to embark on their year in the Netherlands in 2021-2022. This meeting was again graciously hosted by the US Embassy. It was followed by a reception, which was to welcome the new Fulbrighters, but also to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Fulbright Program worldwide.

Needless to say, the pandemic has caused many complexities for our organization and others. Despite these challenges, we are pleased to report on the continued vibrancy of our programs.



Fulbright Award Ceremony

A partially online, partially in-person Award Ceremony was held at the US Embassy The Hague, 8 June 2021.

Introduction

The first bilateral agreement promoting educational exchange between the United States and the Netherlands was signed and put into effect in 1949. The Netherlands America Commission for Educational Exchange (NACEE) was formed in 1972 as a successor to two separate entities: the US Educational Foundation 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 United States.

In the period of 1 July 2004 to 1 July 2019 the NACEE was operating under the name of "Fulbright Center." On 1 July 2019 the NACEE became the "Stichting Fulbright Commission the Netherlands." This transition improved the professionalism of our operations and being a stichting better enables us to work in a manner consistent with our mission. It is explained in more detail herein. For the sake of clarity, we will simply call the organization the Fulbright Commission or the Commission herein.

Period covered

This report covers the period of 1 October 2020 until 30 September 2021.

Primary Objectives

The Fulbright Commission's primary objective remains the creation and administration of educational exchange programs in order to promote mutual understanding between Dutch and American citizens. The Commission 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 Commission 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 4,850 American and Dutch citizens have been awarded Fulbright grants. The Fulbright Commission continues to work toward strengthening contacts with Dutch institutions of higher education and enhancing program support. The Commission also pursues opportunities to work with appropriate institutions on projects conducive to enhancing mutual understanding.

Meaningful engagement

The Fulbright Commission 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 United States. 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 Commission and the Netherlands Fulbright Alumni Association (NFAA). Both in the United States 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. The Fulbright Commission also offers similar enrichment opportunities to participants in its teacher programs.

Virtual Events

Equity in Pursuit of Excellence:

Stories of Black Women in Academia and in the Workplace



April 8th
7:00PM-
8:30PM CET

Sjana Holloway
LaNitra Berger
Sonita Moss
Tyler McKinney
Sophie Withaecx



A panel discussion on the experiences of Black Women in Academia and the Workplace, with a focus on workplace inequality in terms of racism and sexism, as well as black excellence and black achievement, what it looks like, how it is accomplished, and the challenges that come with it.

A poster for a virtual mid-year gathering. It features a woman sitting at a desk with a laptop, surrounded by confetti and streamers. The background is dark blue with white stars and yellow streamers.

Join us for our virtual
MID-YEAR GATHERING!

THURSDAY
APRIL 8TH

ONLINE VIA
ZOOM

5:30PM
6:30PM

5:30 PM WORKING IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS / 6:00 PM BORREL SHARING EXPERIENCES
RSVP: m.strating@fulbright.nl

A poster for USA Culture Wise. It features an American flag on the left and a dark background with logos and text on the right.

USA CULTURE WISE

9 - 10 - 11
JUNE 2021
START:
12.45h

Powered by
Breda University of Applied Sciences
&
Fulbright Commission the Netherlands

Breda University
OF APPLIED SCIENCES

75
ANNIVERSARY
1946 - 2021



How would you explain America's upcoming election in fifty minutes or less? US Fulbright students Samuel Chen, Julia Jung and Catherine Knox visited the Dorenweerd College in Gelderland to teach a short class on the US elections.

Basic support from both governments

The Fulbright Commission 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 (ECA) 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 United States and the US grantees to the Netherlands is nearly USD300,000 per year. This figure is not reflected in the Commission's financial report.

Substantial in-country support from organizations in the Netherlands

The in-kind contribution from the Dutch side comes from universities and government organizations and consists of supervision, tuition fee, payment of residence permits and the provision of space for receptions and meetings. These annual costs are estimated at EUR75,000.

Student experiences

Cheryl Freeze, Graduate Student, Boston University



Cheryl received a Fulbright grant for her master's in Music Education at Boston University. She showed us life in Boston during an Instagram takeover.

Close cooperation with the Netherland-America Foundation

Since 2001, the New York-based Netherland-America Foundation (NAF) and the Fulbright Commission 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 2020-2021, the NAF has offered to fund a total of three Dutch and seven US students. The NAF organizes special enrichment activities for the Dutch grantees during their stay in the United States and social events for its alumni both in the United States and in the Netherlands.

Ivy Circle

The Ivy Circle, an organization that strives to create and sustain an active community in the Netherlands of alumni of leading North American universities and business schools, provides one additional scholarship of EUR5,000 to a Dutch Fulbright grantee.

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 Commission does not actively seek support from small foundations. However, if foundations wish to hyphenate their grants to students or researchers, the Commission 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 Commission manage the grant. Two hyphenated grants were offered in this year, namely the Fulbright-Tjallingh Roorda Foundation Grant that supports medical research and the Fulbright - New Netherlands Research Commission Grant, a research institution focused on Dutch-American history but these were not filled. These are highly specific grants and it is therefore challenging to find suitable candidates.

Student experiences



Isaac Messina, Mauritshuis



Isaac received a Fulbright grant for his research in painting restoration. He showed us his work at the Mauritshuis during a week-long Instagram takeover.

Sponsored grants

Dutch universities support the Fulbright Program by sponsoring one or more grants for international students via the Fulbright Program. Maastricht University was the first to do so in 2010. Other universities have followed suit. In 2020-2021, the following universities offered to fund grants: VU University Amsterdam (4 grants), Maastricht University (2 grants), Radboud University (1 grant for second year), Technical University Delft's Faculty of Applied Sciences (2 grants of which, 1 for second year), TU Delft Industrial Design Engineering (2 grants of which, 1 for second year) and Erasmus University Rotterdam (1). A special 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. A grant for this category was awarded in 2020-2021 for the fourth consecutive year.

Scholar experiences

Angie Bos, US Scholar, University of Amsterdam



Dr. Angie Bos taught most her classes via Zoom, but was able to return to some in-person classes during the academic year.

Fulbright Teacher Programs

The Bureau for Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State funds 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. Due to the global pandemic, the teachers who were to come in January 2021 have had their grants postponed until January 2022.

The Fulbright English Teaching Assistants (ETA) Program enables US students to gain teaching experience while at the same time offering support to schools in teaching English. Participating schools are spread throughout the country and include primary schools, secondary schools, vocational schools, and higher education institutions.

The ETA program has been severely impacted by the pandemic. In 2020-2021, international travel restrictions delayed the start of the program until January 2021. In January 2021, 9 ETAs arrived in the Netherlands. They have been teaching throughout the lockdown until the end of their grant period in June 2021.

Other Fulbright programs

We sometimes welcome grantees who are recipients of other Fulbright grants, most often participants in the Fulbright Schuman or Fulbright-Hays programs. The Fulbright Schuman program, administered by the Fulbright Commission in Brussels, was developed in the 1990s and provides grants for citizens of EU member states to conduct research in the United States and American citizens to conduct research in the European Union. The Fulbright-Hays program, administered by the US Department of Education, awards grants to individual U.S. K – 14 pre-teachers, teachers and administrators, pre-doctoral students and postdoctoral faculty, as well as to U.S. institutions and organizations. Although the Fulbright Commission does not administer these programs, should grantees of these programs be in the Netherlands, we welcome them and include them in our programming and provide local support as needed.

Fulbright Program Alumni

The Netherlands Fulbright Alumni Association (NFAA) is based in the Netherlands and organizes events for alumni, such as a Thanksgiving dinner and various smaller meetings and gatherings. The association functions independently from the Fulbright Commission. The Commission provides financial and logistical support for certain activities of the NFAA. Fulbright alumni 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 Commission 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 carries out important lobbying work to help protect the Fulbright Program from budget cuts and to strengthen the program in the United States.

Other Activities

Educational Advising

The Fulbright Commission continues to be a national center of expertise regarding American higher education. It adheres to the high quality and ethical standards of EducationUSA, a network of 430 advising centers in 175 countries, supported by the US Department of State. These standards require that the Commission provide objective, impartial, and complete information in an

accessible way. The Commission offers expertise on subjects including admission tests, financing, suitable placement at US colleges and universities and collaboration between Dutch and American higher education institutions.

We offer advice and resources to any Dutch student interested in studying in the United States. In addition to finding comprehensive information on our website, students can attend regular information sessions and webinars to meet with advisers and alumni and learn about specific topics. In a typical year, the Commission organizes multiple webinars on topics such as undergraduate and graduate admissions, financial aid and scholarships and more. In addition to attending a few online events, we also organized our first ever virtual College Fair in collaboration with the EducationUSA offices in Belgium and Luxembourg. The fair was well attended by university representatives and students.

The advisers also trained a volunteer corps to visit high schools, assist the staff during large events, host the Commission's information sessions, and participate in panels. This year, much of the volunteers' time was spent on virtual events.

Online advising



LL.M. Virtual Fair
25 LL.M. Programs in the U.S.

the Netherlands
November 4
6.30 - 9 pm

To learn more and register:
bit.ly/EdUSAEURLLM2020

BENELUX VIRTUAL COLLEGE FAIR!

STUDEREN IN AMERIKA?

Swipe voor een overzicht van deelnemende universiteiten!

27 oktober 17:30 - 21:00 uur

Geef je op via de link!

Webinar

Hoe financier je een studie in de VS

29 september 2020

Hoe financier ik mijn studie in de VS?

247 weergaven · 30 sep. 2020

4 VIND IK NIET LEUK DELEN OPSLAAN ...

Fulbright Commission the Netherlands
28 abonnees

ANALYTICS VIDEO BEWERKEN

A selection of virtual programs in 2020-2021

Campus Scholarship Program

The Campus Scholarship Program targets Dutch senior students at VWO or HAVO-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 Commission from all other programs is that the Commission does not accept fees from host institutions to generate placements, 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.

Between September 2019 and January 2020, 23 students were selected to study in the US in the 2020-2021 academic year. Most of the CSP students in this cohort decided to postpone their studies due to the pandemic. It was difficult to obtain a student visa and students had concerns about the student experience in a pandemic. Five students traveled to the United States to begin their CSP year in August 2020. Of the remaining 19 students in the cohort, the majority enrolled in Dutch higher education. Ten of these students have joined the 2021-2022 cohort after their first year of study in the Netherlands.

Between September 2020 and January 2021, an additional 16 students were selected to participate in the 2021-2022 cohort.

Student experiences

Lieke Borremans (University of Tampa)

I'M TAKING OVER FULBRIGHT'S INSTAGRAM THIS WEEK

starting the day with an online microeconomics class

Did you go to the Superbowl match?

The stadium was limited capacity due to covid, so me and my friends went to this cute place to watch the game on a big screen!

Lieke Borremans was one of the few CSP students who enrolled at an American university during the pandemic. During her studies at the University of Tampa in Florida, Lieke participated in an Instagram takeover where she showed us life on campus during a pandemic.

KHMW Eizenga Program

In September 2018, we launched a new scholarship program, the KHMW Eizenga program. Made possible by a bequest from Professor Wietze Eizenga (1922-2017) to the Koninklijke Hollandsche Maatschappij der Wetenschappen (KHMW), this program provides scholarships of USD50,000 to Dutch nationals for one academic year of study in the United States for an MBA or graduate level studies in economics. The Fulbright Commission handles program management on behalf of the KHMW. One student received KHMW Eizenga scholarships to study in the United States during academic year 2020-2021 and was pursuing an MBA at Stanford. Six students were awarded a grant in 2020-2021 for academic year 2021-2022.

Intensive Summer Program

The Fulbright Commission has participated in an intensive summer program called the Study of the US Institute for European Student Leaders since 2006. This program is sponsored by the Department of State and open to participants from 26 European countries. Unfortunately, the program was suspended for summer 2020. We hope to send Dutch students again in summer 2021.

Community Engagement – Partnership with the John Adams Institute

In order to better foster community and connect with our alumni and other supporters through public engagement and thoughtful programming, we established a partnership with the John Adams Institute (JAI). JAI provides an independent podium for American culture in the Netherlands. It brings the best and the brightest of American thinking from the fields of literature, politics, history, technology and the arts. Since 2018 JAI and Fulbright have co-hosted annual lectures.

The third lecture was slated for the period covered by this report and was transitioned to an online event. As it was focused on the election, it was deemed too sensitive and the Commission withdrew. The partnership with JAI will continue, however, along with the community engagement it offers.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Promoting diversity, equity and inclusion has increasingly been a priority for the Commission and within Fulbright. Indeed, encouraging more diverse applicants was one of the reasons for increasing the size of the Fulbright student grants. We have also focused on this within the Commission team, preparing for a full day diversity and inclusion training for staff organized by Humanity in Action, which was held just after the period of this report.

To provide a meaningful opportunity for Fulbrighters to engage with one another and connect, the Commission, in partnership with the Fulbright Commission of Belgium, organized and hosted a Fulbright diversity webinar on 'Equity in Pursuit of Excellence: Stories of Black Women in Academia and the Workplace' on 8 April 2021.

Board Members of the Fulbright Commission

The Fulbright Commission has an impressive board comprised of both American and Dutch nationals. During the period this report covers, the board met five times and had a number of sub-committees in place, including an Audit Committee, and an HR & Governance Committee.

During the period this report covers two board members, Jan Petit and James Kennedy, stepped down after eight years of service. Two new board members were also added: Emilie Gordenker and Anniek de Ruijter.

Dr. Anton Pijpers (Chair), Professor and President of Utrecht University
Dr. Paul Broholm (Vice Chair), Director of InsingerGilissen Bank
Mr. Jan Petit (Treasurer), Director of ProFonte (until July 2021)
Mr. David Korslund (Treasurer from July 2021), Advisor on values-based banking
Mr. Omar Cardentey, Deputy Public Affairs Attaché, US Embassy
Dr. Emilie Gordenker, Director of the Van Gogh Museum (from July 2021)
Dr. Jan Willem Gunning, Emeritus Professor of Economics, VU University
Dr. James Kennedy, Professor of Modern Dutch History and Distinguished University Professor, Utrecht University (until July 2021)
Ms. Anna Koolstra, Housing Policy Advisor, Ministry of the Interior
Ms. Hollis Kurman, Chairperson Ivy Circle NL, Writer, Supervisory Board Member, Save the Children NL
Dr. Alexander Rinnooy Kan, University Professor of Economics and Business, University of Amsterdam
Dr. Anniek de Ruijter, Associate Professor of Law, University of Amsterdam (from July 2021)

Staff

The Fulbright Commission has a highly qualified staff of five people as of September 30, 2020.

Ms. Mattie Bekink – Executive Director (until December 2020)
Dr. Christward Gradenwitz – Executive Director (from December 2020)
Ms. Marion Haring – Financial Administrator
Ms. Manon Kolsteren – Campus Scholarship Program Manager and Educational Advisor
Ms. Linda Pietersen – Fulbright Program Manager
Ms. Melanie Strating – Program Manager, Teacher Programs and Educational Advisor (until August 2021)
Ms. Alexandra Aukes – Program Assistant, Teacher Programs (from September 2021)

Financial facts

In general, it can be said that the COVID pandemic has also had an effect on the result this year. For example, less was spent on grants from government funding and non-grant expenses are lower due to the lack of events. This has increased the result. An opposite effect on the result was caused by the lower number of participants in the CSP program. Furthermore, a negative effect on the result was caused by higher salary costs due to, among other things, the higher pension costs of the conversion of the pension contract.

The positive result of this year has been added to the general reserve, but the intention is to award grants for this in later years.

Financial facts and figures

	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
<i>Income</i>				
US government contribution	€ 285.594	€ 343.152	€ 393.045	€ 296.184
Dutch government contribution	€ 402.471	€ 506.794	€ 500.144	€ 497.674
Third party income	€1.007.386 +	€1.070.330+	€ 616.683 +	€ 797.665 +
Total income	€1.695.451	€1.920.275	€1.509.872	€1.591.522
<i>Expenses</i>				
Fulbright grants	€ 791.293	€ 989.426	€ 680.159	€ 731.564
Operational expenses	€ 982.035	€1.097.687	€ 758.940	€ 801.267
Exchange loss/(profit)	€ (33.093) +	€ (54.717) +	€ 41.615 +	€ 5.866 +
Total expenses	€1.740.235	€2.032.397	€1.480.712	€1.538.698
<i>Result for the year</i>	€ (44.783)	€ (112.121)	€ 29.160	€ 52.825
<i>Total equity</i>	€ 755.015	€ 642.893	€ 672.054	€ 724.879

General comments on the financial results

Apart from the government contributions, the Commission has two other main sources of income named "third party income", i.e. contributions from sponsors such as a friendship organization like the NAF, Dutch universities and host schools and income received for non-Fulbright programs. The general government contributions have remained stable compared to the year before. The US government shows a lower amount. This is due to the reimbursement of the COVID-related expenses in 2019-2020, which made the amount higher in that year. The third-party income has picked up after the decrease in 2019-2020, which was in that year the result of lower income of sponsors due to the impact of the COVID measures on the Programs.

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 several years. This was a one-time allotment from the US side. In 2018 we learned that the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science would provide a one-time contribution of EUR100,000 in matching funds and that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would provide EUR600,000 in matching funds. These contributions

more than match the US government funding. Of the Dutch and US government extra funds, approximately EUR130.000 has been spent in 2020-2021.

The level of the equity would allow the Commission to fulfill its obligations should the government funding be discontinued. These obligations would include operational expenses and contacts, salaries and severance in the event of a closure of the Commission, and related expenses.

Special circumstances – COVID-19 and leadership transition

COVID-19 Pandemic

As mentioned throughout this report, the COVID-19 global pandemic has compromised the Fulbright program and our other activities for academic years 2019 - 2020 and 2020 - 2021. The US department of State suspended all Fulbright programs globally on 12 March 2020. A mandatory departure was in place for US grantees in the Netherlands and they were required to leave the country.

The Department of State announced over the summer that most Fulbright programs for academic year 2020 - 2021 would not be permitted to commence until January 1, 2021. Only degree-seeking students were able to commence their Fulbright programs in the autumn if the universities are open and the travel advisories permit them to do so. Both American and Dutch research students and scholars, Dutch promovendi, and American ETAs were only able to start their programs in January 2021. As a result of this, three ETA host schools who were to host four ETAs dropped out of the Fulbright program for academic year 2020 - 2021, but indicated that they will return in 2021 - 2022. So far, the contributions of the sponsors remains stable.

Despite the immediate challenges posed by COVID-19, we remain optimistic about the future of our programs and perhaps their heightened relevance. With the transitions of this year we are also better positioned to rise to challenges and offer meaningful opportunities in the spirit of promoting mutual understanding to both Dutch and American students, scholars, teachers, and communities.

Leadership transition

In late September 2020, the Fulbright Commission Executive Director informed the board that she would leave at the end of the year. A search was launched after the period covered by this report and a new Executive Director, Christward Gradenwitz, was hired. As a Fulbright alum himself, Mr. Gradenwitz has an MPA from Harvard University, a master's degree from Oxford, and a PhD in International Relations from Leiden University. He has worked with the IMF and the World Bank. Most recently, he was Deputy Secretary General of the Senate and a member of the Board of Directors of the Social Insurance Bank of the Netherlands (SVB). His employment commenced on 1 December 2020 to allow for overlap with the departing Executive Director, Mattie Bekink, and provide for smooth transition.