



**FULBRIGHT**  
The Netherlands

# Annual Report

## 2022-2023



## Preface

The year 2022-2023 has been a remarkable year. With excellence and diversity being the main tenets of its Strategic Plan 2022-2030, the Fulbright Commission the Netherlands has again selected outstanding students and scholars, forming diverse cohorts.

When using the term diversity it is meant here in the broadest possible sense, as including diversity, equity and inclusion. Fulbright is a worldwide community where everybody is welcome, and where everybody should also feel welcome. In the very first place this means that Fulbright is all about inclusion, and the feeling of being included can only exist if there be a concomitant experience of equity. Fulbright has a duty to constantly assure itself that it does everything possible to create this feeling of inclusion and equity.

Access is key to attaining the feeling of inclusion and equity mentioned above. While access to all our programs should be within reach to candidates of merit, at Fulbright we realized that our Campus Scholarship Program (CSP) was not. As a matter of fact, our highly successful gap year program requires parents of participants to pay a substantial fee, and there are no grants to cover this apart from the reductions Fulbright can effectuate for its candidates with participating U.S. universities. We realized that this fee makes the program beyond reach for those whose parents cannot afford it. This is why Fulbright decided to diversify our CSP cohorts by offering a new scholarship.

In 2022-2023 Fulbright has created a Trailblazer Opportunity Scholarship, which provides a full scholarship for one or two high achieving Dutch students whose parents cannot afford to pay for the CSP participation fees. The first two Trailblazers have been selected within this year, and they will study in the U.S. in 2023-2024. While the Fulbright Commission tries to make funds available for this, it relies on sponsors who can make this scholarship durable. The Commission is extremely grateful that the U.S. Embassy of the U.S. in the Netherlands has made it possible to get this new scholarship off the ground. Thanks are also due to JetBlue Airlines and to the Tjallingh Roorda Foundation, which sponsor our Trailblazers with travel grants.

Having been sworn in only one week before the period covered by this report started, U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands Ms. Shefali Razdan Duggal became our new Honorary Chair, like, on the Dutch side, the Minister of Education, Culture, and Science Dr. Robbert Dijkgraaf already was. At Fulbright we are very fortunate to receive the full support of our Honorary Chairs. We thank the U.S. Embassy in The Hague as well as the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science for the pleasant cooperation this year again.





## 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 Commissie 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 2022 until 30 September 2023.

“

We must try to expand the boundaries of human wisdom, empathy, and perception, and there is no way of doing that except through education.

- Senator J. William Fulbright

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## **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 4,950 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.



*US Fulbright grantees visit the Mauritshuis and Tweede Kamer in April 2023 at one of five excursions throughout the Netherlands.*

### **Basic support from 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 EUR 75,000.



*Guests and sponsors at the introduction and reception for incoming Fulbright grantees at the US Ambassadors Residence on 28 September 2023*



## Welcome reception for US Fulbright grantees, 28 september 2023



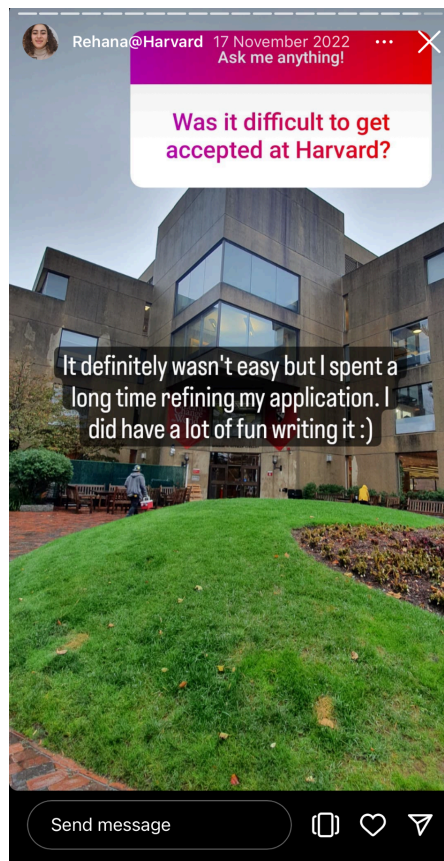


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I'm very grateful for the doors Fulbright has opened for me, and I am so incredibly proud to call myself a Dutch Fulbrighter. It's an honor.

- Rehana Al-Soltane  
Fulbright graduate student (NL) at Harvard University

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*Rehana took over the Fulbright Commission's Instagram account for a week in November 2022 to show us her daily life as a student at Harvard University and answer student questions*





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I started working on (partial) ectogestation as part of my master's thesis at King's College in London. One of the prototypes is being built at TU Eindhoven, and it made sense to work with the design team that is building them. And the Netherlands is the hotbed of philosophy technology. It's really funny because now I look at philosophy technology journals and all the authors in them are people I just see and meet and interact with day to day. Two years ago, I was reading those papers and all those names were foreign to me.

- Llon Kavege
- Fulbright graduate student (US) at TU Delft

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## Book publication

Addoley Dzegede, US NAF-Fulbright grantee, finished her Fulbright year by writing a book about her project in the Netherlands. *Cut from a bigger cloth* describes Addoley's own textile work in the context of her research on the history of wax print, specifically how Dutch manufacturers copied and industrialized the production of Indonesian batik, making a cloth that became so identified with Africa that many don't realize its origins.

### 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 2022-2023, the NAF has offered to fund a total of 3 Dutch and 8 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.

### The 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 EUR 5,000 to a Dutch Fulbright grantee and one additional scholarship of EUR 2,500 to an undergraduate student starting a bachelor's degree in the United States.

### 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 such as a law firm, no suitable candidates were found for the grants they offered this year.

### 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 2022-2023, the following universities have provided funding for grants: VU University Amsterdam (4 grants), Maastricht University (2 grants), Technical University Delft's Faculty of Applied Sciences (1 grant), TU Delft Industrial Design Engineering (1 grant for the second year), Radboud University Nijmegen (3 grants of which 1 for second year) and Erasmus University Rotterdam (1 grant). For the special grant in this category for a US painting restoration student to take courses at the University of Amsterdam's Restoration Department and practice her skills in the Mauritshuis, one grant was sponsored for the 6th consecutive year.



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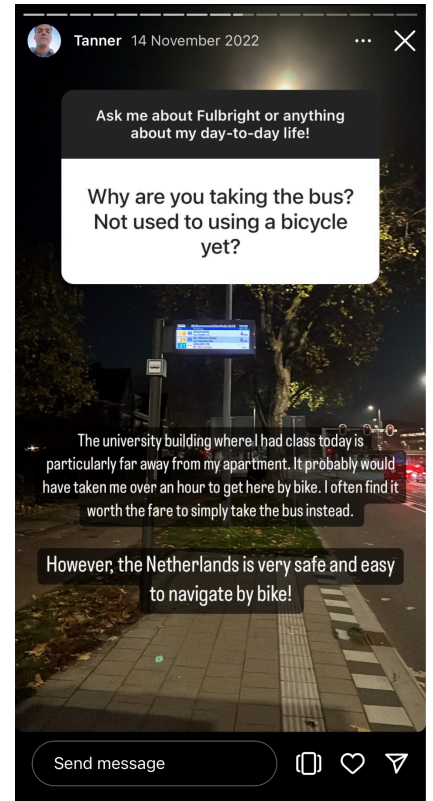
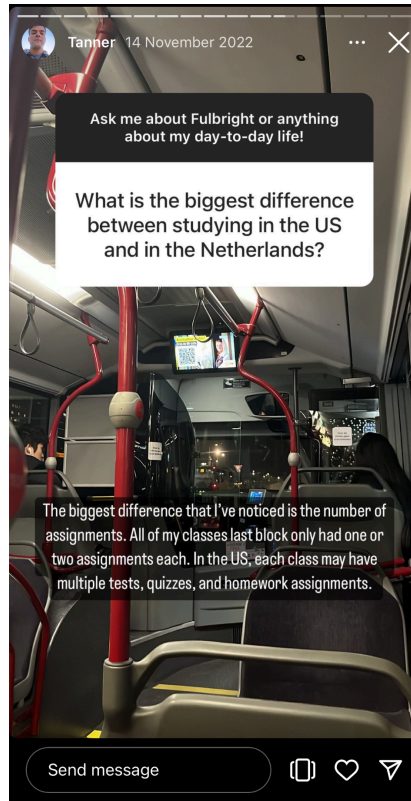
It was an absolute pleasure to meet so many inspiring people from all over the world and to hear about their culture, research, study programs and their Fulbright experience. I am so thankful to the Fulbright program for this opportunity.

- Hendrien Kuipers  
Fulbright graduate student (NL) at the Mayo Clinic

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*Hendrien attended the 2023 Fulbright Seminar 'Public Health in a Complex World: Translating Science and Building Trust' held in Boston, where she represented The Netherlands and the Mayo Clinic.*



*US Graduate Student Tanner DeYoung took over the Fulbright Commission Instagram to share his experiences at Utrecht University*

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One moment that stood out to me this year was when I was playing pick-up soccer with Daniel, Tanner, and Kaden in Utrecht. It was a beautiful day out, and I was having a lot of fun running around and not impacting the game whatsoever with my inferior soccer skills. However, after a while, we realized there was a group of 4 young Dutch boys from the neighborhood waiting in the corner to use the pitch. Instead of finishing up our game and letting them take the pitch, we just invited them into our game and ended up having one of the best games of the day. I think this moment represented what Fulbright was about the most. Being open minded and bridging differences in age or culture to share your passion for something or create something greater than yourself.

Little moments like these will stay with me long after I leave the Netherlands.

- David Wang

Fulbright Graduate Student (US) at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

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## 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. In 2022-2023, there were no participants in the program due to staff shortages.

## Other Fulbright Programs

We sometimes welcome or administer 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 a Dutch national or come to the Netherlands, we welcome them and include them in our programming and provide local support as needed. In the academic year 2022-2023, one Dutch PhD student received a Fulbright Schuman grant to do research in the US, and we welcomed one Fulbright Schuman Student and one Scholar from the US.



**At least four Fulbright alumni published books in the 2022-2023 academic year. Nina Siegal published the Diary Keepers, a story about World War II and the Holocaust through six diaries; US Correspondent Maral Noshad Sharifi published her first autobiographical novel Citroeninkt, narrating the story of a young refugee navigating life in the Netherlands; Journalist Lynn Berger wrote Ik werk al (ik krijg er alleen niet voor betaald), about the social struggle between paid and unpaid work; Historian Lise Koning published Zwart op Wit, on the history of blackface in the Netherlands.**

### **Fulbright Program Alumni**

The Netherlands Fulbright Alumni Association (NFAA) is based in the Netherlands and organizes events for alumni, such as a Thanksgiving dinner. The association functions independently from the Fulbright Commission. The Commission provides financial and logistical support for certain activities of the NFAA. This was the first year after COVID that the NFAA was able to organize a Thanksgiving dinner again.

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.



*NFAA Thanksgiving Dinner at Utrecht University's historic Academy Building*

### **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. 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, our student ambassadors visited 26 study abroad events at secondary schools throughout the country.



*Fulbright Commission/EducationUSA booth at the Buitenlandbeurs, november 2022*

In September 2023, we organized the second in-person edition of College Night, which was part of the EducationUSA Benelux College Tour. More than 200 secondary students, their parents and school counselors signed up to meet with representatives from 24 American universities and testing organizations to learn about study opportunities in the United States.

We were also present at EAIE, which took place in Rotterdam in September 2023, and the BuitenlandBeurs, one of the country's biggest study abroad events.

### **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. In this year, a total of 17 CSP students have been selected to study in the US in 2023-2024. In the current academic year (2022-2023), a total of 18 students studied in the US.

## **Destinations of CSP participants in 2022-2023**



In 2022-2023, 17 participants applied to 29 universities across the US. Their chosen destinations were:

- Colorado State University, CO** (3)
- Denison University, OH** (2)
- Grand Valley State University, MI** (1)
- Linfield University, OR** (4)
- Northw. Missouri State University** (1)
- Roanoke College, VA** (1)
- University of Tampa, FL** (3)
- Western Carolina University, NC** (2)



# CSP experiences





## Trailblazer Opportunity Scholarship

The Trailblazer Opportunity Scholarship provides a full scholarship for one or two high achieving Dutch students whose parents cannot afford to pay for the Campus Scholarship Program participation fees. The Trailblazer Opportunity Scholarship covers all costs of studying in the United States, with support from the US Embassy the Hague, the Fulbright Commission, The Tjallingh Roorda Foundation, the host university in the US, and sponsored flights by JetBlue. In May 2023, the first two Trailblazer Opportunity Scholarships were awarded. These students will study at Denison University in the United States in the 2024-2025 academic year.



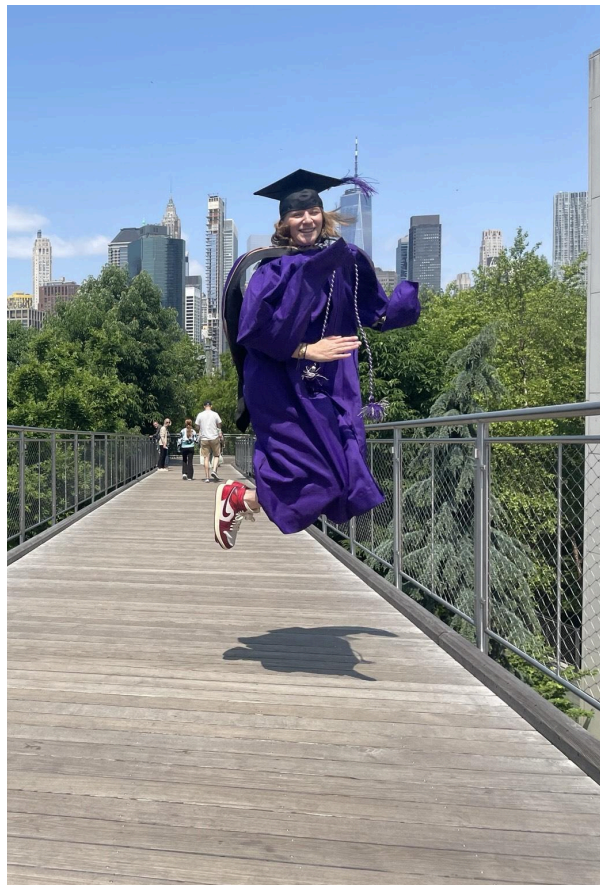
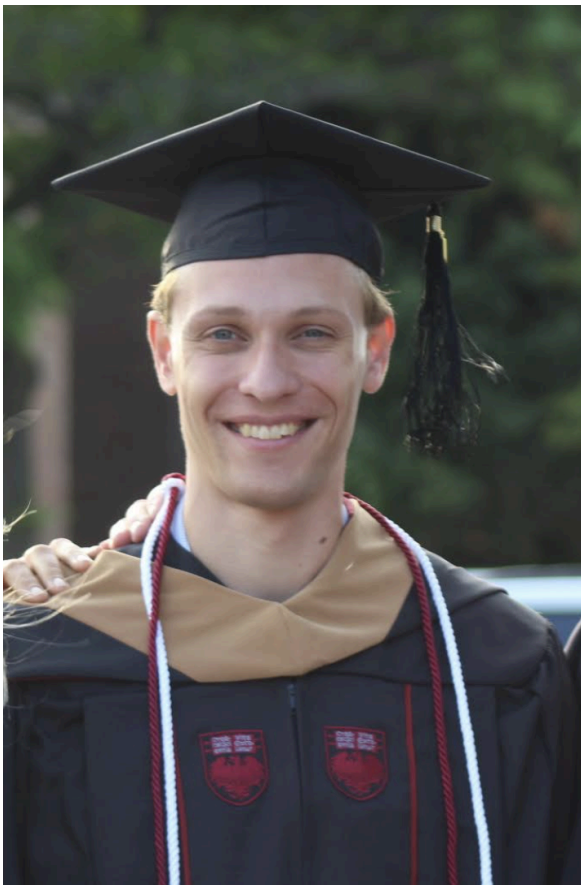
*Left, trailblazer promotional image. Right, US Ambassador Shefali Razdan Duggal (middle) with the two Trailblazer grantees of 2023. They will study in the US in the 2024-2025 academic year.*

## KHMW Eizenga Program

Since September 2018, we administer the KHMW Eizenga program. Made possible by a bequest from Professor Wietze Eizenga (1922-2017) to the Koninklijke Hollandse Maatschappij der Wetenschappen (KHMW), this program provides scholarships of USD 50,000 to Dutch nationals for one academic year of study in the United States for an MBA, or a Master or PhD program in economics. The Fulbright Commission handles program management on behalf of the KHMW. In the academic year 2022-2023 two students have pursued studies in the United States with the KHMW-Eizenga scholarship. Due to the low number of grants provided in the first years, and the large number of suitable candidates, the KHMW decided that a larger number of grantees could be selected for 2023-2024. Five students were awarded a grant in 2022-2023 for the academic year 2023-2024.



## Graduation portraits



*KHMW-Eizenga grant recipients at their graduation ceremonies*





### **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. In the summer of 2023 the Netherlands was allowed to send two participants to the Study of the US Institutes (SUSI), one to the SUSI on Environmental Issues, organized at Shippensburg University, and one to the SUSI on Civic Engagement, organized at Michigan State University.

### **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.

On 9 December 2021 the Fulbright Commission and Elsevier BV signed a Memorandum of Understanding for 2022-2025 to the effect of committing to select each year two Dutch promovendi going to the US, who either do research for their PhD in the field of diversity, inclusion, equity, and access, or who by their background contribute to diversity. The first two grantees in this category were selected in 2022, and went to the U.S. in academic year 2022-2023.



## **Board Members of the Fulbright Commission**

The Fulbright Commission has a board comprised of both American and Dutch nationals. During the period this report covers, the board met three times and had three sub-committees in place: an Audit Committee, an Outreach & Inclusion Committee, and a Governance Committee.

During the period this report covers two board members, Dr. Anniek de Ruijter and Ms. Anna Koolstra, stepped down. One new board member was also added: Ms. Rosanne Engel.

Dr. Anton Pijpers (Chair), Professor and President of Utrecht University;  
Dr. Emilie Gordenker (Vice Chair), Director of the Van Gogh Museum;  
Mr. David Korslund (Treasurer), Advisor on values-based banking;  
Ms. Rosanne Engel (Alternate Treasurer), Consultant at Bain & Company (from July 2023);  
Ms. Anna Koolstra, Housing Policy Advisor, Ministry of the Interior (until 30 June 2023);  
Mr. Gerbert Kunst, Director of International Policy, Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science;  
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;  
Ms. Mary Rodeghier Martin, Deputy Counselor for Public Diplomacy, US Embassy;  
Dr. Anniek de Ruijter, Associate Professor of Law, University of Amsterdam (until 30 June 2023);  
Ms. Addie Schroeder. Counselor for Public Diplomacy, US Embassy.

## **Staff**

The Fulbright Commission has a staff of six persons as of 30 September 2023.:

Dr. Christward Gradenwitz – Executive Director  
Ms. Marion Haring – Financial Administrator  
Ms. Manon Kolsteren – Campus Scholarship Program Manager and Educational Advisor (on maternity leave from 1 June 2023)  
Ms. Linda Pietersen – Fulbright Program Manager  
Mr. Floris Borghouts - Program Assistant (from 1 March 2023)  
Ms. Esther Fris - Campus Scholarship Program Manager and Educational Advisor (from 1 May 2023)  
Ms. Iris Plessius - Communication and Outreach Specialist (from 15 July 2023)

## Financial facts

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 insofar as the amount exceeds the continuity reserve.

### Financial facts and figures

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
<i>Income</i>				
US government contribution	€ 393.045	€ 296.184	€ 296.263	€ 408.799
Dutch government contribution	€ 500.144	€ 497.674	€ 614.366	€ 450.551
Third party income	€ 616.683 +	€ 797.665 +	€ 659.412 +	€ 820.038 +
Total income	€1.509.872	€1.591.522	€1.570.042	€1.679.388
<i>Expenses</i>				
Fulbright grants	€ 680.159	€ 731.564	€ 816.849	€ 718.069
Operational expenses	€ 758.940	€ 801.267	€ 726.848	€ 891.664
Exchange loss/(profit)	€ 41.615 +	€ 5.866 +	€ (112.974)+	€ 34.964+
Total expenses	€1.480.712	€1.538.698	€1.430.723	€1.644.697
<i>Result for the year</i>	€ 29.160	€ 52.825	€ 139.319	€ 34.692
<i>Total equity</i>	€ 672.054	€ 724.879	€ 864.198	€ 898.890

### 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 and Dutch universities and income received for non-Fulbright programs. The basic contribution from the US government has increased for the first time since years by 4.5% due to increased costs. The contribution of the US is also higher compared to last year due to the expenditure of the extra funds financed by the US. The extra funds allocated by the Dutch government have been exhausted this year, which means that the contribution from the Dutch government is lower than last year. The basic contribution from the Dutch government has also been increased by an additional amount for wages and price indexation like last year.

The third-party income has increased compared to last year mainly because more grants have been awarded by KHMW Eizenga foundation. The income from the other sponsors for Fulbright grants has remained stable compared to last year.

In October 2016, the US government provided an additional USD 720,000 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 EUR 100,000 in matching funds and that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would provide EUR 600,000 in matching funds. These contributions more than match the US government funding. Of the Dutch and US government extra funds, approximately EUR 127.805 has been spent in 2022-2023.



Less Fulbright grants were awarded than in the previous academic year, which is reflected in the figures in lower expenses for Fulbright grants. The operational expenses are higher due to the awarding of more KHMW Eizenga grants and the awarding of the Trailblazer grants issued for the first time.

The exchange rate result on the USD is negative this year, in contrast to the remarkably high positive exchange rate result in the previous financial year.

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 contracts, salaries and severance in the event of a closure of the Commission, and related expenses.