

Fulbright U.S Scholar Program in Colombia Important Reminders & Resources

Health, Safety, and Security

1. Please review the [Safety and Security page](#) for important information about staying safe and secure while on your program and resources in case of emergency. We recommend bookmarking this page and printing this [contact card](#) for easy reference.
2. Familiarize yourself with the [Seven Corners ASPE](#) health benefits and [ASPE ASSIST](#) support resources. We recommend that you print a hard copy of your ASPE card.
3. Ensure your personal and emergency contact information is up to date in the [IIE Portal](#).
4. Please share your in-country contact information with the Fulbright Commission (local address, phone number, and host/tutor contact information), through the online form that you will receive during the first week after your arrival. It is very important for the Commission to keep updated U.S. grantee contact information so that we can reach out anytime, especially in case of an emergency. Please keep your assigned Program Officer informed about any changes to your contact information.
5. Find country-specific health, safety and security information and recommendations on the Fulbright Colombia Orientation Handbook for U.S. Grantees (Pag. 8-26).

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY

Your health and safety are top priorities for the Fulbright program. We want to ensure that you are able to complete your Fulbright program successfully and safely. In order to best protect yourself and the host community, we recommend that you:

- Although the World Health Organization decreed COVID-19 is classified no more under a pandemic, we suggest to follow [CDC guidance](#) to prevent the spread of the disease. Wash hands frequently, avoid contact with those who are sick, and limit social gatherings in the weeks leading up to your departure and during your grant period.
- Only if required, in Section IV of the *Fulbright Colombia Orientation Handbook for U.S Grantees* you will find additional information about COVID-19 testing in Colombia and official websites with updated information related to the COVID-19 pandemic in the country (Pag. 25).
- U.S. grantees must follow any additional recommendations or protocols requested by their host institutions in Colombia, and any applicable measures and regulations implemented by local or Departmental authorities related to the containment of the COVID-19 or any other virus-related diseases (mobility

restrictions, quarantine, curfews, temporary prevention of sales and transportation of alcoholic beverages, etc.).

- If you are planning to make a trip due to leisure and/or research activities, stay updated on U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories related information, specific for [Colombia](#), especially regarding quarantine and testing requirements upon arrival.
- Wash your hands with soap and water often, especially after coming into contact with surfaces that may have been contaminated by another person (handles, handrails, locks, transport), after using the bathroom, handling money, and before and after eating.

Safety measures in Colombia

Colombia is a country full of culture, traditions, color and friendship. However, like any other country, Colombia faces the challenge of ensuring citizens and visitors' safety. Therefore, hoping that your stay is a pleasant experience, we ask you to follow these recommendations.

- When you are going out, we suggest you inform someone close (a mentor, tutor, Fulbright, etc.). They might know more about the local community than you do and they are best prepared to give you advice about places it would be better for you to avoid and how best to get around. In general, you should take their advice seriously and follow their suggestions.
- You should carry a photocopy of your passport in your purse or wallet, as well as the Colombian ID card (as soon as you get it). Keep your passport in a safe place.
- Be aware of the surroundings and/or crowded places.
- Do not carry a lot of money with you. You should have only what you need for the day.
- Make sure the water you drink is purified. Ask first if tap water can be drunk at the places you will be doing your academic or research stay.
- Be careful with food in the streets, it might not be clean and could be harmful to your health.
- In empty or lonely areas you do not know very well, please walk with caution.
- Be careful with the people you share personal information and motives of being in Colombia.

Follow-up and Monitoring activities during the grant period

- Please make sure to confirm via email with your assigned Program Officer that you have arrived safely to your city of placement in Colombia.
- All U.S. grantees must fill out the [Weekly Health Conditions Form](#) in order to report any symptoms related to COVID-19 or other diseases.
- You will be assigned a Colombian Fulbright alumni mentor, located in your city or region of placement, to help you with questions related to the following topics: lodging or housing, city neighborhoods or areas, local transportation, culture and lifestyle, and access to any particular services you may need. This volunteer and *ad honorem* mentoring strategy seeks to facilitate your adaptation to life in Colombia and minimize U.S. grantees' cultural shock, in particular, at the

beginning of their Fulbright experience in Colombia. Your Fulbright alumni mentor contact information will be confirmed via email.

- We encourage you to participate in the monthly *U.S. Grantee Dialogue Sessions*, held by the Fulbright Commission. In these virtual meetings, you will be able to share your experience in Colombia, interact with other U.S. grantees and Fulbright staff, and solve any specific questions or concerns.
- An assigned Fulbright Staff mentor will be contacting you by telephone on a weekly basis in order to follow up on you and your dependents' well-being and health status. Please share any updates, questions or inquiries. Your Fulbright Staff mentor will also be monitoring your responses to the Weekly Health Conditions Form and may also communicate with your Fulbright Alumni Mentor and/or Host Institution tutor, if required. Your Fulbright Staff mentor contact information will be confirmed via email.
- Please bear in mind that your main point of contact in Colombia will be your assigned Program Officer (Sergio Sánchez, ssanchez@fulbright.edu.co, mobile phone: +57 3173138159). Do not hesitate to contact him via email, phone, or WhatsApp, if you need any assistance from the Fulbright Commission, or have any questions or concerns.
- In addition to ASPE ASSIST Mental Health Support Hotline (+1 833 963 1269, Worldwide: +44 20-3859-4463, aspe-support@anvilgroup.com), U.S. Fulbright grantees in Colombia can have access to occasional advising and counselling sessions with a Colombian Fulbright alumni psychologist, subject to availability. Further information and guidelines will be shared via email.
- The Phone Tree is a rapid-response security verification mechanism implemented by the Fulbright Commission in Colombia with the aim of reaching all current U.S. grantees in Colombia in the event of any emergency. Upon arrival in the country, you will be added to a WhatsApp group chat, which shall only be used for that purpose. The Phone Tree will be activated by the Fulbright Staff in case of a natural disaster or a terrorist attack.
- You will be required to complete and submit three (3) detailed follow-up grant reports during your grant period, including the following aspects of your experience in the country: academic progress, relation with host institution, overall program satisfaction, city of placement, security, health, funding, and dependents (if applicable). The first report must be submitted one month after arrival; the second, half-way through your grant period; and, a final report, by the end of your stay in Colombia.

Travel authorization during the grant period

All domestic or international travel during the grant period in Colombia, including fieldwork trips, must be cleared and approved both by the Fulbright Commission and the U.S. Embassy. For each fieldwork trip, the grantee must submit the following travel information at least fifteen (15) days prior to the date of departure:

- Specific destination (municipality(ies) and Department(s) in Colombia that the grantee plans to visit);

- Exact dates of travel (day, month and year of arrival and departure);
- Details on any accompanying researchers, colleagues or dependents (when applicable);
- Specific security measures taken or envisaged by the traveler or research group (including verifications with local points of contact or organizations in the field);
- Mode of transportation and travel details, as available (itinerary, license plates, etc.).
- Any additional details that the Commission should be aware of regarding the proposed activities, groups of interest in the region, previous visits to the area, and preparations.

Please complete the following form each time you want to present a travel request:
<https://forms.gle/BHMhciTzbX4KWQHD8>

According to the information provided by the grantee, the U.S. Embassy Regional Security Office will approve, provide specific recommendations, or disapprove the request. This assessment will be based on updated information related to security and public health conditions in the region of interest, at the time of the request. Grantees must be aware that security conditions in several regions of Colombia remain quite changing and volatile.

Helpful Resources

- Enroll in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#). This free service enables you to receive important information about safety conditions in your host country and allows the Department of State to assist you in case of an emergency.
- Review travel advisories or warnings, as well as American Citizen Services information on the U.S. Department of State [travel website](#).
- Review the [Online Guide for Fulbright U.S. Scholars](#). This comprehensive document provides detailed information about your Fulbright program. The password for this site is: CIES_grantee!
- Additional contact information, emergency phone lines, resources and helpful websites may be found in the Contact section of the Fulbright Colombia Orientation Handbook for U.S Grantees (Pag. 5).

Stay Connected with Fulbright

- Join the [Fulbrighter App](#). This exclusive networking platform enables you to connect virtually with the global community of Fulbright participants.
- Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) (@fulbrightprgrm), and [Instagram](#) (@the_fulbright_program).
- Follow the Fulbright Commission on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) (@FulbrightCol), and [Instagram](#) (@fulbrightcolombia).
- Add the [Fulbright Program](#) to the 'Experience' section on your LinkedIn profile.

- Submit a [blog post](#) to the [Fulbright blog](#) to share your experience as a Fulbrighter.