

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Fulbright
English Teaching
Assistant
Program (ETA)



FAQ - Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Program (ETA)

How many ETAs does Colombia accept in a given year?

On average, around 30 Fulbright English Teaching Assistants will be awarded by the Fulbright Commission in Colombia each year, depending on available resources and negotiations with stakeholders.

Can I apply if I am both a U.S. and Colombian citizen?

Yes, U.S. citizens holding dual U.S.-Colombian citizenship are eligible to apply to this program.

Is Spanish language proficiency required?

Spanish language proficiency is required, not only for the development of the proposed grant activities but also for ease of adjustment and daily communication. Generally, an intermediate or higher level of Spanish is recommended to facilitate the grantee's successful academic performance and interaction with Colombian counterparts, the local population, and other relevant stakeholders.

How relevant is having previous teaching experience for the Fulbright Commission in Colombia?

Due to the nature of the program, preference is given to candidates with strong English teaching experience, especially those who have worked with adults or young learners, hold degrees in education, English, Spanish, or applied linguistics, and have TESOL, TSL, or TEFL qualifications. Colombian educational institutions expect Fulbright ETAs to be native English speakers to enhance students' and staff's English proficiency and strengthen language teaching capabilities among English instructors.



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Who do I contact if I need help with my application?

For general application inquiries, you may reach out to Bradley Ryktarsyk, Erika Walsh, and Jen Sherdan at FBstudent@iie.org. For specific information regarding the Fulbright U.S. Student Researcher in Canada, Latin America, and the Caribbean, you may contact Maya Andelson at FBstudent.WHA@iie.org.

What is the “supplementary project”? Is it the same as the “social project”?

Yes, the Supplementary Project and the Social Project are the same. This initiative allows ETAs to engage deeply with communities in need of social support while also working on a topic they are passionate about.

All ETAs are required to engage in a social/volunteer project related to their personal, career, and/or educational interests, and approximately 10 to 15 hours per week are to be spent on this project. It is intended to allow ETAs to evidence their commitment to contribute to local communities in their host country.

How is the social project determined, and can I choose its focus?

The social project is shaped by each ETA's interests and skills, as well as the needs of the community where they are placed. It's best to wait until your placement is confirmed to learn about specific community organizations in the area. The Fulbright Commission in Colombia encourages you to let community needs guide the focus of your project.

The Commission can provide resources to help grantees find an institution for their social project, but it is ultimately each grantee's responsibility to identify and engage with a local organization.



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Can you give me any feedback about why I was not selected?

Since there is no general application process in Colombia, we are unable to provide feedback on past applications. It is also important to note that Fulbright awards are typically very competitive, so not all applicants will be selected at the end of an application cycle. For feedback on past applications, we suggest that you contact IIE at FBstudent@iie.org.

When are grantees expected to travel? What are the earliest and latest dates that I should travel to Colombia?

The grant period can and must begin in August of each year. Grant dates correspond to the academic year, August to May. Changes to or deferrals of the grant period are not allowed. All ETA grantees are required to attend the grant's Seminars (Welcome/Orientation Seminar and Mid-year Enrichment/Enhancement Seminar), according to the modality (online and/or in-person) and dates established for them.

The grant period begins with an Orientation Seminar organized by the Fulbright Commission in Colombia in late July (hybrid modality). Attendance at the Orientation Seminar is mandatory for all ETA grantees.

How is life in Colombia as a Fulbright U.S. English Teaching Assistant?

For more information on life in Colombia and testimonies of other Fulbrighters, we suggest you visit our website by [clicking here](#).

To learn more about Colombia as a travel destination, visit: <http://www.colombia.co/>.



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Who do I contact if I am worried about safety?

The general recommendation for U.S. citizens is to stay within city limits and avoid areas deemed unsafe by the U.S. Embassy in Colombia. If you have concerns about your location's safety, we recommend contacting your host institution, as they can provide valuable insights into local safety conditions.

Finally, in case of an emergency, you may contact the U.S. Citizen Services Office at the U.S. Embassy in Bogotá. Their emergency number is (601) 2752000 (Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.). After hours, you may call (601) 2754021 or email acsbogota@state.gov.

You may also call 123, which is the emergency line in Colombia.

Can the Fulbright Commission in Colombia help me find housing?

Fulbright Colombia provides grantees with general information about housing options. While the Commission can assist in providing housing information, it cannot make housing arrangements. It is the grantee's responsibility to secure housing in Colombia during the grant period according to their preferences and needs. You may contact the International Relations Office at your host institution for advice and support in securing housing.

Do I need a visa for this program? And what do I need to do to apply for it?

Yes, you will need to apply for a Colombian visa, as immigration regulations require that anyone staying in Colombia for more than 3 months must apply for a Colombian visa to regularize their immigration status. If you are selected, the Fulbright Commission in Colombia will guide you through the visa application process, ensuring you meet the requirements and deadlines set by the Colombian government.

Dual Colombian-U.S. citizens do not need to apply for a visa, since according to immigration regulations, they must enter Colombia with a Colombian passport.



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What should I know about the Orientation Seminar?

Before arrival, the Fulbright Commission offers a series of informative webinars in which relevant information is shared regarding the grantees' preparation, the visa application process, and grant document processing, among other key aspects for a successful grant start. The grant period begins with an Orientation Seminar organized by the Fulbright Colombia Commission in late July, developed under the hybrid modality. Attendance to the Orientation Seminar is mandatory for all ETA grantees.

Grantees will also participate in the Mid-Year Enrichment Seminar. This space is designed to enhance the pedagogical skills of Fulbright ETA grantees by providing them with advanced methodological strategies and access to innovative teaching approaches to enrich their ability to teach English effectively.



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FULBRIGHT
Colombia