

## EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES IN ROMANIA - BEN FRANKLIN SUMMER INSTITUTE FOR HIGH SCHOOLS 2017 – CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The Embassy of the United States to Romania is pleased to invite high school students candidate nominations from all high schools in Romania for the 2017 Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellows Summer Institute.

The four week institute will address U.S. foreign policy priorities such as youth engagement, democracy and civil society development, and economic prosperity.

The program will take place in **June and July 2017**; exact dates will be communicated at a later time. The institute will be hosted by **Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, pending availability of funds.**

The deadline for candidate nominations is midnight on **Sunday, April 2, 2017.**

Prior to sending the proposal, please express your intention to participate sending a message to the following e-mail address: [alexandrescui@state.gov](mailto:alexandrescui@state.gov), in order to receive the application form.

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When sending the application form, it is requested that applicants ask for confirmation that their applications have been received. You may also ask for confirmation at the following phone number: 021-200-3684. Public Diplomacy Office does not take responsibility for e-mails from applicants that for any reason do not reach the intended recipient e-mail address for the Summer Institutes 2017.

#### 1. Program Description:

The Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellows Summer Institute is an intensive short term exchange program whose purpose is to foster relationships among young Europeans and Americans to build strong linkages and an awareness of shared values. The four week program will enable teenagers, ages 16-18, to explore U.S. foreign policy priorities such as youth engagement, support for democracy and civil society, and economic prosperity. The program will consist of a series of lectures, seminar discussions and presentations, and a broad assortment of practical, faculty- and mentor-led workshops. The coursework and classroom activities will be complemented by community service activities, site visits, social and cultural activities, and homestays with American families to deepen participants' experience of U.S. society during their exchange.

During the academic residency, participants will also have the opportunity to discuss other topics such as democratic practices, conflict resolution, problem solving, communication skills, critical thinking, tolerance and respect for diversity, youth leadership, team building, and the media. The Institute will also explore how freedom of expression provides rights to and imposes responsibilities on citizens. Upon their return home, participants will implement service projects in their communities and present an alumni project plan to a youth-serving or youth-centered organization in their home country. These organizations may include the U.S. Mission Youth Councils, American Corners or American Spaces, and exchange alumni associations.

#### 2. Other Essential Program Information

A. Program Funding: Through the award given to Wake Forest University, costs for all U.S.-based activities of the exchange will be covered.

B. In-country and international travel expenses will be covered by all participating Embassies for their participants. These expenses include domestic travel in the home country, including a visit to post for a visa interview; round trip international travel to the United States; passport fees; a travel allowance; pre-departure orientation costs; and alumni activities. Post program funds, other Department sources, an in-country organization, private sector funds or the participant's own funds may be used to pay for some or all of these expenses, as long as the participant meets the full Summer Institute selection criteria.

Embassies will take care of making all travel arrangements and providing international airline tickets for their participants to fly round-trip to Greensboro airport in North Carolina in the United States. Since many participants will be minors and will be traveling from their home country alone, the U.S. host institution will provide adult chaperones to accompany participants on flights between one or two selected European airports to the United States and back.

C. Health Benefits: Washington will provide travel health benefits through its Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) to all participants. There is a \$25 co-pay for visits to the doctor's office and a \$75 co-pay for emergency room visits for the duration of the program. Pre-existing conditions are not covered. Information on the health benefit program may be found online at [usdos.sevencorners.com](http://usdos.sevencorners.com).

D. Program Requirements and Restrictions: Candidates must exhibit demonstrable interest in pursuing leadership opportunities in their home countries, and convey a genuine desire to learn about the United States and its people, society, and institutions. They are expected to fully participate in the academic program and the

follow-on activities afterward in their home countries. They should attend all lectures and organized activities, complete assigned readings, and be ready to share their culture with Americans. They should be made aware that the Institute is very intensive and that there will be little time for personal pursuits unrelated to the program. Participants will travel to the United States on J-1 visas, under the International Visitor government designation. There should be no fees incurred for the J-1 visa application. Participants are not allowed to arrive in the U.S. prior to the start date of the Institute or to remain in the U.S. after its end date. Violations of program rules, host institution rules, or local, state or federal laws can be grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. It is important that these requirements and restrictions are made clear to all candidates before their nominations are submitted.

D. English Language Ability: All candidates must be proficient in English so that they can actively participate in the academic program. The host institution will take into account that the level of comprehension and speaking ability of Fellows may vary and will prepare lectures and discussions that meet the highest academic standards while using language appropriate for those for whom English is not the first language.

3. Candidate Description and Qualifications: All candidates are expected to have a strong interest in learning about diplomacy, the transatlantic relationship, the role of a free press in a democratic society, and public or community service. They should have a strong demonstrated interest in communications, advocacy, debate, and or civic participation. They should have the academic aptitude for a program of this nature and the personal qualities needed to be successful, including maturity, strong social skills, flexibility, and open-mindedness.

Candidates nominated for this Fellowship will:

- be born between June 24, 1998, and June 24, 2001 (i.e., be 16, 17, or 18 years of age at the time of the program start);
- be highly proficient in English, as demonstrated in a personal interview or the results of a standardized test;
- be committed to enrolling in high school or university in their home countries in fall 2017, following completion of the Institute;
- demonstrate strong leadership potential and interest in transatlantic relations and diplomacy;
- indicate a serious interest in learning about the United States;
- demonstrate a high level of academic achievement, as indicated by academic grades, awards, and teacher recommendations;
- demonstrate a commitment to community and extracurricular activities;
- have had little or no prior U.S. study or travel experience in the United States;
- be mature, responsible, independent, confident, open-minded, tolerant, thoughtful and inquisitive;
- be willing and able to fully participate in an intensive summer program, community service, and active educational travel program;
- be comfortable with campus life, shared living accommodations, travel and interaction with a multinational, co-ed group of participants from across Europe and the United States;
- be comfortable with engaging various Americans in the broader community; and
- be able to adjust to cultural and social practices different from those of their home countries.