



PROGRAM INFORMATION

Study of the U.S. Institutes (SUSIs) for Student Leaders are intensive short-term academic programs whose purpose is to provide groups of undergraduate student leaders with a deeper understanding of the United States while simultaneously enhancing their leadership skills. Each Institute has 20 participants from the selected countries. The Institutes consist of a **four-week academic residency** with a balanced series of seminar discussions, readings, group presentations and lectures. Site visits, leadership development, cultural activities, community service, and, if possible, a one-week study tour will complement the coursework and academic sessions. Note that if the program must take place virtually, participants will engage in similar activities but online from their home countries.

Program Funding: The Education and Cultural Affairs Bureau (ECA) of Department of State will cover all participant costs, including program administration; international and visa travel, travel allowances, domestic travel, and ground transportation; book, cultural, mailing, and incidental allowance, and housing and subsistence as well as arrange and pay for participants' international and visa travel costs and travel allowance within set limits. If the program is conducted virtually, ECA will provide a technology stipend to all participants.

Program Requirements and Restrictions: Candidates should be made aware that they are applying for an intensive and rigorous academic Institute and are expected to fully participate in all aspects of the program. Participants must attend all lectures, participate in all required organized activities, and complete all assignments. Family members and/or friends may not accompany or join participants for any part of the program.

English Language Ability: English Language knowledge and proficiency are REQUIRED to participate in this program. The program is conducted in English.

Housing and Meal Arrangements: Housing will be in shared or single university dorms on campus or full-service hotels within walking distance of most classroom activities. Male and female participants will be housed in separate quarters. In addition to regular group meals and a university meal plan, participants may have access to a kitchen to cook some meals on their own. It is important that nominees are aware of these arrangements and that they are comfortable with such accommodations.

Care will be taken to ensure that any special requirements regarding diet, daily worship, housing, and medical care are satisfied. Special accommodations will be made available to the greatest extent possible. Should a participant need to quarantine due to positive COVID-19 test results, accommodations will follow Center for Disease Control (CDC) and host institution guidelines.

Health Benefits: All participants will receive the Department of State's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) health benefit during the U.S.-based in-person component, which provides coverage of up to \$100,000 with a \$25 co-pay per medical visit and a \$75 co-pay per emergency room visit, for the



duration of the program. Pre-existing conditions may be covered up to \$100,000, subject to policy exclusions and limitations. ASPE also covers up to \$500 for routine COVID-19 testing requirements in the United States. COVID-19 is treated like any other illness under the ASPE health benefits plan.

Travel Policy: Under no circumstances are participants allowed to arrive in the United States prior to the start date of the SUSI or remain in the United States after the end date. Similarly, participants will not be permitted to leave the SUSI to visit relatives or friends while in the United States. If a relative or friend wishes to visit a participant, it will be considered on a case- by-case basis in consultation with the ECA program officer and the host institution. Participants are required to return to their home countries immediately following the end of the Institute.

Virtual Program Contingency: Should health, safety, and travel conditions pose significant challenges, the SUSI will pivot to a virtual format. The virtual program would consist of a minimum of 36 hours of required programming with a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning. To the extent possible, the virtual programming would include lectures, small group discussions, videos, readings, panels, site visits, leadership development, assignments, and individual and group activities. Participants will be expected to fully participate in the entire virtual program from their location.

Connectivity: Should the program need to pivot to a virtual format, participants would need access to a computer and a stable internet connection. If a participant does not have access to these two items, we will work with the participant to facilitate access. Participants would be expected to actively engage in all program activities, and therefore, they should notify immediately the host institution and post of any issues with their online access during the duration of the program as well as any difficulties affecting their participation.

CANDIDATE DESCRIPTION AND QUALIFICATIONS:

The participants are expected to be highly motivated first through third year undergraduate students from colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher education, who demonstrate leadership through academic work, community involvement, and extracurricular activities. Their fields of study will be varied and may include the sciences, social sciences, humanities, education, business, and other professional fields.

Candidates nominated for this program will:

- be proficient in English;
- be interested in the topic of Entrepreneurship and Economic Development;
- be between 18 and 25 years of age;



- have at least one semester left of their undergraduate studies, and be committed to returning to their home universities following completion of the program;
- demonstrate strong leadership qualities and potential in their university and community activities;
- indicate a serious interest in learning about the United States;
- have a sustained high level of academic achievement, as indicated by grades, awards, and teacher recommendations;
- demonstrate commitment to community and extracurricular university activities;
- have little or no prior study or travel experience in the United States or elsewhere outside of their home country;
- be mature, responsible, independent, confident, open-minded, tolerant, thoughtful, and inquisitive;
- be willing and able to fully participate in an intensive academic program, community service, and educational travel;
- be comfortable with campus life, prepared to share living accommodations, and able to adjust to cultural and social practices different from those of their home country; and,
- if the program must be conducted virtually, posts must ensure that participants have access to the internet or help facilitate such access if needed.

Frequent Asked Questions (FAQ)

What degree of English proficiency should a nominee have?

All participants must be fully proficient in English; throughout the Institute they will need to fully understand lectures, actively participate in discussions, and read and write assignments in English.

During the in-person portion of the program, how much free time will a participant have?

There will be some free time during the program. However, nominees MUST understand that this is an intensive academic program, and they are expected to fully participate in all lectures, activities, site visits, and scheduled events.

If a nominee has relatives in the United States, would he/she/they have time to see them, during the in-person portion of the program?

Participants will NOT be allowed to leave the Institute to visit relatives or friends. Occasionally it is possible for a relative or friend to visit the participant on a specific day designated by the U.S. host institution if the schedule permits. These situations will be considered on a case-by-case basis in



consultation with the ECA program officer and the host institution. Participants are required to return to their home countries immediately following the end of the Institute.

During the in-person portion of the program, can a participant arrive early/late or stay after the Institute?

No. Participants who choose to travel to the United States on a Study of the U.S. Institute are required to abide by the terms and conditions of the program. These terms state clearly that student leaders may NOT arrive in the United States before the program start date or remain in the country after the close of the Institute.

Can a graduate student participate in the SUSI for Student Leaders Institute?

No. Study of the U.S. Institutes for Student Leaders are designed exclusively for undergraduate students with at least one remaining semester of study.

Can a participant miss one part or component of the Institute?

All participants are expected to participate in all scheduled lectures, events, site visits, trips, and activities.

How much money will participants need to bring for the in-person portion of the program?

The Study of the U.S. Institutes cover all basic costs of an individual's participation including transportation, lodging, and meals. Generally, U.S. host institutions provide meals through a combination of a cafeteria meal plan, a pre-loaded debit card for use at local restaurants, and/or a cash allowance to permit participants to purchase food for cooking. Information on housing and meal arrangements will be provided by the U.S. host institution approximately six weeks prior to the start of the Institute. Other than the meal stipend mentioned above, participants should not expect to receive any spending money from the Institute. Participants should bring their own spending money if they wish to purchase souvenirs or other items during their time in the United States.

Are you able to fully accommodate participants with disabilities?

The Study of the U.S. Branch welcomes nominations for individuals with disabilities. We are committed to working with our Institute hosts to arrange reasonable accommodations for all participants. We ask that you identify disabilities during the nomination process so that we can begin working with our Institute hosts to ensure appropriate accommodations.