



Fulbright New Zealand Media Fact Sheet

The Fulbright Programme

The Fulbright programme of international educational exchange was an initiative of American Senator J. William Fulbright from Arkansas, who in the aftermath of World War II believed that greater mutual understanding between different countries and cultures was crucial to ensure a peaceful future for the world.

The Fulbright Act, an ingenious piece of legislation passed by the United States Congress in 1946, directed proceeds from the sale of surplus war property, foreign loan repayments and reparations to fund the “promotion of international good will through the exchange of students in the fields of education, culture, and science.”

In Senator Fulbright’s own words, the Fulbright programme aims “to bring a little more knowledge, a little more reason and a little more compassion into world affairs and thereby to increase the chance that nations will learn at last to live in peace and friendship.”

The Fulbright programme has been described as one of the largest and most significant movements of scholars across the face of the earth. It now operates in over 155 countries, funding around 8,000 exchanges per year for participants to study, research and teach in another country.

The more than 300,000 Fulbright alumni worldwide include heads of state, cabinet ministers, ambassadors, politicians, judges, heads of corporations, university presidents, journalists, artists, professors and teachers.

Fulbright New Zealand

New Zealand was the fifth country to sign up to the Fulbright programme by bilateral treaty with the United States of America, in 1948. Since then Fulbright New Zealand has granted more than 3,000 exchange awards, sending more than 1,700 New Zealand graduate students, academics artists, teachers and professionals on exchanges to the US and welcoming more than 1,300 Americans on exchanges to New Zealand.

Fulbright New Zealand is jointly funded by the US and New Zealand governments with additional funding from award sponsors, private philanthropists and alumni donors. Its annual operating budget is approximately NZ\$2.5 million, from which around 35 student and 35 scholar awards are funded each year.

The organisation is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of six New Zealanders and six Americans, and is currently chaired by Fulbright New Zealand alumna Dr Helen Anderson. New Zealand’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon Murray McCully, and the US Ambassador to New Zealand serve jointly as Honorary Chairs of Fulbright New Zealand.

Fulbright Awards

Fulbright New Zealand offers awards under two main programmes, one for graduate students and the other for more advanced academics, artists and professionals. Grantees are selected not just for excellence and achievement in their chosen field, but also in consideration of ambassadorial qualities, leadership potential and the potential impact of their proposed exchange activities.

Fulbright Student Programme

Fulbright New Zealand offers a range of around 25 awards annually for New Zealand graduate students to study or research in the US in different fields. With the exception of the Fulbright-Platinum Triangle Award in Business which contributes up to US\$75,000 towards the cost of a two year MBA programme, Fulbright New Zealand's core graduate awards provide up to US\$33,000 towards one year of postgraduate study or research at a US institution of the grantee's choice. Many grantees use their award to complete a Masters degree in the US. Others choose to stay in the US to complete a full PhD, or undertake a year of research towards obtaining their PhD from a New Zealand university.

Around 10 Fulbright US Graduate Awards are offered each year for American students to study or research in any field at a New Zealand institution of their choice. The awards are valued at up to NZ\$33,000, covering one year of study or research. New Zealand is one of the most popular destinations of choice for American applicants, with around 100 applications each year for the ten awards on offer.

Fulbright Scholar Programme

Fulbright New Zealand also offers a range of awards for New Zealand and American academics, artists and professionals to undertake exchanges to each other's countries. These range from short term Fulbright Travel Awards of a few thousand dollars towards travel costs to fully-funded Fulbright Visiting Scholar Awards in New Zealand Studies of up to one academic year in duration. Around 30 such awards are offered to New Zealand scholars and 10 to Americans, with a further half-dozen awards made to New Zealand institutions to host a visiting Fulbright Specialist from America.

Other Awards and Fellowships

Fulbright New Zealand administers other awards and fellowships for exchange between New Zealand and the US on behalf of like-minded partner organisations. These include the John F Kennedy Memorial Fellowship and Ian Axford (New Zealand) Fellowships in Public Policy, which are both for Americans to visit New Zealand.

Fulbright alumni

Fulbright grantees make the most of their exchanges to get to know and understand a different country and culture, to advance themselves academically or professionally and to make lifelong friendships and professional relationships. Many look back on their Fulbright exchange as a life-changing experience and a defining moment of their career.

Fulbright New Zealand has many prominent alumni including:

New Zealanders

- former Prime Minister Sir Wallace (Bill) Rowling
- Nobel Prize-winning scientist Alan MacDiarmid
- anthropologist (and 2013 New Zealander of the Year) Dame Anne Salmond
- author Witi Ihimaera
- composer Gareth Farr
- cultural and tourism sector manager Dame Cheryl Sotheran
- dancer Sir Jon Trimmer
- educationalist Dame Marie Clay
- environmentalist Sir Alan Mark
- filmmaker Sima Urale
- historians James Belich and Michael King
- International Court of Justice judge Sir Kenneth Keith
- Lawyers Sir David Baragwanath and Donna Hall
- Māori studies scholars Sir Tamati Reedy and Wiremu Kaa
- Members of Parliament David Cunliffe and Kennedy Graham
- opera singer Simon O'Neill
- Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment Jan Wright
- photographers Laurence Aberhart and Peter Peryer
- playwright Roger Hall
- poets Allen Curnow and Cilla McQueen
- writer CK Stead

Americans

- Nobel Prize-winning economist Paul Samuelson
- ceramic artist Al Qöyawayma
- choreographer Garth Fagan
- diplomat and educator Harlan Cleveland
- educationalist Maxine Greene
- historian Robin Winks
- journalist Georgie Ann Geyer
- lawyer and Chief Executive Robert Coulter (Indian Law Resource Center)
- former Mayor of Honolulu Mufi Hannemann
- naturalist Olaus Murie
- poets Robert Creeley and Rita Dove
- rocket scientist William Pickering
- scriptwriting instructor Robert McKee
- television producer David Tabacoff
- writer and business consultant Nancy Neill

Further information

For further information please see the Fulbright New Zealand website or contact:

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