



G | M | F The German Marshall Fund
of the United States
STRENGTHENING TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION

PROGRAM OVERVIEW & SELECTION PROCESS

APPLICATION DEADLINE: 5:00PM EST ON Monday, February 6, 2017

I. Overview

Launched in 2016, the Young Transatlantic Innovation Leaders Initiative Fellowship is the flagship program of the Young Transatlantic Innovation Leaders Initiative (YTILI) of the U.S. Department of State, and is supported in its implementation by the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF).

YTILI empowers young European entrepreneurs and innovators with the tools, networks, and resources they need to grow their enterprises and contribute more fully to economic development and job creation, security, and good governance in the region. YTILI is also a vehicle for building a transatlantic network of innovators that can contribute to an ongoing policy dialogue that strengthens the transatlantic relationship.

In 2017, the YTILI Fellowship will engage up to 100 young European leaders in a series of professional development and leadership activities that are designed to support the growth and development of commercial and social business ventures in their home communities. The following document provides detailed information on the fellowship program elements, fellowship expectations, selection process, and timeline.

II. Program Elements

The 2017 YTILI Fellowship year will commence in May 2017 and conclude in May 2018. The cohort of up to 100 fellows will be divided into two groups (Cohort 1, Cohort 2) that will travel separately to the United States for their fellowship experience. The full 2017 YTILI cohort will be connected virtually in pre-departure activities, an online platform and at the concluding summit. Additional pre-departure and post-fellowship activities may be offered by individual U.S. embassies and consulates in the fellows' home countries. The following section outlines the main elements of the YTILI fellowship administered by The German Marshall Fund of the United States and its partners.

- **Orientation Webinar:** All fellows will be required to participate in an orientation webinar to review the expectations of the program, launch the online platform, and begin the process of building a unified YTILI cohort. (Online; May 2017)
- **Washington, D.C., Program:** Each traveling cohort of fellows will begin their experience in the U.S. with a program in Washington, DC. This orientation program will focus on three elements: (1) building the YTILI cohort and peer learning exchange; (2) networking with top U.S. government officials, as well as, global public, private and nonprofit leaders; (3) connecting fellows with key experts and mentors to enhance their entrepreneurial skills and expertise. (Washington, DC; cohort 1: June; cohort 2: September)
- **Two-week Professional Placement:** Following the Washington, D.C. program, fellows will be sent to selected U.S. cities with established or emerging entrepreneurial ecosystems for a two-week (10 business day) placement with a host organization. During this two week period, fellows are expected to: (1) participate in activities outlined by the host organization, which will vary by placement, but may include work on specific projects; (2) explore the entrepreneurial ecosystem of the host city to understand the policy context, institutional and financial landscape, and local networks that support innovation; (3) complete a series of

individual inquiries and professional development activities designed to build their entrepreneurial core competencies and leadership skills. In each city, GMF will designate a local ambassador who will serve as a resource for the fellows and support GMF in coordinating group activities and required appointments. The professional placement period will conclude with a group meeting to discuss key deliverables outlined in the following section and to discuss next steps. (Assigned U.S. City; cohort 1: June; cohort 2: September)

- **European Summit:** In the spring of 2018, YTILI Fellows will convene in Europe for a concluding summit that will include additional professional development, networking, and peer to peer learning. Selected US city ambassadors will participate in the meeting along with European experts in entrepreneurship and innovation. The summit will be an opportunity for the fellows' to discuss their progress, reflect on the fellowship experience, and network across the full cohort of fellows. Additional details on the agenda will be shared throughout the fellowship year. (European City; Spring 2018)
- **Online Platform:** As part of the fellowship experience, GMF and U.S. Department of State will offer an online platform for internal exchange and knowledge sharing. The platform will also provide an opportunity for additional training and skills development that complement the U.S. placement experience. (Online; Fellowship Year)
- **Additional Activities:** Fellows may be eligible for Innovation Small Grants to fund startup or scaling activities, Travel Grants to conferences, and alumni events and other regional programs. Additional information on these activities will be provided at the start of the program. (Various; Fellowship Year)

III. Fellowship Requirements & Expectations

If selected as an YTILI fellow, it is expected that individuals will participate in all elements of the program as outlined above and complete the fellowship deliverables as outlined below. Fellowship awards cannot be deferred.

Expectations & Fellowship Deliverables:

- Respond in a timely manner to inquiries and requests from GMF, the U.S. Department of State and/or identified partners in placements or U.S. host cities;
- Conduct oneself in a professional manner and abide by the GMF code of conduct for professional exchanges, which will be provided to fellows at the time of award;
- Review pre-departure fellowship orientation materials, including the professional placement and U.S. host city entrepreneurial ecosystem, and participate in the orientation webinar;
- Research and identify 4-6 individuals in the placement or U.S. host city entrepreneurial ecosystem that would be most beneficial to advancing the fellow's goals for the YTILI experience. (Deliverable: List of individuals to be shared during Washington program);
- Complete at least 3 professional appointments or interviews with identified individuals during the placement period. (Deliverable: at least one internal (YTILI-cohort only) blog post to be posted on YTILI online platform summarizing insights or reflections from the professional appointments. Due prior to the fellow's departure from the U.S.);
- Write at least one blog post on the overall YTILI experience suitable for publication on the YTILI Medium page. All blog posts regardless of publication status will be posted on the YTILI online platform for sharing with the YTILI cohort. (Deliverable: Cohort 1 blog post due to GMF by September 1, 2017; Cohort 2 blog post due to GMF by December 1, 2017);
- Participate in all required appointments during the Washington program, city placement period and concluding summit;
- Fulfill obligations of the professional placement as outlined by the host;
- Develop a new or refined pitch presentation or video for your venture (Deliverable: drafts due for peer sharing at the conclusion of the placement period; final pitches will be shared at the concluding summit);
- Develop an Action Plan outlining post-fellowship next steps (Deliverable: due for peer sharing at the conclusion of the professional placement); and
- Participate in all fellowship evaluation activities throughout the fellowship year and for up to 18 months following the placement period in the United States.

Please note: Fellows are not allowed to have dependents (including spouses and children) accompany them during the Fellowship.

<https://share.america.gov/ytili/#fellowship>

#YTILI

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Sample schedule of U.S. portion of the YTILI Fellowship program

Wednesday (Day 1)	Arrival and welcoming reception
Thursday-Friday (Days 2-3)	Washington Program
Saturday (Day 4)	½ day Washington Program; transfer to host city
Sunday (Day 5)	Settling in
Monday-Sunday (Days 6-12)	Week 1 of placement and host city program
Monday –Friday (Days 13-17)	Week 2 of placement and host city program; concluding pre-departure meeting
Saturday (Day 18)	Departure for home city

IV. Financial Provisions of the Fellowship

There is no fee to apply to the YTILI Fellowship. The Fellowship does not cover salary while Fellows are participating in the program. If selected as an YTILI fellow, the U.S. government will cover the following costs:

- J-1 visa support.
- Round-trip air travel from participant’s home city to the United States and all required program travel.*
- All activities in the Washington, DC orientation program, two-week professional placement in a US city and the European summit.
- Online Platform and related trainings.
- Housing throughout the program (orientation, two-week placement, summit).*
- Meals and local transportation throughout Washington program orientation and European summit; meals and transportation stipend during two week professional development experience.*
- Accident and sickness benefit plan.

**parameters on these items are outlined below*

The following items are not paid for by the Fellowship program:

- Airport transfers in home countries.
- Additional food and beverages outside of planned meals in the Washington program orientation and European Summit.
- Additional food and beverages outside of the meals and transportation stipend provided during the travel days of the professional placement period; stipend will be based on U.S. government guidelines for meals and incidental expenses by placement city.
- Leisure activities not offered by the program.
- Personal purchases and gifts.

Please note the following parameters on the transportation, housing and meals paid for by the program:

- Fellows will be housed in double occupancy hotel rooms, shared houses/dormitories or similar accommodations. Fellows may be expected to share a bedroom and bathroom with another Fellow of the same gender.
- During the Washington program and European summit, there will be group meals offered at the hotel, catered at meeting locations, or in restaurants. During the two-week professional placement in a US city, participants will receive a stipend to cover meals that are arranged on their own. Participants may have access to a kitchen to cook some meals, depending on availability at host accommodation. Please note that the same types and varieties of foods that applicants may have access to in their home countries may not be available in the U.S. host city. GMF and its partners will make reasonable efforts to accommodate special requirements regarding diet, daily worship, etc.
- All air travel will be booked in coach class on carriers and schedules (arrival and departure dates) determined by GMF based on program requirements. Fellows will receive advance notice of all itineraries prior to booking; however, GMF is unable to accommodate special requests for preferred carries or routing.
- GMF will provide group airport transfers in the US.
- Public transportation will be the preferred method of daily transportation during professional placements.

V. Eligibility Requirements

Applicants will not be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, socio-economic status, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or any other protected characteristic as established by U.S. Law.

Please review the following eligibility requirements for the YTILI fellowship:

- Are between the ages of 24 and 35 on January 9, 2017.
- Are a citizen of one of the participating countries*: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom.
- Currently resides in one of the participating countries*: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom.
- Are eligible to receive a U.S. J-1 visa.
- Have at least two (2) years of entrepreneurial/leadership experience with a startup business or social venture.
- Are not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident of the United States.
- Are not a U.S. government employee.
- Are proficient in reading, writing and speaking English.

Please note: Fellows are not allowed to have dependents (including spouses and children) accompany them during the fellowship, including the U.S. placement period and the European summit.

The U.S. Department of State and the German Marshall Fund of the United States reserve the right to verify all of the information included in the application. In the event that there is a discrepancy, or information is found to be false, the application will immediately be declared invalid and the applicant ineligible. If you do not meet the technical eligibility requirements for this program, we invite you to visit www.exchanges.state.gov for information on other U.S. Department of State exchange opportunities.

VI. Selection Process and Criteria

The YTILI Fellowship selection process is a merit-based open competition. After the deadline, all eligible applications will be reviewed and scored against the evaluation criteria outlined below. Following the initial review, U.S. Department of State and GMF will select a group of semi-finalists. All semi-finalists will be interviewed by the U.S. embassies or consulates in their home countries, either in-person or by video conference. If advanced to the semi-finalist round, applicants must provide a copy of their international passport (if available) or other government-issued photo identification at the time of the interview.

As part of the YTILI Fellowship application, semi-finalists will be asked to provide standard demographic information, details about their business (if applicable), and their opinions about different aspects of America, including the American business community. These questions are being collected by an independent research office within the U.S. Department of State for research purposes only. Applicants' answers will not be seen by members of the selection team, nor will they influence decisions. Applicants' responses are confidential and results will only be reported in the aggregate.

Following the semi-finalist interview, U.S. Department of State and GMF will make the final selection of the fellows. Notification of status will be sent to all applicants following the initial evaluation and to semi-finalists at the conclusion of the selection process. The chart below outlines the major steps and milestones in the selection process.

The following criteria will be used to evaluate applications (not listed in order of importance):

- **Professional Achievement & Leadership Potential:** Relative to his/her age, has the applicant accomplished notable professional achievements? Will this applicant likely become a leader, if not already, in his/her community or professional field, and if a leader already, does this applicant exhibit potential for further leadership growth?
- **Entrepreneurial Competencies and Know-How:** does the applicant demonstrate sound knowledge and application entrepreneurial know-how, ideas and principals? Is the applicant at a stage in his/her entrepreneurial journey to benefit from the YTILI fellowship program?
- **Intellectual Curiosity:** Has the applicant demonstrated a desire to learn and expand his/her professional and intellectual horizons through the fellowship? Does he/she demonstrate curiosity about exploring entrepreneurial ecosystems in the U.S. and examining innovation and entrepreneurship in the transatlantic context?
- **Goal orientation and mission** - is the applicant clear on their desired goals for participating in the program and are these goals reasonable within the scope of the program? Does the applicant have a clear vision for how the YTILI program can advance their business or social enterprise?
- **Resourcefulness/Adaptability/Positive Attitude:** Has the applicant demonstrated an ability to adapt to difficult or difficult circumstances? that will certainly arise during the program?
- **Network and Cohort Mindfulness:** does the applicant see themselves as a contributor to the YTILI network and not just a beneficiary?

Fellowship Selection Process & Activity Timeline:

Activity	Dates
Application release	Monday, January 9, 2017
Application close	Monday, February 6, 2017 5pmEST
Initial Application Review & Scoring	February 7-24, 2017
Semi-Finalist Selection & Notification of Status Sent to All Applicants	Week of February 27th
Semi-Finalist Interviews by US Embassies or Consulates (In Country)*	March 6-17, 2017
Completion deadline for required semi-finalist survey	March 17, 2017
Fellowship Selection & Notification of Status Sent to All Semi-Finalists	Week of March 20th
Visa Processing for Finalists	April-May
Cohort Travel 1	June 2017
Cohort Travel 2	September 2017
European Summit	Spring 2018

**Please note that semi-finalists must be available for either an in-person or video interview of US Embassy or Consular staff during the two week window noted above.*

VII. Frequently Asked Questions

Q: If I'm selected as a YTILI Fellow can I defer my award?

A: If you are selected as an YTILI Fellow you are not able to defer your participation to another fellowship year. To facilitate scheduling, the program offers two options for travel to the United States for the Washington program and the city placement. Applicants are asked to give their travel preference in the initial application and if selected, will work with GMF staff to finalize their travel dates based on the availability of suitable placements and preferred cohort travel dates.

Q: Do I get to choose what city I would be based in and choose my placement?

A: In the application, applicants are asked to give their top three preferences for the type of placement that would best support their goals. Fellows are not able to select their placement or city, but GMF will work to best align fellows' need with available placement opportunities.

Q: What types of cities participate in the program?

A: U.S. cities with either established or emerging entrepreneurial ecosystems are targeted for the program. GMF has a deep network of cities engaged its transatlantic activities in urban policy and fellowship programming including: Austin, Boston, Baltimore, Charlotte, Denver, Detroit, Kansas City, New Orleans, Salt Lake City, San Francisco, Seattle, Washington, DC. Selected fellows will be provided information on the final list of participating cities.

Q: Is my family or partner able to travel with me?

A: No, the fellowship program is designed for individuals only.

Q: If I'm employed with a company, do I need their permission to apply?

A: GMF and the U.S. Department of State do not require written permission from employers to apply for the program; however, it is expected that selected fellows pro-actively communicate with employers, complete any due diligence and meet any obligations that may require employer notification.