



## Community College Initiative (CCI) Program

*Scholarship awards for the 2017-2018 Community College Initiative (CCI) Program are contingent on the appropriation of Federal funding by the United States Congress.*

### Program Overview

The Community College Initiative (CCI) Program seeks to foster mutual understanding between the citizens of the United States and the citizens of participating CCI countries. The CCI Program provides participants with a non-degree, academic-year program at a U.S. community college designed to build participants' technical skills in applied fields, enhance their leadership capabilities, and strengthen their English language proficiency. The program also provides opportunities for professional internships, service learning, and community engagement. The CCI Program is a program of the U.S. Department of State.

Eligible fields of study for the 2017-2018 CCI Program include applied engineering, business management and administration, early childhood education, information technology, and media. Participants may earn an academic certificate in their field of study and gain first-hand practical experience through internships. After completing the program, participants return home with enhanced skills to help them contribute to the economic development of their countries.

Since the program's inception in 2007, more than 2,800 students from 21 countries have received scholarships for study at community colleges throughout the United States.

The CCI Program demonstrates U.S. commitment to increasing access to higher education for international students from underrepresented and underserved communities in selected countries and highlights the learning environment offered at U.S. community colleges. The program also builds U.S. community colleges' efforts to deepen international education partnerships and programming.

Community colleges are predominantly publicly funded, inclusive institutions in local communities that welcome all who desire to learn, regardless of wealth, heritage, or previous academic experience. Community colleges offer individual courses (credit and non-credit), certificate programs, workforce development training, and Associate degrees. There are more than 1,100 public, independent, and tribal community colleges across the United States. Community colleges are sometimes referred to as technical colleges or junior colleges.

### Fields of Study Summary

The CCI Program offers study in the following fields:

- Applied Engineering
- Business Management and Administration
- Early Childhood Education
- Information Technology (IT)
- Media

The CCI Program offerings within these fields of study are limited to the specific concentration areas that are listed on the 2017-2018 CCI fields of study summaries included as part of this application.

Courses and programs of study vary by individual colleges. Participants will work with their Program Coordinators at each host college to develop an individual development plan within their field of study and concentration area. Participants should develop their goals broadly within these fields of study and concentration areas. In this application, participants should describe their specific areas of interest in their proposed fields of study and concentration areas, their related experience and their long-term goals.

### CCI Eligibility Requirements

Everyone who meets the CCI eligibility criteria listed below is welcome to apply regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, disability (physical or mental), sexual orientation, or gender identity. Persons with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply. Competition for the CCI Program is merit-based and open to anyone who:

- Is a citizen, national or permanent resident qualified to hold a valid passport issued by a country participating in the CCI Program.
- Is currently residing in the eligible country.
- Is between 18 and 30 years old by the program start date (July/August 2017).
- Has successfully earned a secondary school diploma.
- Has *not* completed the equivalent of three years toward a U.S. bachelor's degree or higher in the field of study the applicant is nominated to pursue. Nominees without substantive post-secondary education will be given placement priority.
- Has demonstrated commitment to the selected field of study through some academic or professional experience. The program aims to identify participants with proven skills or interest and limited professional experience in the fields of study offered.
- Has basic working knowledge of English language as demonstrated by a minimum TOEFL score of 400. (Note: To pursue credit-bearing courses in an academic field of study, the applicant must meet the minimum language requirements of the host college—usually 500 on the TOEFL test or equivalent scores on other standardized tests. English language training will be necessary and is available for those who do not demonstrate this level of proficiency; these participants are likely to have extremely limited access to courses in their fields of study and must have an interest in pursuing English language study as their primary academic focus. All participants will be retested upon arrival at their host institutions. The host campus testing result will be the score used to determine course placements.)
- Has limited or no overseas study experience. Nominees with no prior overseas study or travel to the United States will be given placement priority.
- Meets any customized requirements of the home country Embassy/Consulate or Commission.
- Submits a complete original application.
- Is able to receive a U.S. J-1 visa and meet the program conditions to maintain that status.
- Is willing and physically able (with accommodations as required) to complete the program in its entirety, including activities or travel that may be programmed on any day of the week, possibly including early morning or evening hours.
- Is committed to returning to his/her home country after completion of the program and satisfying the J-1 visa two-year residency requirement.
- Is able to begin the academic exchange program in the United States in July 2017.

Individuals in the following circumstances are NOT eligible for the Community College Initiative Program:

- U.S. citizens.
- Non-U.S. citizens living in the United States.
- Individuals currently participating in academic, training, or research programs in the United States.
- Individuals currently studying, residing, or working outside of the eligible countries.
- Individuals who have participated in an exchange visitor program sponsored or funded by the U.S. government for a period of more than six weeks and who have not fulfilled their two-year home residency requirement by the time of their CCI application.
- Individuals who have applied for U.S. permanent residency.
- Local employees of the U.S. missions abroad who work for the U.S. Department of State and/or the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Employees are also ineligible for one year following the termination of employment.
- Immediate family members (i.e., spouses and children) of U.S. embassy and Fulbright Commission employees. Family members are also ineligible for one year following the termination of employment.
- Persons arrested for, charged with, or convicted of a crime (excluding minor traffic violations).

### **Application Review Process and Criteria**

The CCI Program is conducted as a merit-based open competition. After the application deadline, all applications will be reviewed in country for eligibility and assessed by a panel of exchange program specialists. Competitive applicants will be interviewed in their home country by a nomination committee. All applicants will be notified of their status on a rolling basis from spring to summer 2017.

The nomination committee will use the following criteria to evaluate applications (not necessarily in order of importance):

- Demonstrated interest and professional goals in the field of study applicant wishes to pursue.
- Cross-cultural interest.
- Leadership potential.
- Flexibility and suitability as an exchange student.
- Proficiency in written and spoken English.
- Physical ability and willingness to complete the program in its entirety, including activities or travel that may be programmed on any day of the week and during early morning or evening hours.
- Commitment to returning to their home countries after completion of the program to fulfill a two-year home residency requirement.
- Preference will be given to applicants who have no prior experience outside their home countries.
- Preference will be given to applicants who represent underserved and underrepresented communities, including women.
- Preference will be given to those applicants who have completed secondary school and have not yet earned a degree equivalent to a U.S. bachelor's degree or higher.

### **General Application Instructions**

- Submit a completed original application with signature on the last page.
- Each applicant must complete his/her own application form. Applicants may consult with others for advice on how to complete the form, but each applicant must answer the questions and write his/her own responses.
- Please answer ALL questions on the application in English. Do NOT leave a space blank. If a question does not apply to you, enter N/A (not applicable).
- Include your full legal name with family name (surname) in CAPITAL LETTERS first as spelled on your international passport (if available).
- Include complete contact information, including postal codes for all addresses and city/country codes for all phone numbers.
- Handwritten applications must be neatly printed.
- Submit the application by the deadline established by the U.S. Embassy or Fulbright Commission located in your country.

### **Financial Provisions of the Grant**

- J-1 visa support.
- Round-trip travel from participant's home city to host institution in the United States.
- Tuition and mandatory college fees.
- Housing and meals.
- Small allowance for books and incidental expenses.
- Limited Accident and Sickness coverage that is J-visa compliant.
- A variety of personal and professional development activities.