

Frequently Asked Questions: AIFIS-Luce Fellowships for Indonesian Researchers to the U.S.

About the Program:

What is an AIFIS Research Fellowship? What is provided by this program?

- The AIFIS Research Fellowship is a program created by The American Institute for Indonesian Studies ([AIFIS](#)) that invites applications from graduate students, researchers, academics, and/or faculty members based in Indonesia to conduct research in the U.S. Through competitive application, 10 scholars will be selected to each receive a grant of \$7000 for research and travel to the U.S. These grants are designed to foster engagement between Indonesian and American scholars and to raise existing collaborations to new levels by stimulating small cooperative projects in any field of Indonesian studies, or social sciences, humanities and STEM fields for which the Indonesian context is central to the research. This fellowship program is made possible with the generous support of the [Henry Luce Foundation](#).

What is the duration of the fellowship?

- At least 6 weeks (45 days)

How long is the fellowship available?

- Research travel will need to be conducted in 2024, with an expiration of grant usage on December 31, 2024.

Can I apply for multiple AIFIS fellowships in one application cycle?

- No, applicants will only be able to submit one application per application cycle.

Is there a requirement to present research findings during the fellowship period? Are there any post-fellowship obligations, such as reporting or publication?

- Fellows are required to submit a final report at the end of their award term, no later than within 30 days of completing the fellowship term.
- If a final report is not received, the fellow will no longer be eligible for future AIFIS funding.
- Fellows are also required to give a public lecture, seminar, or workshop during the award term, either in the U.S. or once back in Indonesia.
- Publication is not a requirement but we strongly encourage applicants to discuss possible publication opportunities with their U.S. counterparts.

Is the fellowship amount sufficient for all costs in the U.S., including tickets, health insurance, and living costs?

- The fellowship will award each candidate \$7000 to cover travel and living expenses, health insurance, and any associated research costs while in the U.S. This amount should be sufficient to cover 6-weeks of research travel to the U.S.. Applicants should know that cost of living can vary from city to city in the U.S. We ask that each applicant include a timeline and budget projection for their research trip. U.S. counterparts will be able to help project the actual cost based on living standards at their respective institutions.

Do I have to purchase health insurance during the award period?

- Yes, all AIFIS awardees are required to carry health insurance for the period of their award term and will be required to fill out proof of health insurance and liability waiver forms to receive their award. Fellows are required to supply AIFIS with proof of health insurance as well as emergency evacuation and repatriation of remains insurance before traveling to the U.S. Insurance services

can typically be arranged through the U.S. host institution and your counterparts will likely be able to direct you to those resources. AIFIS is unable to provide health or other insurance to its fellows.

Is it necessary to include an American scholar in the proposal as a partner of the research?

- Yes, all applicants are required to establish a working relationship with a U.S. counterpart who will serve to support the applicant's research goals while in the U.S. Strong applications will show how sustained research engagement between U.S. and Indonesian researchers.
- A U.S. counterpart is also necessary for securing visas and hosting you while you are in the U.S., but the degree by which they are involved in the research itself can vary. Your U.S. counterpart may or may not already be involved in your research project, but applicants will need to do some independent outreach to make a connection with a U.S. counterpart willing to host them in order to be eligible for the award. This means finding scholars and institutions with similar areas of research or with access to resources you need in order to advance your research.

Can I use my proposal for my PhD to join this program?

- Situating a proposal for research travel within an existing PhD program strengthens the proposal, but should not be the only submission. Proposals should speak specifically to a candidate's research goals while traveling to the U.S. (i.e. what they plan to do and how they plan to do it), the researcher's competence to carry out those research goals, how their research plan it is situated within a larger research project or PhD program, and finally how their project works to advance the field of Indonesian Studies, broadly defined.
- Please see application instructions regarding proposal narrative for specific details.

Would there be any examples of previous projects on this program that could be examples for us? Be it the people, the project, or the publication as the result.

- Please join us for an Info Session on October 29, 2023, where we will hear examples from former AIFIS fellows who have conducted research travel to the U.S. The video will be available to stream on our youtube channel after the event.
- <https://www.youtube.com/@AIFIS>

Is the fellowship for individuals only, or can I work with a team on the research project?

- This fellowship is designed for individual researchers to travel to the U.S., and the funding will not be sufficient to cover the cost of multiple team members. If an application is situated within a larger group project, we ask that you first speak to the aspects of the research you will individually conduct in the U.S., and then how it will be situated within a larger group project once the fellowship term is complete. Collaborative projects make for stronger applications, but the application itself needs to highlight the individual research goals first and foremost.

What is the expected outcome from this program?

- These grants are designed to foster engagement between Indonesian and American scholars and to raise existing collaborations to new levels by stimulating small cooperative projects in any field of Indonesian studies, or social sciences, humanities and STEM fields for which the Indonesian context is central to the research. The specific outcomes of each submission will be determined by the researcher applying for the fellowship. Applications will be evaluated on their ability to situate the project within a larger body of scholarship, but are not limited to any discipline or field area.

After finishing the research in America, can I use the return ticket to visit New Zealand to collect more research data and then return to Indonesia? I plan to obtain data from America, New Zealand, and Bali. I won't use the stipend during my stay there.

- This grant is designed for conducting research in the U.S. and should only be used for costs associated with research travel to and from the U.S., healthcare and all other living and research expenses while in the U.S.

Will the J1 be the visa type used by the grantee?

- The type of visa required will be determined by the host University. In most cases, the visa will likely be a J1 visa.

Is travel insurance permitted for health insurance?

- Specific healthcare requirements will be determined by the US host University

About Eligibility and Requirements:

Who is eligible to apply for an AIFIS Research Fellowship?

- Must be an Indonesian citizen planning to conduct research and engagement with scholars in the U.S.
- Must have at least a master's degree or MA equivalent, with preference for doctoral degree seeking or post-graduate candidates.
- Must be based outside of North America, with preference given to candidates affiliated with institutions in Indonesia.

What disciplines or fields of study are eligible for the fellowship? Are there any specific research themes or topics that the fellowship supports?

- All disciplines or fields of study are eligible for the fellowship. It is open to any field of Indonesian studies, or social sciences, humanities and STEM fields for which the Indonesian context is central to the research. In their application, candidates should make a strong case for the justification of needing to travel to the U.S. in order to conduct research, but are not limited to any particular field area.

Do I need to be affiliated with a specific institution to apply for the fellowship?

- All candidates must independently establish a research affiliation with a U.S. counterpart, but there are no specific institutions required in order to be considered for an AIFIS-Luce fellowship.

Are international applicants eligible for the fellowship?

- All applicants must be based outside of North America, with preference given to candidates affiliated with institutions in Indonesia

Is there any opportunity for PhD candidates to join this fellowship? Is the program eligible for PhD students? Is there any fellowship for PhD students on writing dissertations in this program?

- Yes, we are currently accepting applications from scholars who have at least a master's degree or MA equivalent, with preference for doctoral degree seeking or post-graduate candidates.

Is it possible for people just starting out in research?

- Yes, this grant is available for any phase of research. In your research proposal, speak to where you are in the development of your research and why you would need to work with U.S. colleagues in order to conduct that particular phase of research.

Does the selection for AIFIS-Luce Fellowships consider gender equality?

- In regards to eligibility for the fellowship, applicants must meet all of the following requirements and will be considered without regard to race, religion, sex, age, and/or disability.
- Must be an Indonesian citizen planning to conduct research and engagement with scholars in the U.S.
- Must have at least a master's degree or MA equivalent, with preference for doctoral degree seeking or post-graduate candidates.
- Must be based outside of North America, with preference given to candidates affiliated with institutions in Indonesia.

Do I need to have a TOEFL for this program?

- No, TOEFL scores are not required for application, but applicants will need to demonstrate some facility in English in their application materials and in order to work with U.S. colleagues. We ask that one recommendation letter speak to the applicant's competence to conduct research in an English language context.

I am an Indonesian citizen studying in the U.S. PhD program. Am I eligible to apply for the Fellowship?

- No, this grant is designed for Indonesian researchers based outside of the U.S. Indonesia to travel to the U.S. to conduct research exchange. Preference will be given to Indonesian researchers based at Indonesian institutions.

Is there an age limitation?

- No.

As the terms and conditions state that Applicants must propose to conduct research in the United States, what if the research will be conducted in both Indonesia and the US?

- This grant is designed for the U.S. portion of your research, but it would strengthen the application to know how it is situated within a larger project which draws from both Indonesian and U.S. contexts for the research project.

About the Application:

What is the application process like for the AIFIS Research Fellowship?

- The AIFIS- Luce fellowship for Indonesian researchers utilizes the SMAApply portal in which applicants will need to fill out:
 - Their personal information (Name, address, CV, amongst others)
 - Indonesian contacts
 - U.S. Contacts
 - Information about their U.S. Counterpart
 - Their proposed research plan/itinerary (cities they plan to visit, etc)
 - Information about how their research plan is situated within a larger research project and larger body of scholarship.
 - Letters of Recommendation

When is the application deadline for the fellowship?

- **November 30, 2023**

I want to apply for this program but I do not have a U.S. counterpart yet, what should I do? How do I establish a U.S. host/counterpart? What role does the U.S. Host/Counterpart play in the research project? How to make joint research collaboration with the US College on language Enrichment?

- All applicants must find someone in the U.S. that will be a counterpart who can support the applicant's research project in order to be eligible for research funding. A U.S. counterpart is necessary for securing visas and hosting you while you are in the U.S., but the degree by which they are involved in the research itself can vary. Your U.S. counterpart may or may not already be involved in your research project, but applicants will need to do some independent outreach to make a connection with a U.S. counterpart willing to host you in order to be eligible for the award. This means finding scholars and institutions with similar areas of research or with access to resources you need in order to advance your research.
- All researchers should conduct independent outreach by making a connection with U.S. scholars in related fields. This typically entails email outreach, introducing yourself, and explaining what kind of research collaboration you're interested in exploring with U.S. scholars.
- The upcoming information session will shed light on how to reach out to and make connections with the U.S. Counterparts.

How to get recommendations from the U.S? What are the technical guides for the letter of recommendations?

- Ideally, recommendations should come from someone you already have an established relationship with, regardless of where they are located. They should be able to speak to your qualifications in conducting this research.

How to process the application and what are its requirements? How long does the application take? What is the expected outcome of the program?

- The application process will be held on the SMAApply website. We have detailed instructions on how to navigate the application on our website (<https://www.aifis.org/aifisluce-fellowships>)
- The application process is fairly straightforward, however we do require all applicants to have two letters of recommendation which may take time.

What is the format for the proposal? Are there any tips on how to create a strong and successful proposal / application?

- There is no specific format required, but proposals should describe the nature of your proposed project and your competence to carry out the required research and engagement with American academic communities. State the reasons why your project requires your presence in the United States, and indicate the research collaborators, libraries, museums, archives, and other resources that you plan to use while conducting your research. Indicate the U.S. scholar and institution that will potentially sponsor your research. Indicate your research counterpart in the U.S. and the degree to which they will be involved in your project. Your proposal should also indicate the connection to Indonesian studies more broadly and how it helps to advance the field of Indonesian studies.
- Strong applications will speak to the reasons why your project requires presence in the U.S., your competence to carry out required research, and draw connection to Indonesian studies more broadly.

About the Selection and Review Process:

How are the fellows selected, and what criteria are considered?

- Applications are reviewed by a committee of 4-5 scholars of Indonesian Studies. The review criteria includes assessment of the following areas of consideration:
 - Contribution to the Field of Indonesian Studies, broadly defined
 - Feasibility of the Research Design

- Applicant's Qualifications
- Contribution to the intellectual scope of American Overseas Research Centers and relevant disciplinary fields
- Overall Impression

What is the quota for the selected applicants/awardees?

- This year we are looking to select 10 scholars for this fellowship.

How competitive is the selection process for the fellowship?

- The competitiveness of the application will be determined by the number and quality submissions to the program. Unfortunately we are unable to predict this figure before the end of the application submission process.

What is the approval ratio among the candidates?

- 10 grants will be given and the ratio will be determined by the number of candidates who submit applications, which cannot be predicted at this time.

About Research Topics:

What are the research themes in this program? What are the main field areas for this program?

- The fellowship is open to all fields of research, and there are no specific priority areas for research themes in this program. Applicants will need to make a case for the justification of research travel in order to suit the goals of their specific field and research areas independently. The research topic should be situated within a larger body of scholarship, and demonstrate how the research is building upon and advancing that field of research through these intended research activities in the U.S.

Must the research topic be related to professional background?

- Minimum requirement for eligibility is a masters degree or professional equivalent. The proposal should speak directly to the candidate's individual qualifications for effectively conducting research in their respective field area or discipline.

Is a researcher that focuses on qualitative methods able to apply?

- The fellowship is open to any methodologies of research determined by the researcher. Applicants will then need to justify those methods within the field of scholarship their project is situated, and to what degree that research needs to be conducted in the U.S.

How can I access the Info Session?

- The info session will be livestreamed to YouTube and will be available after the event on the [AIFIS YouTube channel](#).

Can I invite more than one scholar from the U.S.? Can they be from different universities?

- The number of scholars you invite is completely determined by you and your plan of research. We require for you to have one main U.S. counterpart who will help sponsor your visa to the U.S. but there may also be other people you want to reach out to and collaborate with through your research trip.

If we are a doctoral student/PhD candidate, one letter of recommendation should be from our Thesis advisor right? However, who should we ask if we have already obtained our PhD?

- In regards to letters of recommendation, we advise you to ask someone who can speak to the strength of your research and how feasible it will be for you to conduct your research with this grant. This could be your advisor, U.S. counterpart, or even colleagues.

How can we be sure of the specifics of our research plan? How can we be sure that the resources we need are at the locations we plan to visit?

- This would be another part of having a U.S. Counterpart as they would be able to help you figure out which resources or locations will be useful for you to visit and help you look for alternatives should your research plan change
- Though there may not be a specific person in an institution that aligns with your research goals, we hope that by reaching out to U.S. Universities, scholars, or Southeast Asian Research Centres you may find someone to help connect you with someone well suited to your topic.

Does the proposal require a research question?

- Yes, in your proposal we would ask that you establish your research question and what your research is briefly and then explain what you want to expand on or further in your research and why you would like to go to the U.S. to conduct your research.

Will there be a priority given to applicants without experience in the U.S.?

- We will be giving priority to Indonesian scholars based in Indonesia or with affiliations to Indonesian institutions, however we are very open to your application.
- Through this fellowship, we aim to provide more opportunities to applicants who do not have any prior experience in the U.S. so we will be prioritizing their applications as we would like to build more connections between Indonesian and U.S. scholars and researchers.