



Announcement

Visiting Scholar Program (VSP) 2009 - 2010

The Vietnam Education Foundation is pleased to announce the 2009-2010 VEF Visiting Scholar Program (VSP) for Vietnamese nationals, who already hold a doctorate in any of the fields supported by VEF, namely, in the major disciplines of sciences (natural, physical, and environmental), mathematics, medicine (such as, public health), and technology (including information technology). Fields include the basic sciences, such as, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, as well as Agricultural Science, Computer Science, and Engineering.

The VSP is intended to support professional development training, which may include studies, research, and/or observational activities, to take place in cooperation with a leading U.S. academic institution. The Visiting Scholar will undertake a program of up to one year in length, which may include formal courses, workshops, seminars, laboratory or field research, or other types of professional development activities. Upon returning to Vietnam, the Visiting Scholar must use the knowledge and skills acquired in the U.S. to train others. In this way, the VEF VSP is a training-of-trainers (TOT) program wherein the Visiting Scholar is considered a trainer of others.

APPLICATIONS for Academic Year 2009-2010

For the 2009-2010 academic year, beginning in the summer or fall of 2009 and continuing through the summer of 2010, VEF will fund 8 Visiting Scholars for a period of time ranging from 5 to 12 months to pursue professional development at a U.S. university.

Applications will be available ONLY online at www.vef.gov

OPENING AT 8:00 a.m., December 15, 2008

CLOSING AT 8:00 a.m., February 12, 2009

(Vietnam time zone)

All completed applications for the Visiting Scholar Program that meet the minimum qualifications will be reviewed after the application deadline of February 12, 2009. The applicants determined to be the most outstanding will move to the next stage of review and will be interviewed by phone no

later than March 2009. The finalists, who are determined to be the most outstanding as a result of the interviews, will be recommended to the VEF Board of Directors as VSP nominees. The VEF Board of Directors will approve the final list of Visiting Scholars in early April. VEF will notify all applicants of their status by **April 15, 2009**.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants to the VSP must meet the following **Eligibility Requirements**:

- Be a Vietnamese national.
- Hold a Ph.D. degree in a field supported by VEF.
- Demonstrate a high level of English proficiency.

PLEASE NOTE the following information regarding
Eligibility of VEF employees and VEF contracted agency employees in Vietnam and in the U.S.

Employees of the Vietnam Education Foundation, including contract employees, and their immediate families, are **ineligible** for VEF Fellowships, Visiting Scholar Grants, and U.S. Faculty Scholar Grants for a period ending one year following termination of such employment.

If a former employee or other contract employee of VEF is otherwise eligible and chooses to apply for a VEF Fellowship, Visiting Scholar Grant, or U.S. Faculty Scholar Grant after the one year period, the VEF Board of Directors must be informed and approve the submission of their application.

Employees of private and public agencies (excluding educational institutions) under contract to VEF to perform administrative or screening services on behalf of VEF's Fellowship, Visiting Scholar, and/or U.S. Faculty Scholar Grant programs are **ineligible** for VEF Fellowships, Visiting Scholar Grants, and U.S. Faculty Scholar Grants for a period ending one year following the termination of their services for VEF.

SELECTION CRITERIA

VEF has an open, competitive, and transparent application and selection process. The final candidates for the Visiting Scholar Program are selected based on their academic and professional merit, on the quality of their proposed professional development program and the expected outcomes, and on the potential of their future contributions to Vietnam.

- ✓ An emphasis during the selection process will be on emerging fields, including consideration of elements of innovation in one's professional development plan, topics reflecting leading edge research, and programs that incorporate cross-field integration.
- ✓ While the VSP is open to all who are eligible, preference in the selection of Visiting Scholars will be given to faculty members and/or teaching staff of a Vietnamese university, research institute, or other academic institution in Vietnam.

The following **Selection Criteria** will be used to evaluate qualified applicants for the VSP:

1. Evidence of superior academic achievement as a scholar in Vietnam

2. Quality of the Visiting Scholar professional development plan

Evidenced by a written professional development plan that:

- a. Describes in detail the activities that the applicant will undertake in the U.S.
- b. Explains how this professional development experience will contribute to the advancement of their career in Vietnam.

3. Commitment to return to Vietnam to contribute to the educational and scientific development of the country

Demonstrated by a written training plan that describes how the Visiting Scholar applicant will further disseminate the knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired in the U.S. to other Vietnamese scholars.

4. Support from the U.S. host institution

Demonstrated by a written statement of support from the proposed U.S. host university, department, and/or faculty member, which/who is demonstrably considered among the best in the field or specialty area.

5. Support from the Vietnamese institution(s)

Demonstrated by a written statement of support from the applicant's institution/organization in Vietnam and in a written document from the Vietnamese institution(s) hosting the training sessions to train others in Vietnam with the knowledge gained by the Visiting Scholar in the U.S.

6. Likelihood of continuing collaboration with the U.S. host institution

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| VEF FINANCIAL SUPPORT |
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VEF provides the following financial support for the Visiting Scholar:

1. Visa for the U.S. Cost of the actual visa application, if any. (This does not include transportation, lodging, or other expenses related to the process of getting one's visa.)
2. Health Check-up and Immunizations. Costs for a pre-departure health check in Vietnam and any vaccinations required by the U.S. host institution.
3. Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO). Costs for transportation, lodging, and meals.
4. Settling-in Allowance. U.S. \$500 to help defray costs of arriving and getting settled in the U.S.

5. Airfare. A round-trip economy air ticket from Vietnam to the U.S. academic institution and return.
6. Monthly Stipend. U.S. \$2,300 stipend per month, which is pro-rated for any partial month. The Visiting Scholar must plan wisely in order to cover the following:
 - a. Living expenses in the U.S.: lodging, meals, local transportation, and incidentals.
 - b. Required federal or state income taxes.
 - i. All Visiting Scholars are required to file annual U.S. tax returns, even if they have returned to Vietnam.
 - ii. VEF does not withhold taxes from the stipend. The Visiting Scholar is expected to plan finances accordingly in order to pay any taxes (estimate: 17% of earnings), which might be due to the U.S. federal or state government. Taxes are paid in arrears, i.e., for the year previous to when one files tax returns, which is in mid-April reporting on income gained during the previous calendar year.
 - iii. Failure to pay U.S. taxes can result in serious fines and a ban on the Visiting Scholar entering the U.S. in the future.
7. Medical/Health Insurance. Paid one time to the insurance agent at the beginning of the intended program to cover the Visiting Scholar during the full training period in the U.S. This accident/illness health insurance is intended for emergency situations and hospitalizations and includes medical evacuation and repatriation insurance according to the required coverage amounts from the time the Visiting Scholar leaves Vietnam throughout the duration of the Visiting Scholar program. Additional health insurance, which is not covered by VEF and would cover doctor's visits and/or dental and vision insurance, may be purchased at one's own expense, possibly through the U.S. University, after arriving in the U.S.
8. Professional Development Grant. A one-time payment for professional development expenses, such as, books, subscriptions, memberships, and equipment. The amount depends on the length of the program in the U.S.:
 - a. U.S.\$1,500 for programs less than 6 months
 - b. U.S.\$3,000 for programs 6 - 12 months in duration
9. VEF Annual Conference. Approved expenses (i.e., transportation, hotel, and meals) related to the VEF Annual Fellows and Scholars Conference to be held in early January 2010 in the U.S. Visiting Scholars, who are pursuing their programs in the U.S. at that time, are required to attend.
10. Professional Conference/Training Grant. U.S.\$2,500 for expenses to participate in either of the following activities, which must be related to the Visiting Scholar's field or professional endeavors and which takes place during the training program in the U.S.:
 - a. Professional Conference in the U.S. In this case, the Visiting Scholar must be the first author and presenter of a presentation or paper for a panel discussion, oral presentation, or poster session.
 - b. Professional Course(s) or Training Workshop(s). This is defined as a short-term professional development training program of no longer than one week. The venue for

the training program may be different from the U.S. host university or research institute. The venue could also be at a professional conference, which often provides professional training workshops. The proposed program must be reviewed by the VEF Program Officer to assure that it is allowable under the J-1 immigration regulations before final approval can be given by VEF for the Visiting Scholar to participate.

- c. Partial Grant. If the conference or training program takes place in the Visiting Scholar's city of residence or greater city area, the grant will be reduced to U.S. \$1,250.
11. VEF Alumni Conference. Approved expenses (i.e., transportation, hotel, and meals) related to the VEF Alumni Conference in Vietnam once the Visiting Scholar returns to Vietnam.

OTHER SUPPORT BY VEF

1. Visa Sponsorship. VEF is the J-1 visa sponsor for the Visiting Scholar and the J-2 visa sponsor for the Visiting Scholar's dependents. VEF will determine which J-1 visa category (Research Scholar, Short-term Scholar, or Non-degree Student) is appropriate, based on the activities of the planned program.
2. On-going Assistance. The VEF offices in the U.S. and in Vietnam provide ongoing information and assistance and will help in any emergency situation.
3. VEF Network. The Visiting Scholar becomes a part of the wide network of VEF Fellows and Scholars, prior to, during, and after the VSP.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE APPLICANT

As part of the application, the VSP applicant must provide the following:

1. Program Description. A clear and concise description of the project, program, research, and/or the study plan to be undertaken as a Visiting Scholar. Include the objectives, timeline, and expected outcomes and how completion of this plan will contribute to the applicant's career advancement in Vietnam. Also include plans for any continued collaboration with the U.S. host institution (**limit 4 pages**).
2. Training of Trainers (TOT) Description. A clear and concise description of a training plan that describes how the knowledge, skills, and abilities, which the applicant will acquire in the U.S., will be communicated to others in Vietnam. VEF sees the VSP program as training the applicant as a trainer of others, thus a Training of Trainers program. Ideally, the Visiting Scholar will train other trainers, who in turn would train others, thus broadly spreading the knowledge gained by the Visiting Scholar while in the U.S.

3. U.S. University Commitment. A written commitment from the most appropriate U.S. university or institute, department, and/or faculty member(s), which/who will serve as the applicant's host, if selected as a Visiting Scholar. It is recommended to secure acceptance by more than one institution, which is considered the best in the applicant's particular field of interest, so that the applicant has a choice of several options to present to VEF. The written commitment must include the following details:
 - a. Dates. Dates that the Visiting Scholar will be hosted: expected start and end dates.
 - b. Roles and Responsibilities. The role of the host institution, department, and/or faculty member(s), including which arrangements for the Visiting Scholar will be handled by the host and which must be managed by the Visiting Scholar.
 - c. Role of Visiting Scholar. Expectations of the host entity regarding the role and involvement of the Visiting Scholar.
 - d. Outcomes. The expected outcomes of the Visiting Scholar's proposed program.
 - e. Support. Expected support from the host institution for the Visiting Scholar, which may include:
 - i. Financial support, if any.
 - ii. Furnished office or desk space.
 - iii. Use of phone for U.S. and international phone calls.
 - iv. Use of a personal computer (laptop or desktop).
 - v. Use of other equipment, including fax.
 - vi. Use of laboratory space and equipment and any limitations.
 - vii. Use of libraries and other institutional facilities, including any health centers, gymnasiums, swimming pools, etc.
 - viii. Institutional identification card.
 - f. Further clarifications. Any other information that clarifies the arrangements between the host institution and the Visiting Scholar.
4. Vietnamese University Commitments
 - a. Candidacy. A written commitment from the applicant's home institution/organization in Vietnam to support the candidacy of the applicant for the VEF VSP.
 - b. Training of Trainers Program. A written commitment from the applicant's home institution/organization and/or by other Vietnamese institutions to support training sessions to train others in Vietnam with the knowledge, skills, and abilities gained by the Visiting Scholar in the U.S.
5. Professional Conference/Training Program. Details for any professional conference or professional training program in the U.S. that the applicant wishes to attend.
 - a. Because the Visiting Scholar is primarily in the U.S. for the program at the host institution, a conference or training program should not exceed ONE WEEK in length.
 - b. Include written acknowledgement from the host institution, approving attendance at one of these activities within the timeframe of the overall program at the host institution. In other words, the Visiting Scholar must attend these activities during the timeframe that the U.S. institution has agreed to host the Visiting Scholar.

- c. Include the location, title, professional sponsoring entity, purpose, dates, and URL for each optional activity. Confirm that the grant of U.S. \$2,500 will sufficiently cover expenses at the event.
- d. The applicant may wish to identify a conference or a training program at a later date. However, since time is very short, the applicant is urged to consider which conference or training program to attend. Furthermore, since conference attendance is based on having a paper/presentation accepted as first author, the applicant is urged to submit conference papers/presentations very far in advance.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VISITING SCHOLAR

The following provides an abbreviated list of the primary responsibilities of a Visiting Scholar. A detailed list of responsibilities will be provided in the grant letter, which serves as an agreement between the Visiting Scholar and VEF and which is distributed in advance of the Pre-Departure Orientation. The Visiting Scholar is responsible to do the following:

1. Arrangements with the U.S. University. Finalize all arrangements with the U.S. University and communicate regularly in advance of arrival with the U.S. faculty member serving as the Visiting Scholar mentor.
2. Permission from Employer. Immediately upon selection as a Visiting Scholar, secure written permission from your present employer in Vietnam to participate in the VSP for the duration of the proposed project.
3. Housing. Upon selection, immediately arrange for housing in the U.S. Typically, the U.S. academic institution has services to help Visiting Scholars find appropriate temporary housing, either furnished or unfurnished.
4. Pre-Departure Orientation. Plan to participate in the VEF Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO) to be held in early June 2009 in Vietnam. VEF will organize a PDO of 5 days to inform Visiting Scholars about their responsibilities as well as about the cultural and legal issues they may encounter in the U.S. Included in the PDO is an outdoor Team Building event, which usually involves one day of camping. During the PDO, official Visiting Scholar grant documents and immigration documents will be issued. It is **mandatory that all VEF Visiting Scholars participate** in the PDO.
5. Dependents. Make all arrangements for, and pay for any costs related to, dependents, who accompany or visit the Visiting Scholar while in the U.S. Secure, maintain, and pay for all required medical, health, and repatriation insurance for accompanying dependents while they are in the U.S.
6. VEF Annual Conference. Depending on the dates of one's program in the U.S., participate in the VEF Annual Conference to be held in the U.S. in early January 2010.
7. Taxes. Pay any required federal and state U.S. taxes on monies received from VEF or from other sources while in the U.S. U.S. taxes are applied on money earned during each calendar

year. Thus, as an example, a Visiting Scholar, who begins the VSP in August 2009 and ends in June 2010, would be responsible for taxes for 2009 and for taxes for 2010 and would need to file two tax returns in such a case.

8. Regulations and Laws. Abide by all procedures and regulations established by VEF, by the U.S. hosting institution, and by U.S. immigration authorities, and abide by all applicable laws.

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This Announcement is intended to provide sufficient information about the Visiting Scholar Program so that the applicant is confident about the basic parameters of the program. One should feel free to contact the Vietnam Education Foundation if concerns have not been addressed herein.

**If you have any questions regarding the VEF Visiting Scholar Program 2009-2010,
please e-mail vsp@vef.gov, or phone**

- **The VEF Field Office in Hanoi, Vietnam: 04-3936-3670 (Ext. 16)**
- **The VEF Headquarters in Arlington, Virginia, in the U.S.: 703-351-5053**