



Announcement

Visiting Scholar Program (VSP) **Cohort 2013**

Academic Year 2013-2014

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Visiting Scholar Program (VSP) – Cohort 2013 Academic Year 2013-2014

INTRODUCTION

The Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF) is pleased to announce the 2013-2014 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), engineering, mathematics, medicine (including biomedical sciences as well as epidemiology, nutrition, and biostatistics within 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. Priority this year will be given to applicants, whose field of study focuses on climate change (environmental sciences) or on nuclear energy, provided that all other qualifications are equal.

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 or research institute. The Visiting Scholar will undertake a five-month to one-year program that 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 United States to teach and advise students, to train colleagues and other faculty and teachers outside of one's home university, and to contribute to greater cooperation and collaboration with scientists in the United States.

A. APPLICATIONS for Academic Year 2013-2014

For the 2013-2014 academic year, for a program beginning no earlier than August 2013 and ending no later than September 2014, VEF will fund three (3) Visiting Scholars for a period of time ranging from 5 to 12 months to pursue professional development at U.S. universities or at U.S. research institutes.

**Applications will be available ONLY online at www.vef.gov
OPENING AT 10:00 a.m., March 10, 2012
CLOSING AT 10:00 a.m., May 2, 2012
(Vietnam time zone)**

All completed applications for the VSP will be reviewed by VEF after the application deadline of May 2, 2012, to verify that the application meets the minimum qualifications. All qualified applications will then be reviewed by a panel of prominent scientists and professors with expertise in the applicant's general area of specialty. **Applicants with the highest recommendation of the review panel will be interviewed in person in Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh City during the first week of August 2012. Please note that the face-to-face interview is a new procedure for the**

VEF Visiting Scholar program and is put into effect for the first time for the 2013 cohort applicants. The candidates, who are selected as most qualified as a result of the interviews, will be recommended to the VEF Board of Directors as Visiting Scholar nominees. The Board will approve the final list of Visiting Scholars in mid-November 2012. VEF will notify all applicants of their status by **the end of November 2012.**

IMPORTANT: All Visiting Scholars are REQUIRED to attend the VEF Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO), scheduled for June 6-12, 2013. These dates include travel to/from the event; thus, the first day indicated is the date for arrival at the PDO and the last day indicated is the departure date. **If you are not able to attend the PDO, you will not receive the Visiting Scholar Grant.**

B. ELIGIBILITY

Applicants to the VSP must meet the following **eligibility requirements**:

- Be a Vietnamese national.
- Hold a Ph.D., a D.Sc., or another research-based doctoral 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 United States.*

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 of 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 of one year following the termination of their services for VEF.

C. SELECTION CRITERIA

VEF has an open, competitive, and transparent application and selection process. The final candidates for the VSP 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 fields and topics of importance to Vietnam and on programs that incorporate collaboration and partnerships.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ Preference and priority will be given to applicants that have not received a VEF Fellowship or grant in the past, provided that all other qualifications are equal. If the applicant is considered among finalists, priority will be given to individuals, whose previous VEF grant was awarded further in the past.

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 and value 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 United States.
- b. Provides a proposed time line.
- c. Explains expected outcomes: how this professional development experience will contribute to:
 - 1) Advancement of the applicant's career in Vietnam
 - 2) Development of the applicant's field in Vietnam
 - 3) Scientific progress for Vietnam
 - 4) Any other expected outcomes

3. Demonstrated commitment to the educational and scientific development of Vietnam

Evidenced by a written training plan that describes how the Visiting Scholar applicant will further disseminate the knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired in the United States to other Vietnamese scholars and to the applicant's students. The applicant should also explain how s/he plans to continue cooperation between the home institution in Vietnam and the U.S. host institution. The applicant's demonstration of leadership and initiative in the academic realm or the community should also be mentioned. Applicants may also suggest how they might serve as a scientific and cultural bridge between the two countries.

4. Demonstrated commitment of support from the U.S. host institution

Evidenced by a letter from the proposed U.S. host university/institution, department, and/or faculty member/researcher. The letter should detail the support and resources that will be provided to the Visiting Scholar applicant by the host institution. The letter should also address how cooperation between the host institution and the Visiting Scholar applicant and the Visiting Scholar applicant's Vietnamese institution will be sustained after the grant period. The U.S. host institution should be an appropriate site for the developmental plan proposed by the Visiting Scholar applicant.

5. Demonstrated commitment of support from the Vietnamese institution(s)

Evidenced by a letter from the applicant's institution/organization in Vietnam and additional letter(s) or statement(s) from the Vietnamese institution(s) that agree to host the sessions to disseminate the knowledge gained by the Visiting Scholar in the United States to colleagues, other faculty and teachers, and students. These statements should provide details of the resources that will be provided to the Visiting Scholar applicant to utilize the knowledge and skills acquired during the grant period.

D. VEF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

VEF provides the following financial support for the Visiting Scholar:

1. Visa for the United States. 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. The vaccinations must be acquired in Vietnam, unless there is a substantial reason that the vaccinations must be attained in the United States.
3. Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO). Costs in Vietnam for transportation, lodging, and meals for this required VEF event.
4. Settling-in Allowance. U.S. \$500 to help defray costs of arriving and getting settled in the United States.
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 number of months or partial months is calculated according to the dates of the Visiting Scholar's academic program as approved by the VEF Board of Directors. The Visiting Scholar must plan wisely in order to cover the following:
 - a. Living expenses in the United States: lodging, meals, local transportation, and incidentals.
 - b. Required federal or state income taxes.
 - 1) All Visiting Scholars are required to file annual U.S. tax returns, even if they have returned to Vietnam.
 - 2) 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. The U.S. host institution is asked to document and deduct required taxes from the monthly stipend, as appropriate.

- 3) Failure to pay U.S. taxes can result in serious fines and a ban on the Visiting Scholar entering the United States 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 United States. This accident/illness health insurance is intended for emergency situations and hospitalizations and includes medical evacuation and repatriation insurance according to the coverage amounts required for international students/scholars in the United States. The Visiting Scholar is covered from the time the Visiting Scholar leaves Vietnam throughout the duration of the VSP. 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. host institution, after arriving in the United States. The Visiting Scholar should confer with the U.S. institution about providing all required medical/health insurance for the Visiting Scholar, which may be more efficient and beneficial to the Visiting Scholar than the insurance arrangements made by VEF. If the U.S. institution agrees to provide this at their cost, the Visiting Scholar must get a written statement to this effect from the U.S. host institution and notify VEF immediately.

8. Professional Development Grant (PDG). U.S. \$300 per month for professional development expenses. The number of months or partial months is calculated according to the dates of the Visiting Scholar's academic program as approved by the VEF Board of Directors. Use of these funds by the Visiting Scholar is limited to professional development purposes, defined as follows: conference attendance and/or presentations; training workshops or seminars; books, journals, and publications; computer hardware or software; professional memberships or subscriptions; courses to improve English speaking, listening, reading, or writing; hiring a statistician; and hiring an English language expert to edit one's research or publishable article. PDG funds cannot be used for non-professional purposes, such as living expenses, costs for dependents, travel for pleasure, medical or health expenses, and entertainment. All tangible items purchased through the PDG funds are the property of the Visiting Scholar. The Visiting Scholar must report the use of PDG funds to VEF, which is done annually for all Visiting Scholars. Thus, the Visiting Scholar should keep good records (purpose, dates, amounts, and receipts) to submit to VEF upon request.

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 the United States in January 2014. Visiting Scholars, who are pursuing their programs in the United States at that time, are required to attend. After a Visiting Scholar has returned to Vietnam or ended his/her program, s/he will not be funded to attend the VEF Annual Conference.

10. 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.

E. PAYMENT OF VEF FUNDS FOR THE VISITING SCHOLAR TO THE U.S. UNIVERSITY

VEF requires the U.S. host university or institution to disburse the stipends and PDG funds to the VEF Visiting Scholar on behalf of VEF. The term "grant" is an internal term used by VEF and does not imply any particular definition that the host university/institution may have for their reference to the same term. The following details clarify the expected arrangement.

1. Electronic Transfer. The total amount for the monthly stipends (U.S. \$2,300 per month) and the total amount of PDG funds (U.S. \$300 per month), or the adjusted amount for each for a partial month, will be electronically transferred from VEF to the host university or research institution before the beginning of the Academic Year.
2. Administrative Fees. No administrative fees can be deducted by the U.S. host institution for administering or handling the VEF monies.
3. Disbursement of Funds. The U.S. host institution makes all financial arrangements for distribution of monies to the Visiting Scholar according to whatever administrative system that they might already have in place to disburse such funds.
4. Timing of Payments. The first stipend payment must be made within the first month of arrival of the Visiting Scholar on campus and every month thereafter. If a Visiting Scholar chooses to arrive earlier than the stated start date of the grant, the U.S. host university is not obliged to make any stipend payments until the official start date of the grant. Ideally, the host institution should make arrangements to make a partial payment of the stipend upon the Visiting Scholar's arrival at the host institution. Regardless of any unforeseen delays on the part of the U.S. host institution or VEF in processing the monies, the first and all subsequent monthly stipend payments to the Visiting Scholar must be made in a timely fashion.
5. Process of Receiving Funds. The U.S. host institution must inform each Visiting Scholar about the procedure to secure the stipends and PDG funds, providing a copy of the procedure also to VEF.
6. Relevant Taxes. The U.S. host institution must process documentation, if any, related to U.S. taxes that might be owed by the Visiting Scholar when disbursing the stipends or PDG funds to the Visiting Scholar.
7. Tracking PDG Funds. VEF asks that the U.S. host university or institution do the following:
 - a. Require written evidence from the Visiting Scholar regarding the use of PDG funds, which are limited to the uses outlined above (Section D.8) and which must relate to the Visiting Scholar's professional development.
 - b. Keep records of the use of PDG funds, which would be supported by the written evidence provided by the Visiting Scholar, and, if requested by VEF, summarize the use of the funds. Regardless of what records might be kept by the U.S. host institution, the Visiting Scholar is responsible for keeping track of use of funds (purpose, dates, amounts, and receipts).
8. Return of Unused PDG Funds. At the time that the Visiting Scholar departs from the U.S. host university or institution, any unused PDG funds for that Visiting Scholar must be returned to VEF.

IMPORTANT: The Visiting Scholar must get written agreement from the U.S. host institution that they agree to disburse the funds provided by VEF for the Visiting Scholar as stated above.

F. 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 or Short-term Scholar) is appropriate, based on the activities of the planned program.
2. On-going Assistance. The VEF offices in the United States 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, Scholars and Alumni, prior to, during, and after the VSP.

G. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE APPLICANT

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

1. Professional Development Plan. 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, the development of the applicant's field in Vietnam, and scientific progress for Vietnam (**maximum of 4 pages**).
2. Information on Other U.S. Federal Government Grants. Applicants must clarify if they are receiving any other U.S. Federal Government grant monies for a program in the United States at the time of the proposed VEF program.
3. Information on Previous VEF Grants. If the applicant has received a VEF Visiting Scholar grant in the past, then the application must demonstrate the following:
 - a. How the proposed project is different from the previous one;
 - b. What the advantage is to the U.S. and Vietnamese institutions to have the individual return; and
 - c. What the outcomes were from the previous grant and how the present request builds on the past outcomes.
4. Commitment to the Educational and Scientific Development of Vietnam. A clear and concise description of a training plan that describes how the knowledge, skills, and abilities, which the applicant will acquire in the United States, will be communicated to others in Vietnam. VEF sees the VSP as a "Training of Trainers" program, namely, training the applicant as a trainer of others, who in turn would train others, thus broadly

spreading the knowledge gained by the Visiting Scholar while in the United States. Also include plans for any continued collaboration with the U.S. host institution. The applicant's demonstration of leadership and initiative in the academic realm or the community should also be mentioned. Applicants may also suggest how they might serve as a scientific and cultural bridge between the two countries.

5. U.S. Host Institution Commitment. A written commitment from the most appropriate U.S. university/institution, department, and/or faculty member(s)/researcher(s), which/who will serve as the applicant's host, if selected as a Visiting Scholar. 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 of U.S. Host Institution. The role of the host institution, department, and/or faculty member(s)/researcher(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, including plans for continuing collaboration with the Visiting Scholar and the Visiting Scholar's Vietnamese home institution.
- e. Support. Expected support from the host institution for the Visiting Scholar, which should address at least the following:
 - 1) Financial support, if any.
 - 2) Furnished office or desk space.
 - 3) Use of phone for U.S. and international phone calls.
 - 4) Use of a personal computer (laptop or desktop).
 - 5) Use of other equipment, including fax.
 - 6) Use of laboratory space and equipment as well as any limitations.
 - 7) Use of libraries and other institutional facilities, including any health centers, gymnasiums, swimming pools, etc.
 - 8) Institutional identification card.
 - 9) Cost, if any, to the Visiting Scholar for any of the above.
- f. Disbursement of Monthly Stipends and PDG Funds. Agreement by the host institution to disburse VEF funds for the Visiting Scholar, as outlined in section E herein.
- g. Further Clarifications. Any other information that clarifies the arrangements between the host institution and the Visiting Scholar, such as, timing of stipend payments, PDG funds, and possibility of having the host institution's insurance plan at no cost to the Visiting Scholar.

6. 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 and to allow the applicant to undertake the VSP for the period of time proposed in the United States.

- 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 United States.
 - c. Institutional Collaboration. A demonstrated interest in continuing collaboration with the U.S. host institution.
7. Disclosures. Applicants must disclose any prior convictions of a felony or a misdemeanor (excluding minor traffic violations). If the applicant has had such a conviction, the applicant must explain how the issues have been resolved.

H. 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 U.S. University. Finalize all arrangements with the U.S. university/institution and communicate regularly in advance of arrival with the U.S. faculty member/researcher 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 United States. 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 required VEF Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO) to be held June 6 – 12, 2013, in Vietnam. These dates include travel to/from the event; thus, the first day indicated is the date for arrival at the PDO and the last day indicated is the departure date. VEF organizes 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 United States. 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 United States. Secure, maintain, and pay for all required medical, health, and repatriation insurance for accompanying dependents while they are in the United States. Ensure that no VEF funds are used for dependents.

6. VEF Annual Conference. Depending on the dates of one's program in the United States, participate in the VEF Annual Conference to be held in the United States in January 2014. It is **required that all VEF Visiting Scholars participate in the Annual Conference**, if they are in the United States at the time of the Conference.
7. Taxes. Pay any required federal and state U.S. taxes on monies received from VEF or from other sources while in the United States. 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 2013 and ends in June 2014, would be responsible for taxes for 2013 and for taxes for 2014 and would need to file two tax returns in such a case. The Visiting Scholar is required to pay U.S. taxes, even if s/he has returned to Vietnam.
8. Regulations and Laws. Abide by all procedures and regulations established by VEF, by the U.S. host institution, and by U.S. immigration authorities, and abide by all applicable laws.

Timeline for 2013 Cohort for Academic Year 2013-2014

Event/Action	Timeline
Announcement of the VS 2013 program	March 5, 2012
Application period	March 10, 2012 – May 2, 2012
Deadline for applications	May 2, 2012
Interviews of finalists in Vietnam (new procedure)	August 1-7, 2012
Final decisions and notification to all applicants	Late November 2012
Required Pre-Departure Orientation for selected 2013 Vietnamese Visiting Scholars	June 6-12, 2013
2013 Vietnamese Visiting Scholars begin programs in the United States	No earlier than August 2013, and no later than September 2014
VEF Annual Fellows and Scholars Conference (required and paid by VEF for 2013 Visiting Scholars)	January 2014 (dates and location to be determined)

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This announcement is intended to provide sufficient information about the VSP so that the applicant is confident about the basic parameters of the Program. Applicants 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 2013-2014, please contact VEF via e-mail at vs@vef.gov, or phone

- **VEF Field Office in Hanoi, Vietnam: 04-3936-3670**
- **VEF Headquarters in Arlington, Virginia, USA: 703-351-5053**