

Social Media and Blogging Guidance

With the growth of blogging and social networking sites in recent years, Fulbrighters have more opportunity than ever to share their experiences with friends, family, and the Internet community. This in turn brings positive attention to the Fulbright Program and its impact not only on the Fulbrighter but the host community and program as well.

Should you decide to share your Fulbright experiences publicly via web-based media (and we hope you will), there are a few points that you should keep in mind:

1. Avoid confusion by acknowledging that yours is not an official Department of State website, and the views and information presented are your own and do not represent the Fulbright Program or the Department of State.
2. While participants in all U.S. State Department-sponsored academic exchange scholarships have full academic and artistic freedom to write, publish and create, they are also expected to maintain a standard of conduct that is in keeping with the spirit and intent of the Fulbright Program – to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries.
3. Any Fulbright grantee who publicly posts inappropriate or offensive material on the Internet in relation to the Fulbright program may be subject to revocation or termination of their grant. Be aware that what is deemed culturally acceptable in the United States (or, more specifically, on the Internet in the United States) may not be received well overseas. Describing the challenges of living in a foreign country is fine, but please refrain from using disparaging language to describe the country you are in and the people you live and work with.
4. Always be safe – do not publically give out multiple methods of contact (usually an email will suffice) or addresses, regular routes (such as how you get to class or where you jog every day). Change your passwords regularly and check/update security settings – particularly on Facebook, as security settings often change with little or no notice. Ask other people or Fulbright grantees for permission before using their names or publishing their photos, as they may have their own reasons for not wanting a public profile.

Finally, if you decide that you would like to blog your Fulbright experience, we have two requests. One, we hope that you will let us know what you're doing by sharing your blog on one of our social media sites or emailing us – we love to follow your adventures! Two, please post a disclaimer somewhere on the blog stating that you are not officially representing the U.S. Government or the Fulbright Program. Some sample language can include:

"This site (enter site's title and address) is not an official Fulbright Program site. The views expressed on this site are entirely those of its author (or insert name here) and do not represent the views of the Fulbright Program, the U.S. Department of State or any of its partner organizations."