



Economic Empowerment Fellows Program of the University of Montana

Program Summary

In partnership with Participatory Development Training Center (PADETC), the Mansfield Center of The University of Montana seeks professional applicants for a program sponsored by the U.S. Embassy. The Economic Empowerment Program focuses on expanding economic opportunity to broader society, with the goals of increasing incomes and reducing poverty.

We are seeking mid-level participants that represent business, non-governmental organizations, governmental organizations, and educational institutions. Because this is a program for mid-level professionals, students are not eligible to apply. The general age range for participants is 25-to-40-years of age.

During the five-week program in the United States, participants will gain firsthand knowledge of how organizations and institutions generate employment and economic activity, while also participating in site visits and specially-designed seminars. An important part of the program is a fellowship. Participants will be matched with a similar organization in Montana and work with an American counterpart for two-to-three weeks. Participants will spend one month in the state of Montana and one week in Washington, D.C.

Lao participants may also be asked to host a U.S. participant at their place of work. That individual will be your fellowship partner during your U.S. stay. A selected number of American participants will travel overseas to engage with you and your counterparts on economic and business-related issues in your country. Because 28 Asian Fellows will be selected, and only 10-12 of their partners will travel to Asia, not every Asian participant will host an American at their place of work. However, you must state your willingness to host a U.S. participant on your application.

A total of 28 successful applicants will participate in only one of the following two groups:

14 successful applicants from Southeast Asia will participate in Group One
Group One Travels to the U.S.: May 2-June 8, 2014

and

14 successful applicants from southeast Asia will participate in Group Two
Group Two Travels to the U.S.: October 3 – November 9, 2014

Selected Southeast Asian applicants will host U.S. partners in their country in January 2015. Only 10-12 U.S. partners will travel to Asia, so this will not be a one-to-one exchange.

Program Objectives: The primary goal of the program is to build economic opportunity by supporting your efforts to broaden opportunity and ensure that the benefits of growth and trade are widely distributed. Specific program objectives are:

- **Promote mutual understanding and lasting, mutually beneficial partnerships** between key mid-level professionals and organizations in the U.S., Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- **Provide a forum for American and southeast Asian mid-level leaders** to collaborate and share ideas, approaches, and strategies regarding some of the world's most pressing problems.
- **Build a global network of professionals** able to work effectively in a dynamic and increasingly interconnected environment.
- **Develop existing leadership abilities** in program participants to enhance their abilities to effect positive change in their workplaces and communities.

Other Essential Program Information

Program Funding: The United States government will cover all participant costs, including international travel; travel and ground transportation in the U.S.; meals; lodging; and cultural allowances.

If you will be asked to host U.S. participants at your place of work, the program for the Americans will be at no expense to you or your organization. American participants will be provided all funds for hotels, meals and transportation.

Health Insurance: All participants will receive the U.S. Department of State's health coverage to cover any medical issues that might arise during your travel in the U.S. Pre-existing conditions are not covered.

Program Requirements and Restrictions: Participants are expected to participate fully in the program. They are expected to attend all workshops and organized activities. The program is very intensive and there will be little time for personal pursuits unrelated to the program. This is not a tourism program but an intensive professional experience. However, please realize that this is a group project. Not every appointment will be specifically designed to your interests. Every appointment will contribute to overall understanding of economic empowerment issues. This is an inter-disciplinary programs specifically designed to bring together people from different backgrounds and professions in a shared goal of economic empowerment.

English Language Ability: All candidates must demonstrate English language fluency. The program is rigorous and demanding. Participants will be expected to handle reading materials in English and to be full and active participants in all seminar and panel discussions. English fluency is vital to a successful experience.

Candidate Description and Qualifications: The participants are expected to be highly motivated professionals working on issues related to economic empowerment. Participants will represent businesses, non-governmental organizations, governmental organizations, and education organizations. All participants will have a good knowledge of English. We welcome

applicants from both rural and urban areas, with little or no prior experience in the United States or elsewhere outside your home country. We welcome participants of all backgrounds.

The recruitment period is October 21 – November 29, 2013. Application review will be conducted by local partners in conjunction with the Mansfield Center of the University of Montana. Successful applicants will progress to a telephone interview between December 16-20 in order to assess English-language skills and further ascertain suitability for the program. A select number will be chosen for personal interviews January 5-23, 2014. Seven primary participants and one alternate will be chosen from each country and notified by February 28, 2014. Seven participants from each country for a total of 28 will ultimately travel to the U.S. in one of two cohorts of 14 participants each.

Selection Criteria

- English-language fluency.
- Clear understanding of economic empowerment issues that affect your community.
- Aged 25-40, with some flexibility to age 44: this program is for mid-level professionals.
- Plan to return to your organization following completion of the program.
- Demonstrate strong leadership qualities and potential in your work.
- An emerging or mid-level professional with the background to benefit from this learning experience.
- Completion of relevant education (preferred but not required).
- Suitability of the applicant's organization to benefit from this exchange and to host a U.S. participant.
- Potential commitment to hosting a U.S. participant for 10-20 days. This includes organizing a professional program, a cultural orientation, and working with the local partner and the Mansfield Center to organizing logistics such as lodging and transportation. (All activities are paid for by the program, not by you or your organization.)
- The support of your supervisor and/or organization.
- A commitment to the time investment required to make the program a success.
- A demonstrated interest in working in cross-cultural settings.
- Demonstrated understanding of program objectives.
- Communication of personal goals in line with program objectives.
- Participants chosen from each country as a whole reflect the diversity of that country in terms of its populace, geography, and variety of economic interests/fields/organizations.
- Demonstrated commitment to strengthening your community.
- Little or no prior study or travel experience in the United States.
- Be willing and able to fully participate in an intensive program, Fellowship position, community service, and travel program in the U.S. for approximately 37 days.
- Be able to make adjustments to cultural and social practices different from those in your country.
- Understand that this is not a tourism or a luxury program. This is a busy professional program.

The deadline for receipt of applications is 29 November 2013.

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