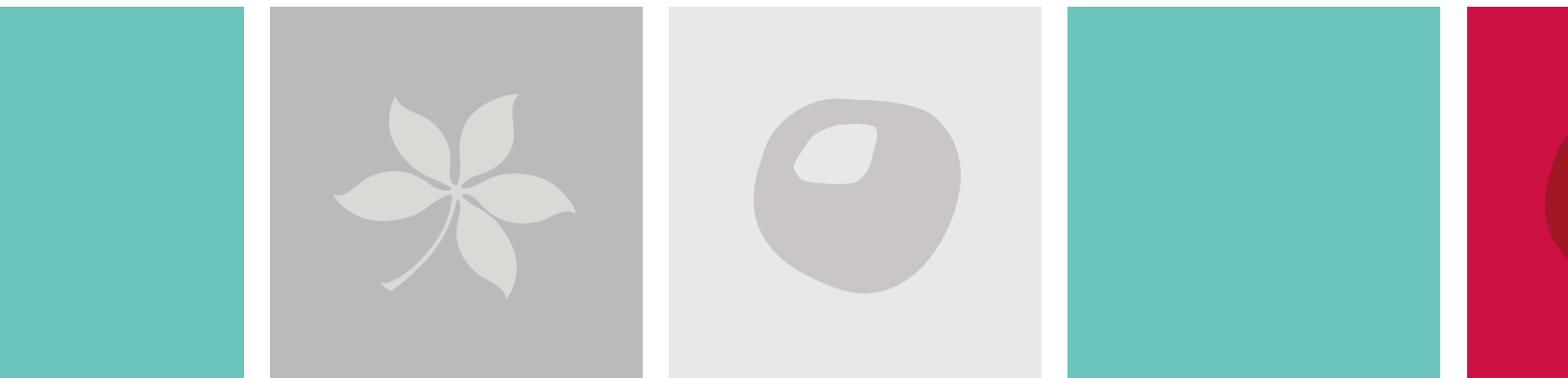


# FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR PROGRAM: IMPACT AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

2018



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS



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This Fulbright Scholar Report was made possible in partnership with the Research Methodology Center at the College of Education and Human Ecology.





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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Fulbright Program is one of the most widely recognized and prestigious international exchange programs in the world. At Ohio State, the Office of International Affairs (OIA) facilitates the Fulbright Scholar Program, which offers professional exchange awards for faculty, staff and administrators. According to The Chronicle of Higher Education, Ohio State was ranked second in the nation as a top producer of Fulbright U.S. scholars for the 2016-2017 academic year. The program directly contributes to Ohio State's Strategic Internationalization Goals.

In 2016, OIA partnered with the Office of Institutional Research and Planning to assess the Fulbright Scholar Program. The university-wide impact study focused on professional exchanges; **the study did not focus on student awards**. The objectives of the study were to:

1. Assess the impact and outcomes of the Fulbright Scholar Program on recipients' teaching, research and service
2. Document the impact of the Fulbright Scholar Program on building international partnerships and professional development of program alumni
3. Examine campus climate toward the Fulbright Scholar Program
4. Identify future directions for supporting and increasing the impact of the program

The responses of Fulbright awardees suggest that the program is a transformative experience resulting in significant impact on teaching, research and service. Awardees apply their experiences to integrate global and cultural content into new courses and to enrich existing ones. They capitalize on opportunities gained through the program to publish new research, develop new research topics, and seek grant funding. Fulbright scholars also maintain strong collaborative relationships with colleagues from their host countries.

Despite the overwhelmingly positive impacts reported, respondents indicate a suboptimal campus climate toward the program. Specific shortcomings include but are not limited to: disparities in how the Fulbright is valued across units, a lack of positive recognition and support within departments, and roadblocks to taking leave. Based on a thematic review of findings, the following strategies are recommended:

1. Continue to promote Fulbright Scholar Program opportunities across the university
2. Hold Q&A sessions within departments/units to assist in clarifying to unit heads as well as to faculty/staff the opportunities and benefits of participation in the program
3. Articulate a process by which Fulbright scholars have grant award and project outcomes incorporated into faculty annual reports and reviews for Tenure and Promotion
4. Develop a university-wide policy that details consistent approaches across departments in terms of Fulbright awards, faculty leave, sabbatical and/or special assignment appointments

The Office of International Affairs is now sharing impact study findings and implementing these recommendations with the goal of greater awareness of the value the Fulbright Scholar Program, and of establishment of uniform knowledge, policies and practices across the university that are supportive to applicants and recipients of this highly prestigious award.





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# INTRODUCTION TO THE FULBRIGHT IMPACT STUDY

In 2016, the Office of International Affairs partnered with the Office of Institutional Research and Planning to assess the impact of the U.S. Fulbright Scholar Program at The Ohio State University. The purpose of the impact study was to investigate the ways in which Fulbright scholars' experiences have shaped their later professional and personal contributions to the Ohio State community. We also sought to clarify the broader impacts of the program across Ohio State. We limited our study to professional exchange awards such as the Core Fulbright Scholar Program, International Education Administrators seminar, or Fulbright Specialist Program awards. Student Fulbright awards and impacts were not part of the study. Specifically, our study focused on the following objectives:

1. Assess the impact and outcomes of the Fulbright Scholar Program on recipients' teaching, research and service
2. Document the impact of the Fulbright Scholar Program on building international partnerships and professional development of program alumni
3. Examine campus climate toward the Fulbright Scholar Program
4. Identify future directions for supporting and increasing the impact of the Fulbright Scholar Program

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to gather evidence of the impact of the Fulbright experience. In this report, we begin by providing background and history of the Fulbright Scholar Program relative to other Fulbright initiatives and review its history here at Ohio State. We identify the program goals set forth by the U.S. Department of State. Next, we describe the impact study methodology and present the study results. We conclude by summarizing our findings and identifying challenges and offer recommendations for strengthening the success of the Fulbright Scholar Program at Ohio State.





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# THE FULBRIGHT PROGRAM

The U.S. Fulbright Scholar Program is one of several programs under the larger umbrella of the Fulbright Program. Fulbright is one of the most widely recognized and prestigious international exchange programs in the world, supported for more than half a century by the American people through an annual appropriation from the U.S. Congress and by the people of partner nations.

Established in 1946, the Fulbright Program is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government and administered by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. The Fulbright Program is designed to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries. The U.S. Fulbright Scholar Program is administered by the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES) under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of State. CIES is a division of the Institute of International Education (IIE) and has close working relationships with the major disciplinary bodies in the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences.

Approximately 8,000 grants are awarded through the Fulbright Program annually. Roughly 1,200 U.S. scholars, 1,900 U.S. students, 4,000 foreign students, 900 visiting scholars and several hundred teachers and professionals receive awards annually. More than 370,000 “Fulbrighters” from over 160 countries have participated in the program since its inception. Fulbright Program alumni include 37 current or former heads of state or government, 59 Nobel Laureates, 82 Pulitzer Prize winners, 71 MacArthur Foundation Fellows, 16 Presidential Medal of Freedom recipients and thousands of leaders across the private, public and nonprofit sectors.

The Fulbright Program provides participants - chosen for their academic merit and leadership potential - with the opportunity to study, teach and conduct research, exchange ideas and contribute to finding solutions to shared international concerns. The Fulbright Program is an important element of the United States’ bilateral relationships with countries around the world. Through its multiple programs and initiatives, the Fulbright Program funds U.S. citizens for study and research abroad and non-U.S. citizens who are not already in the U.S. for study and research in the United States.

Support for the internationalization efforts of universities is uniquely achieved through the role of the Fulbright Program. The program is singular in its breadth of opportunities. It has grant opportunities for students at undergraduate and graduate levels, scholars, teachers, artists, scientists and professionals. Fulbrighters come from all ranges of socioeconomic, ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds. Grants span all disciplines and fields, ranging from the performing and visual arts, to humanities, the natural sciences, mathematics, engineering and technology. Fulbright encourages applications from all fields, including interdisciplinary ones. Many grantees are seasoned travelers, yet for some, the Fulbright grant will be their first experience abroad, and the reach of the Fulbright Program spans most of the globe.



**Los glaciares: mucho más que s**

Conozcamos más de los glaciares, su origen, beneficios y su impacto en nuestras vidas

**Importancia de los glaciares:**  
 - Grandes reservas de agua en estado sólido.  
 - Fuente de ingreso por el desarrollo turístico.  
 - portan información sobre el cambio climático en miles de años (paleoclima).  
 - libran el clima del planeta.

**Laguna de origen glaciar**  
 La laguna en formación, desde el 2001 al 2013, aumentó 44 veces su tamaño (66 861,77 m<sup>2</sup>)

**Grietas**   **Cuevas**   **Morrenas**

**La Cord**

**Bryan Mark**  
 Department of Geography  
 2014 - 2015 U.S. Fulbright Scholar  
 Peru



# THE FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR PROGRAM AT OHIO STATE

Ohio State has had a formalized Fulbright Scholar Program on the Columbus campus since 2004, with a designated campus liaison administering its activities. The Fulbright Scholar Program has been a prominent vehicle for the internationalization of The Ohio State University and contributes to the university's Strategic Internationalization Goals (updated in 2016 – **Figure 1**). The plethora of awards available under the program allows Ohio State faculty and staff from across all disciplines to engage in collaborations with peers and colleagues around the world, and each of those engagements contribute to the fulfillment of one or more university goals.

*Figure 1. 2016 Ohio State University International Goals*

## **The Ohio State University President's and Provost's Council on Strategic Internationalization**

1. Increase the international experience for undergraduate, graduate and professional students
2. Diversify the international student body and facilitate the integration of international students into the Columbus campus community
3. Explore the possibility of enrolling and integrating international students into the regional campus communities
4. Increase international engagements and research collaborations for faculty
5. Promote scholarship on major global issues
6. Create and expand robust international partnerships
7. Recognize international accomplishments in Promotion and Tenure processes
8. Promote collaboration with and support from international alumni and internationally-oriented Ohio businesses
9. Expand our international physical presence by developing additional Gateways

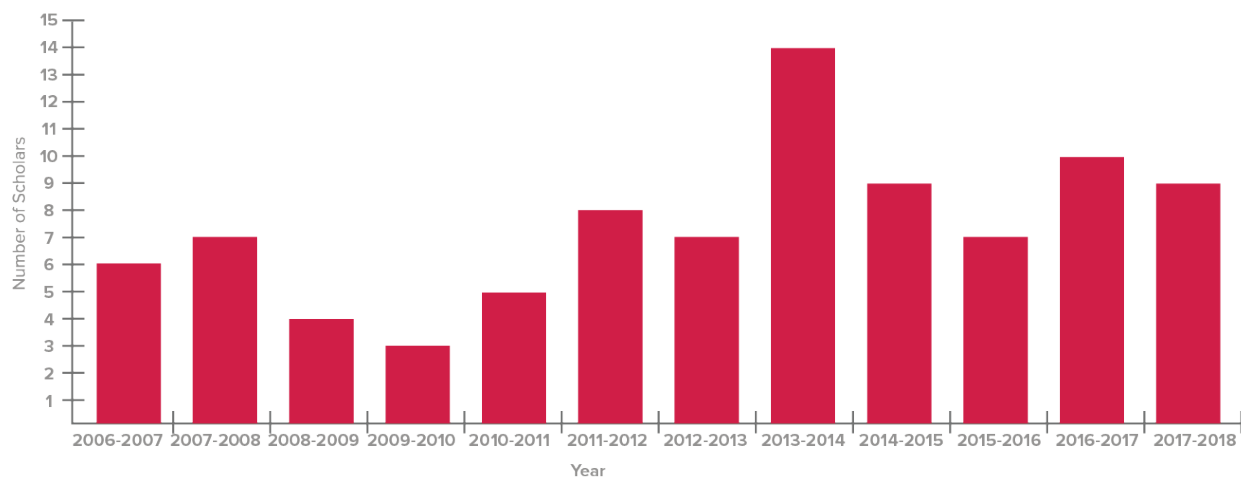
The Ohio State University has been named a top producer of Fulbright scholars for five consecutive years. According to The Chronicle of Higher Education, Ohio State was ranked second in the nation as a top producer of Fulbright U.S. scholars for the 2016-2017 academic year.

Since the 2006-2007 academic year, 89 total grants have been awarded as follows:

- 77 Ohio State faculty and staff have been awarded U.S. Fulbright Scholar grants. Of those:
  - 37 awards were to scholars conducting research
  - 26 awards were to scholars engaged in a combination of teaching and research
  - 9 awards were to scholars focused on teaching
  - 5 staff members were recipients of Fulbright Awards for International Education Administrators (IEA) and other special categories
- 12 faculty members were recipients of the Fulbright Specialist Program award

Since 2006, Ohio State Fulbright scholars from 12 colleges and administrative units have carried out their Fulbright activities in 48 countries. Over the same period, the number of Ohio State faculty Fulbright scholar awardees has generally increased (**Figure 2**). Of the total number of faculty awards since the 2006-2007 academic year, approximately 17% were awarded in 2013-14 and 16% during 2017-18.

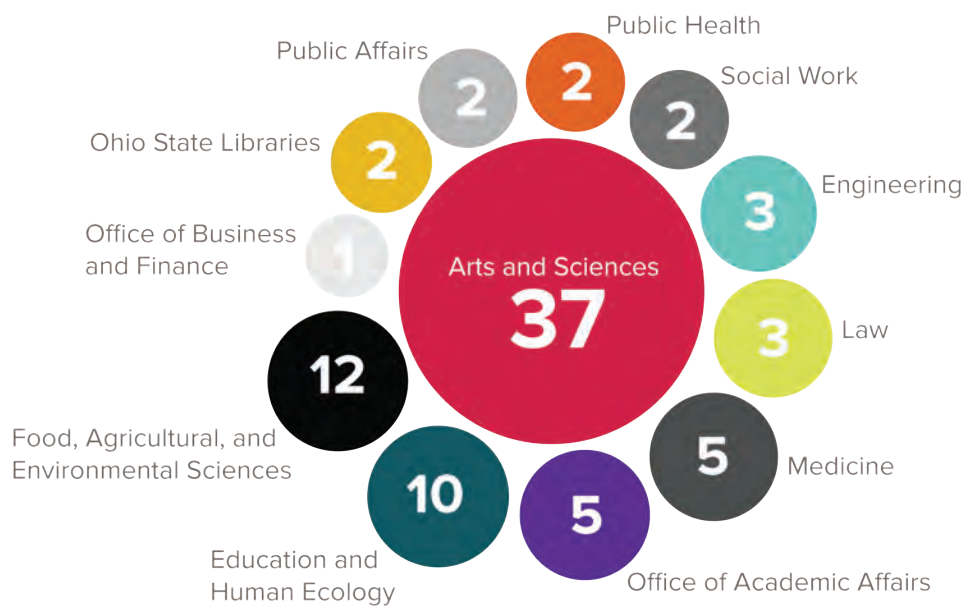
Figure 2. Ohio State Faculty Fulbright Scholars since the 2006-2007 Academic Year





The majority of awards since the 2006-2007 academic year went to scholars in the College of Arts and Sciences (**Figure 3**), with 37 awards (44%). Other top colleges include Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences with 12 awards (14%) and Education and Human Ecology with 10 awards (12%).

Figure 3. Fulbright Scholar Programs – Number of Scholar, Specialist and Administrative Awards Granted to Ohio State Faculty and Staff by College and Administrative Unit since the 2006-2007 Academic Year





**Lee Thomason**

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2015 - 2016 U.S. Fulbright Scholar

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# IMPACT STUDY METHODOLOGY

To achieve the goals of the university-wide impact study, we examined institutional-level data and used both quantitative (survey) and qualitative (focus-group) methods. Approval for the study was granted through Ohio State's Institutional Review Board (IRB).

We targeted the general academic Ohio State faculty and staff community for perceptions on the Fulbright program and faculty/staff Fulbright recipients for deeper information on the impact of Fulbright on their professional careers. **Student recipients of the Fulbright award were not targeted for this impact study.**

A 23-item survey was developed and administered through Qualtrics to 5,419 participants, comprised of faculty, administrators and staff on the Columbus, Newark, Lima, Mansfield and Marion campuses. Of these, 360 individuals responded to the survey including 60 Fulbright Scholar grant recipients. The survey questions included both closed-response and open-ended items. General survey items administered to all participants asked about their current position, their familiarity and knowledge about Fulbright within their academic unit and their perceptions about how the Fulbright Scholar Program is viewed within their academic unit. For those who identified as Fulbright award recipients, the survey included a specific set of 10 questions asking about their grant experience and activities during and after the grant.

After the survey results were collected and summarized, a focus group of Fulbright Scholar recipients was convened to learn more about specific impacts on teaching, research and service. Five Fulbright scholars were recruited, with one Specialist, one International Education Administrator and three Core Fulbright Scholar awardees participating in the focus group. The focus group questions concentrated on impact, details on departmental/unit practices or policies related to their award and general information on campus climate regarding the Fulbright Scholar Program.

Survey items were summarized using SPSS and open-ended responses were used to add details to the summaries. Focus group responses were coded and summarized by theme and common or challenging issues were highlighted. The College of Education and Human Ecology's Research Methodology Center assisted with the focus group and the preparation of the final report.

**SURVEY PARTICIPANTS**

Of the 360 participants, the majority were full professors (120; 35%) followed by associate professors (109; 32%) and assistant professors (59; 17%). The remaining responses were from administrative and staff personnel. Respondents came from a wide range of colleges and administrative units and all Ohio State campuses.

*Figure 4. Survey Participants by College, Campus, or Administrative Unit and Tenure Track*

<b>College, Campus, Administrative Unit</b>	<b>Assistant</b>	<b>Associate</b>	<b>Professor</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total</b>
College of Arts and Sciences	14	38	55	14	<b>121</b>
College of Medicine	27	13	13	1	<b>54</b>
College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sci.	9	14	14	2	<b>39</b>
College of Education and Human Ecology	8	9	6	2	<b>25</b>
College of Engineering	7	6	5	3	<b>21</b>
Office of Academic Affairs	1	7	5	0	<b>13</b>
College of Dentistry	3	2	4	1	<b>10</b>
College of Law	1	1	8	0	<b>10</b>
Fisher College of Business	1	1	2	3	<b>7</b>
Newark Campus	1	4	1	1	<b>7</b>
College of Public Health	4	1	1	0	<b>6</b>
College of Social Work	3	3	0	0	<b>6</b>
Lima Campus	1	3	2	0	<b>6</b>
Mansfield Campus	0	4	1	1	<b>6</b>
College of Optometry	0	2	2	1	<b>5</b>
College of Pharmacy	1	2	2	0	<b>5</b>
College of Veterinary Medicine	3	1	0	1	<b>5</b>
John Glenn College of Public Affairs	1	2	2	0	<b>5</b>
College of Nursing	1	1	1	0	<b>3</b>
Marion Campus	0	2	0	1	<b>3</b>
Office of Health Sciences	1	1	0	0	<b>2</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>360</b>

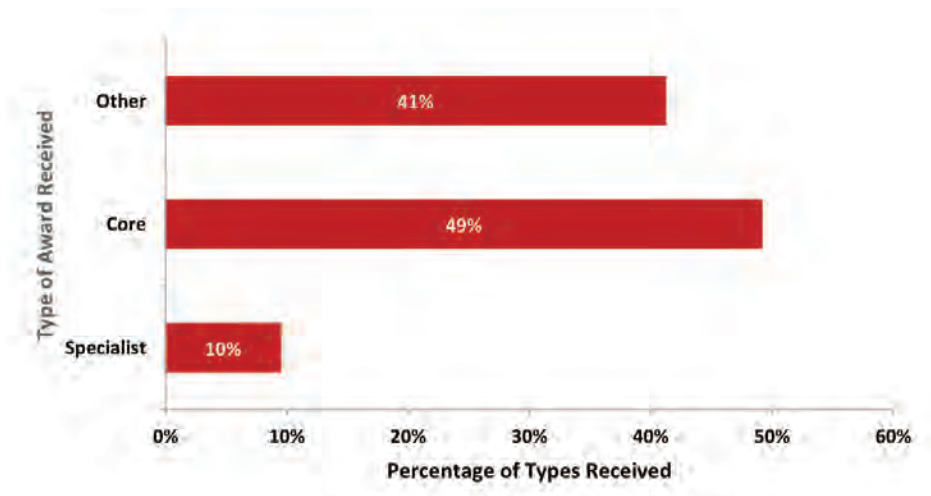
**FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR PARTICIPANTS**

Among the 60 Fulbright scholars who responded to the survey, 38 were awarded a Fulbright Scholar grant at Ohio State while 22 received the grant elsewhere.

As seen in **Figure 5**, most of the 60 scholars received Fulbright Core Program awards. Six Specialist Program awards were received (10%), and the remaining awards fell into categories that include Fulbright Distinguished Chair, IEA seminar award and Special Research awards. Among all Fulbright recipient survey participants, 14 scholars reported receiving a Fulbright grant more than once.

The Core Fulbright Scholar Program supports the following types of activities: research, teaching, a combination of researching and teaching or participation in seminars. Of the respondents who received a Core Fulbright award, over 90% reported they had engaged in research activities during their grant period, and 43% had engaged in teaching in their field overseas.

*Figure 5. Fulbright Grantees’ Responses— Type of Fulbright Award Received*







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Human Resource Management  
Support Process

**Christine O'Malley**  
College of Public Health  
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# SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

## OVERVIEW

The following sections summarize the results obtained from the survey and the focus group activities. We begin by summarizing the quantitative and qualitative responses of 60 Fulbright award recipients in two key areas of interest including: **(1)** impacts related to teaching, research and service, and **(2)** impacts related to international partnerships and professional development. Next we focus on perceptions of the Fulbright Scholar Program across Ohio State. Beginning with an integrated review of survey and focus group data, we highlight how Fulbrighters perceive the impact of their Fulbright-related work on the Ohio State campus community. We then expand our focus by summarizing perceptions from the full sample of 360 respondents. In the final section, we summarize the responses of the five Fulbright awardees who participated in the focus group.

## IMPACTS ON TEACHING, RESEARCH AND SERVICE

Of the 60 respondents who had received a Fulbright grant, the survey revealed the strong and continuing influence the U.S. Fulbright Scholar Program has had on recipients. According to Fulbright scholars, one of the reasons that the Fulbright experience has been impactful professionally was they have gained and applied new ways of thinking and cross-cultural perspectives into their research, teaching and advising of students.



### Fulbright Grantees' Responses: Impact on Teaching

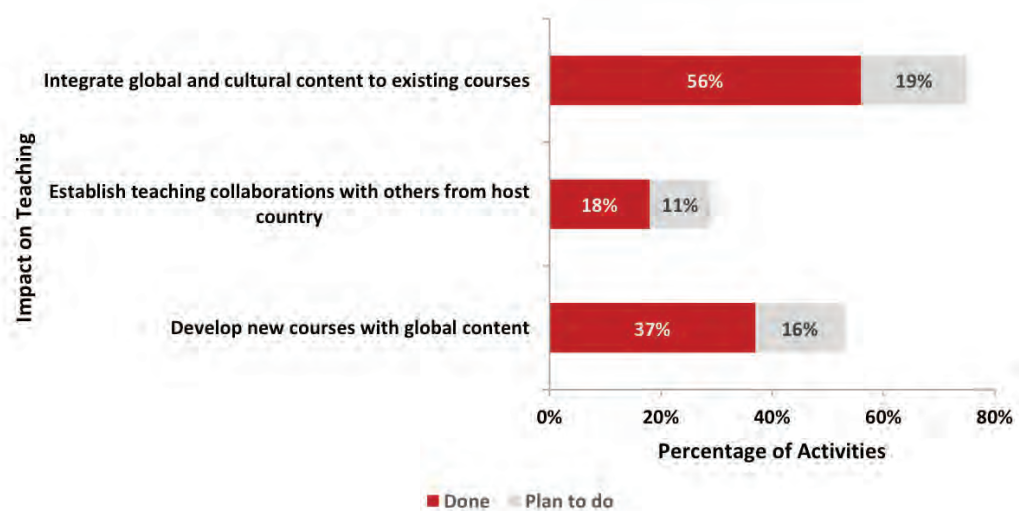
The Fulbright Scholar award enabled faculty and scholars to expand their knowledge base and bring diverse and culturally enriched perspectives to their teaching and classrooms. With increased cultural awareness and transformed worldviews, they “recharged their batteries for teaching,” allowing them to “enrich the educational experiences of students.”

Fulbright scholars described a variety of ways in which their award has had an impact on their instruction, both in and outside of the formal classroom. For example:

- “My students want my teaching to include recent, relevant content about global business transactions. This Fulbright has enabled me to become more conversant in what is new and what is now in global business affairs, especially in EU countries. It will impact my teaching and my research.”
- “...the Fulbrights have also helped me understand and convey to undergraduates and graduates a deeper understanding on a person to person level of everyday people in North Africa and the Middle East.”
- “Every time I teach a course on Modern France, the time I spent on a Fulbright informs my interpretation of the past as well as current events – all of which I communicate to my students. A Fulbright experience shapes a scholar’s professional and personal trajectory for their entire career – in only positive ways.”

The survey showed that 56% of scholars have already incorporated substantial global and cultural content into their courses and 37% have developed new courses with global topics or study-abroad components (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Fulbright Grantees' Responses— The Fulbright Impact on Teaching



### **Fulbright Grantees' Responses: Impact on Research**

Participants in the Fulbright Scholar Program consistently reported that the Fulbright experience had a strong influence on their research. Nearly all respondents (93%) noted that they conducted research during the Fulbright tenure. In addition, as a result of the program, Fulbright scholars were able to form collaborations with researchers from the host countries, produce research publications, develop new research agendas and submit grant proposals. A scholar who engaged in research activity during his/her Fulbright wrote:

- “My Fulbright experience provided me the opportunity for sustained intellectual engagement in Brazil. This has resulted in three new research collaborations which will result in grant submissions, publications and new research opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students at OSU.”

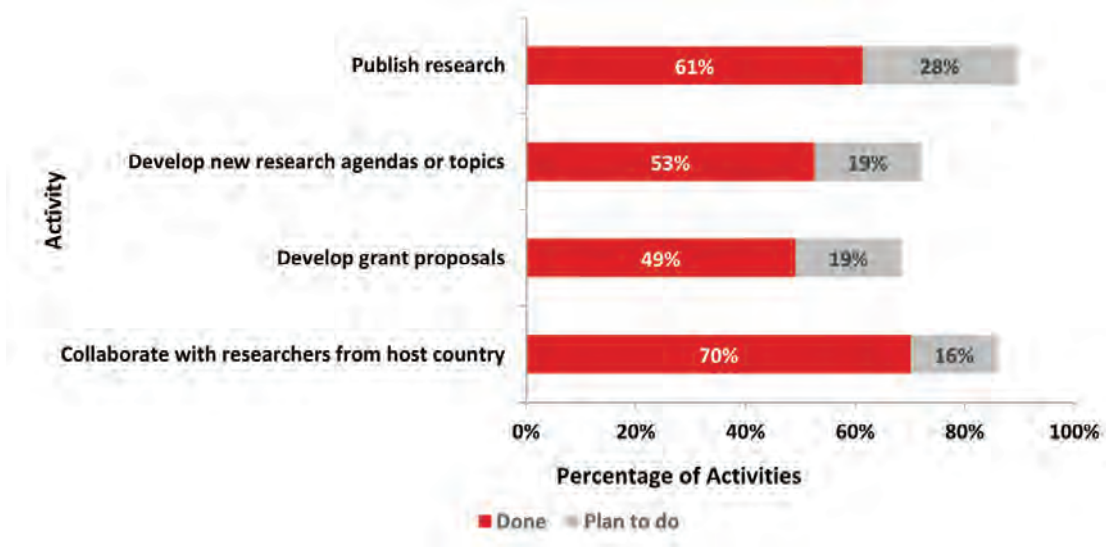
Similarly, 70% of Fulbright scholars who participated in the survey indicated that they collaborated with researchers from the host country and 61% published their research. Research engagement through a Fulbright grant often led to presentations at domestic and international conferences. As a faculty Fulbright scholar stated, “...it helped me establish a research direction that resulted in numerous publications and presentations at conferences, thus enhancing my visibility in my field.”

Other examples of remarks that describe the impact of a Fulbright award on recipient's research include the following:

- “The Fulbright experience was beneficial in developing a comparative study in Russian and American higher education policy. Papers from this have been presented at several international conferences, students have written theses and papers, and publications are in process. It brought a lot of opportunities to OSU, and we also were able to host doctoral students from [Moscow's Higher School of Economics] in Columbus as a result.”
- “My Fulbright experience has contributed greatly to my overall perspective of developments in the field, expanded my knowledge of international research in my field, and resulted in professional relationships and friendships that will continue to impact my research and teaching in years to come. The value of the Fulbright experience is immeasurable, and I take every opportunity to share that with anyone who will listen.”

A summary of research activities resulting from Fulbright awards is provided in **Figure 7**. Among other benefits, research collaboration and publishing are two highly impactful outcomes of a Fulbright award.

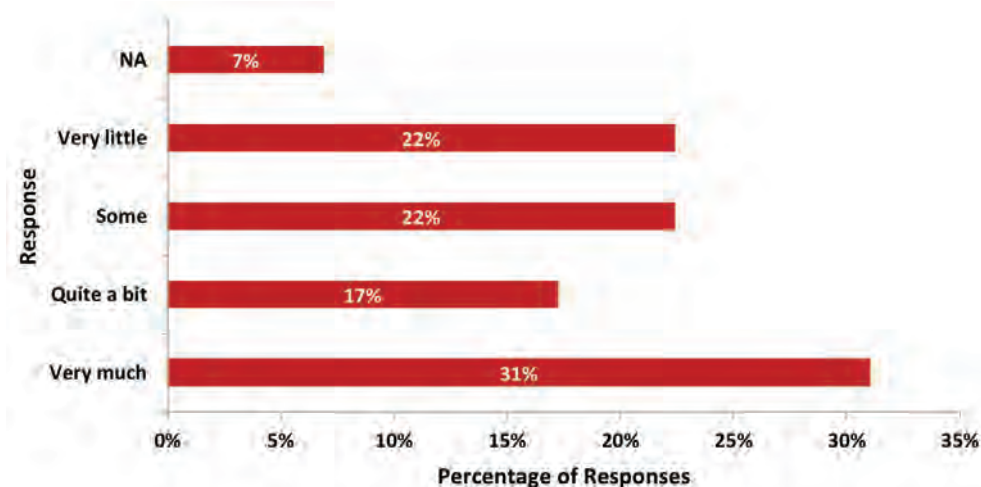
Figure 7. Fulbright Grantee’s Responses– Activities Resulting from Fulbright Research Awards



Additionally, nearly half of all Fulbright scholars (48%) indicated the Fulbright grant largely contributed to their ability to pursue and/or acquire new research funding (“very much” or “quite a bit,” **Figure 8**). For example, among several comments describing the Fulbright’s impact on research, one scholar wrote how the Fulbright grant facilitated international collaborations which led to a grant application:

- “As a result of my Fulbright I have gotten involved in an international digital research project (involving my host country and two others), for which we are in the process of submitting a grant application. This has the potential to contribute to Ohio State’s data analysis initiatives, particularly in the area of Digital Humanities. I have also presented at several universities in the country on graduate study in the U.S. and as a result have recruited several potential future applicants to OSU.”

Figure 8. Fulbright Grantees’ Responses– Reported Degree of Contribution to New Research Funding





### Fulbright Grantees’ Responses: Impact on Service

Participating in a Fulbright Scholar program has a great impact on the scholars’ service to others and the university. Here are a few examples in the scholars’ own words:

- “I’ve become visible for my interests in global education at Ohio State and brought OSU visibility to the Fulbright Program. I’ve evaluated national Fulbright student applications three times, hosted a Fulbright Postdoc and addressed the national Fulbright orientation program in Washington, D.C. as a capstone speaker.”
- “I co-chaired the graduate and undergraduate student Fulbright committee at Ohio State for about 10 years when it was under the auspices of international programs. I still advise students who plan to apply. And I advise international Fulbright grad students who come to OSU.”

For many scholars, the Fulbright experience had a continuous impact on their career. They often hosted international visiting scholars from their host countries and advocated for international experiences for other faculty and students. Scholars reported formal and informal university service involvement, including serving on formal grant review committees and mentoring and advising Ohio State students to pursue Fulbright awards, other domestic and international grants, and other international engagement.

As seen in **Figure 9**, most of the Fulbright respondents to the survey have already established collaborations with professionals and institutions (72%) or intend to for the future (11%), and many have formed or are in process of forming new international partnership agreements with their host institution (28% and 14% respectively). Nearly half of all grantees have engaged in other international activities at Ohio State (49%), and Fulbrighters have been very active to promote the Fulbright Scholar Program to others (84% with additional 11% planning to in future).

Figure 9. Fulbright Grantees’ Responses– Impact on Service to Others and/or the University



### IMPACTS ON INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

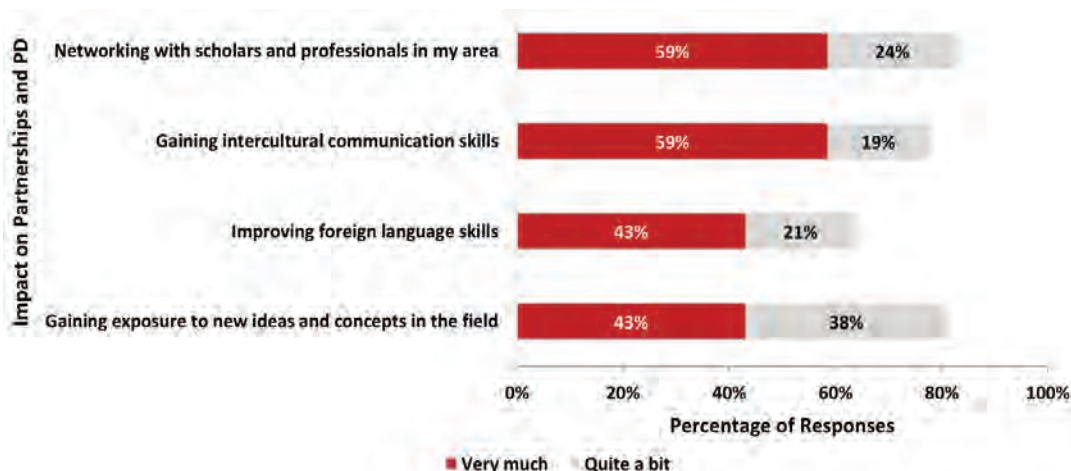
Nearly all Fulbright recipient respondents agreed that the Fulbright Scholar Program facilitated professional development in various manners, including building and expanding professional networks with scholars and professionals around the world. For example:

- “Fulbright has helped tremendously my personal career and the international contacts with whom I do all my professional engagement.”
- “[The Fulbright] has amplified my collaborative network, consolidated my foreign language/teaching skills, accessed additional funding, and involved graduate students in international research... I anticipate further connections with CLAS [Center for Latin American Studies] and already have a hydropolitics (water security) seminar series underway with Mershon featuring related contacts.”
- “Fulbright opened up an entire new world of research and scholarship but more importantly a world of new relationships and understanding. My career has been greatly influenced by my participation in several Fulbright programs overseas.”

The different reported impacts on professional development are illustrated in **Figure 10**. Fulbrighters agreed “very much” or “quite a bit” that their experience facilitated their capacity to network with scholars and professionals in their area (83% total), helped them strengthen intercultural communication skills (78% total), allowed them to improve their foreign language skills (64% total) and exposed them to new ideas and concepts in their area of study (47% total). An art history faculty member with a Fulbright to Japan shared a “remarkable experience” of establishing contacts with Japanese scholars and discovering new research materials which “transformed my view of the world.” The scholar wrote that:

- “...now I am much more aware of cultural intersections between Japan, China and the U.S. during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries than before.”

Figure 10. Fulbright Grantees’ Responses— Impact of the Fulbright Experience on International Partnerships and Professional Development



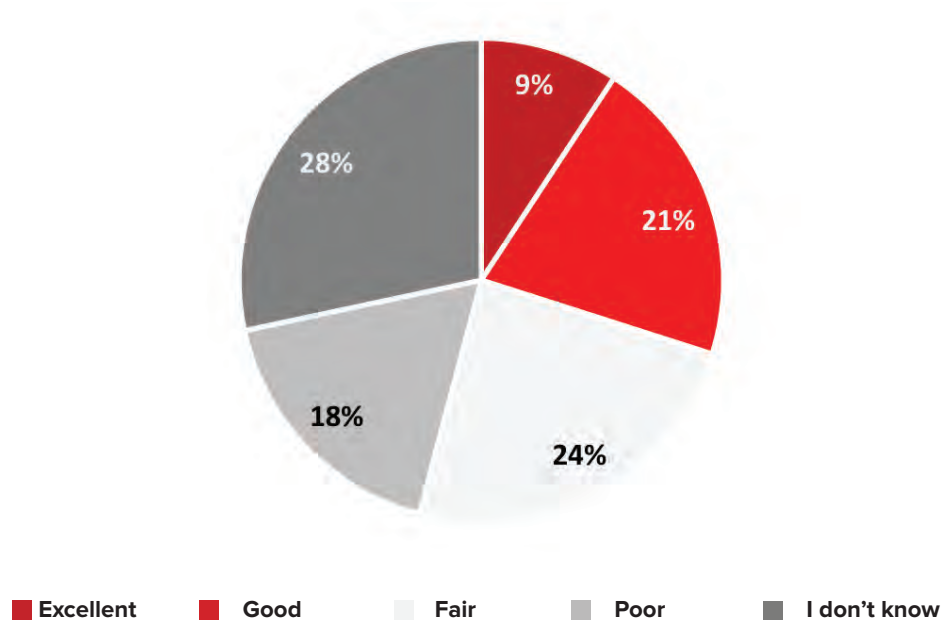
## CAMPUS CLIMATE AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR PROGRAM

In this section, we present survey results for items that were administered to the broader university sample. The 360 respondents to the survey were from diverse departments throughout the university and a wide range of academic fields were represented, from Library Science to Pharmacy.

In order to assess campus climate toward the Fulbright Scholar Program, the survey asked a variety of questions to examine the perception of the grant and university-wide policy and support. While the scholars' responses discussed thus far suggest an overwhelmingly positive experience demonstrating both a broad and a profound effect of the Fulbright Scholar Program at Ohio State, certain barriers were also revealed in the study.

Approximately 30% of all respondents felt the quality of information and resources available at Ohio State regarding Fulbright were “excellent” to “good” (**Figure 11**). However, 28% indicated they did not know in response to this question, and 24% felt the information was “fair.” This limitation may contribute to lack of knowledge regarding Fulbright within individual units.

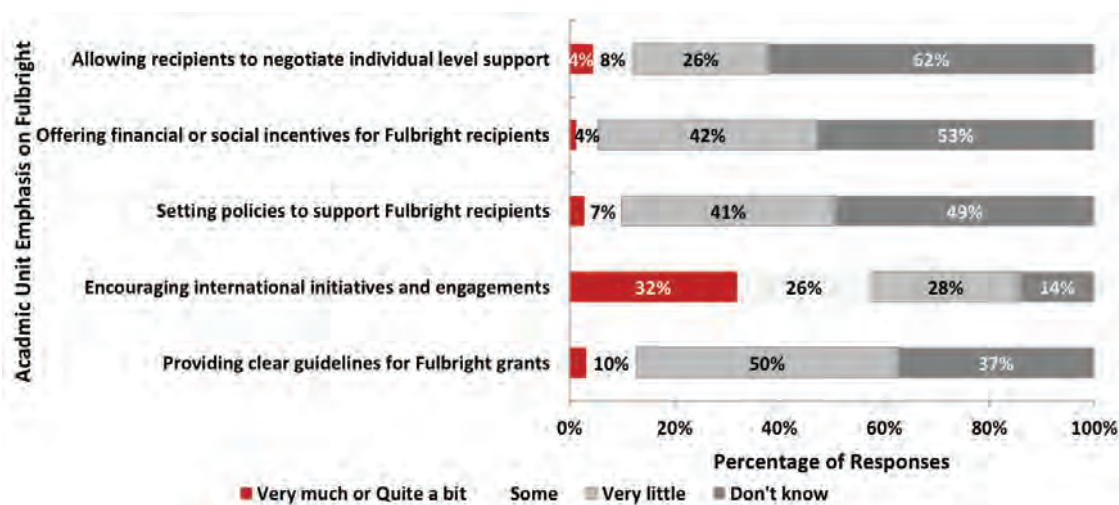
*Figure 11. University-wide Responses— Availability and Quality of Fulbright Information and Resources at Ohio State (Percent of total responses)*





As summarized in **Figure 12**, many of the 360 respondents also replied “I don’t know” to questions about the emphasis their academic unit placed on providing clear guidelines regarding the Fulbright program (37%), setting supportive policies (49%), offering incentives (53%) and allowing recipients to negotiate individual level support (62%).

*Figure 12. University-wide Responses– Academic Unit Emphasis and Support on the Fulbright Scholar Program*



Most respondents indicated their academic unit did “very little” to provide guidelines for Fulbright grants (50%) or set policies to support Fulbright recipients (41%). Further, 28% indicated their academic unit did “very little” to encourage international initiatives and engagements. Most also responded their academic unit did “very little” to allow recipients to negotiate individual level support (26%) while 32% of respondents felt their unit offered “very much or quite a bit” of encouragement for international initiatives and engagements. These results show there is need for additional information to be shared with units regarding the Fulbright as well as other international programs.

When asked a question about the extent to which the Fulbright program specifically is promoted within their academic unit, most faculty responded “not at all” (50%) or “I don’t know” (17%). Only 7% responded favorably that Fulbright was promoted in their unit (**Figure 13**). Respondents also overwhelmingly did not know (76%) whether a Fulbright award was considered equivalent to sabbatical leave or special assignment (**Figure 14**). Only 16% responded “yes”, and 7% of respondents said “no.” Regarding the perceived overall value of Fulbright within their academic unit, 26% of respondents indicated “very much” or “quite a lot” (**Figure 15**), but the largest proportion of responses were “I don’t know.”

Figure 13. University-wide Responses– Extent to Which the Fulbright Program is Promoted within Academic Units (Percent of total responses)

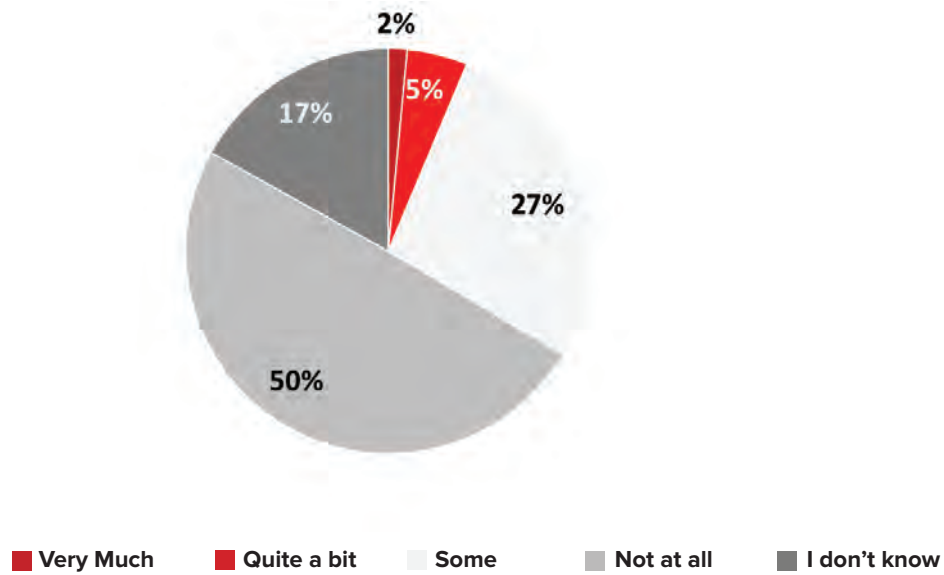


Figure 14. University-wide Responses– Knowledge of Whether the Fulbright Award is Considered Equivalent to Sabbatical Leave or Special Assignment (Percent of total responses)

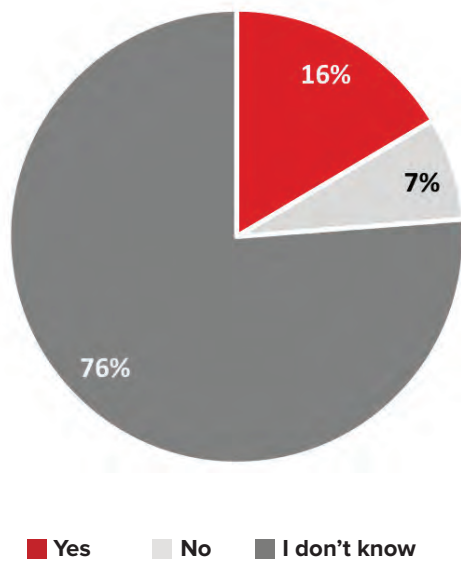
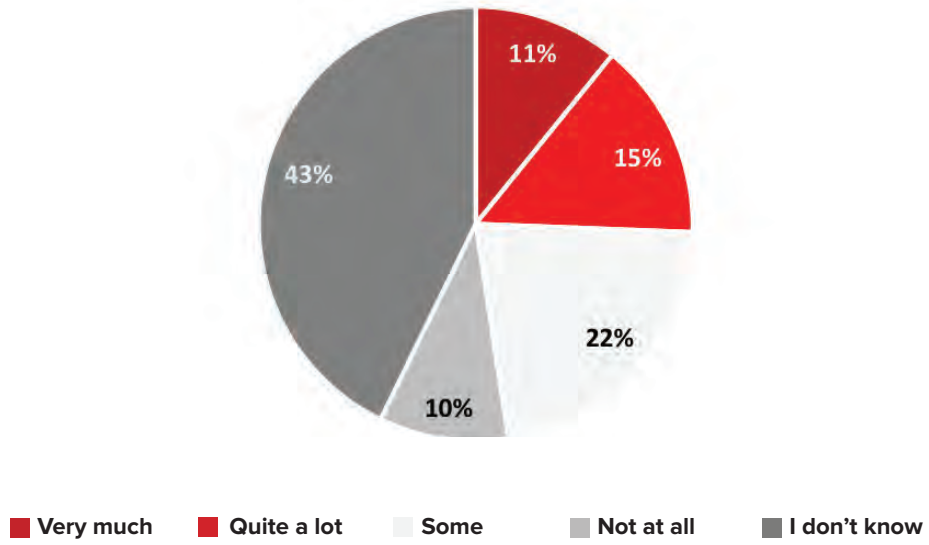


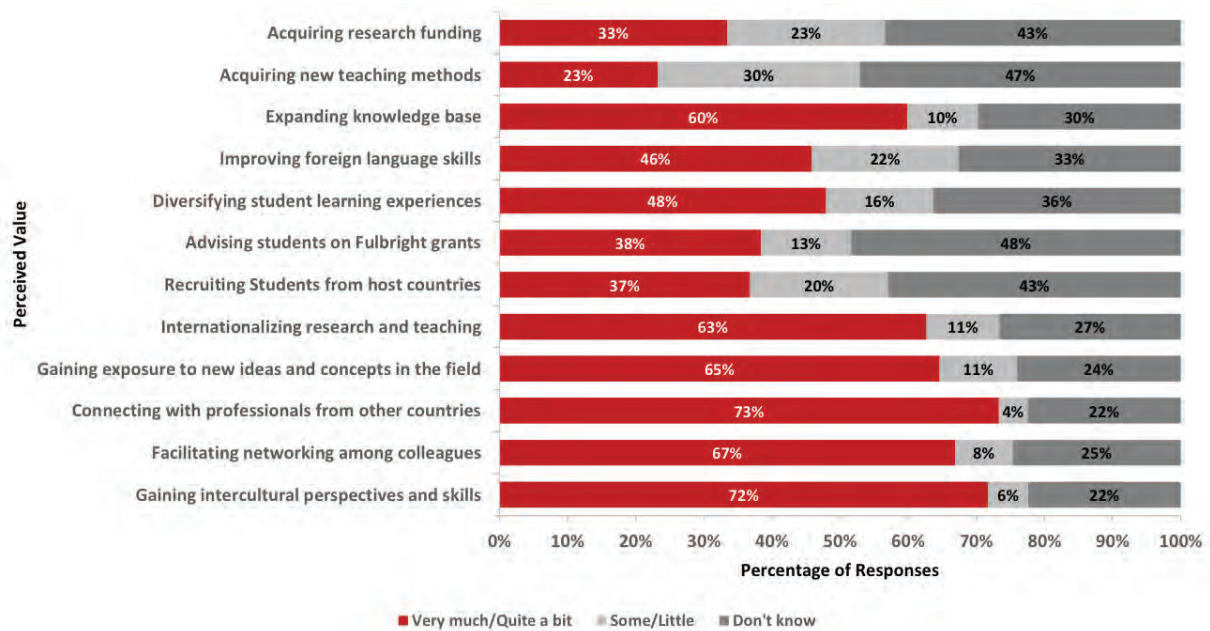
Figure 15. University-wide Responses— Perceived Value of Fulbright Scholar Awards (Percent of total responses)





When the general faculty were asked about the extent to which the Fulbright grant is perceived as valuable to research, teaching and faculty professional development, responses were mostly positive, but a sizeable proportion of respondents indicated “don’t know.” **Figure 16** displays these responses. The areas of greatest perceived value of Fulbright were in connecting with professionals from other countries (73%), gaining intercultural perspectives and skills, networking among colleagues (67%), gaining exposure to new ideas and concepts (65%), internationalizing research and teaching (63%) and expanding the knowledge base (60%). There was still a sizeable portion of respondents indicating “don’t know” to questions about value of the Fulbright.

Figure 16. University-wide Responses— Perceived Value of Fulbright Scholar Programs for Teaching, Research, and Faculty Professional Development







**Tim Berra**

*Department of Evolution, Ecology and Organismal Biology  
2008 - 2009 U.S. Fulbright Specialist  
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# SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

## OVERVIEW

A focus group was conducted as an additional part of the Fulbright Scholar Program impact study. The focus group consisted of four Fulbright scholars (i.e., full professor, associate professor, assistant professor, lecturer) and one staff Fulbright award recipient. Each member of the focus group had participated in at least one Fulbright program that ranged from two weeks to one year. They received awards and joined in programs at universities in either East Africa, South America, Europe, East Asia or Southeast Asia. In their work related to the Fulbright grants, two scholars were engaged in research activities, one scholar was mainly engaged in teaching, one scholar was engaged in a combination of teaching and research and the staff member was awarded a Fulbright grant to participate in an International Education Administrators seminar. The Fulbright tenures of the focus group participants were diverse in terms of their backgrounds, professional/academic standing, types of Fulbright grant received and length of award received, providing a balanced representation of Fulbright experiences.

The focus group participants were asked seven questions regarding their experiences in their respective programs. They were asked to give examples of how their Fulbright experiences had an impact on their teaching, research and/or service and their perceptions of how the Fulbright awards were handled by their department. They were also asked to share their overall perceptions of the campus climate at Ohio State toward the Fulbright Scholar Program.

The focus group was recorded and transcribed. Field notes were taken during the focus group in order to support the transcriptions of the recording. The responses to the eight questions were reviewed to identify common themes. The responses from participants for each question are summarized in the Appendix. Overall, five themes were identified and discussed:

1. Transformative experiences
2. Impact on career: research, teaching and service
3. Building professional networks and establishing lasting relationships
4. Diversifying students' learning and research experiences
5. Campus climate

Quotes are selected to show the key ideas and insights presented for each theme.



**Focus Group Theme: Transformative Experiences**

During the focus group, the Fulbright award recipients were asked to describe a highlight of their Fulbright experience. Most described their Fulbright experiences as “transformative” and affirmed that their Fulbright experiences led to important and lasting changes in their career. Below are some quotes selected from the focus group:

- “...I would say it was transformational with my research in that it really opened up a longstanding relational connection to the region and a context that became vital to climate change research. [... contributing to a] research agenda that’s been multidisciplinary, broad and lasted more than a decade.”
- “... the Fulbright opportunity ... was academic year 2016-2017, at the [University in East Africa], and transformative in my field of work, which is more related to the instructional side and undergraduate level research.”
- “I was there for one year and it was a completely research-oriented experience. No teaching. I also would describe it as transformative, although, I’m still sort of readjusting to being back.”
- “Whereas this time, we actually lived with the Thais, and it was very educational. It gave me much more insight into some experience I had had while teaching.”

**Focus Group Theme: Impact on Career – Research, Teaching and Service**

The focus group participants were asked how their Fulbright experiences impacted their research, teaching and/or service. They noted they were able to engage in research activities and shared how they bring their expertise with research to the university they visited. As a result of the program, they published prolifically or had presentations with scholars from their host countries. The focus group participants also shared how their experiences in the program had significant impact on teaching. Some important concepts mentioned include the development of their cultural awareness and how understanding the differences between cultures enriched their views of teaching and instruction, research and service. They noted that Fulbright programs also provide scholars with opportunities to increase intercultural communication skills. The following are quotes referencing the influential impact of the Fulbright experiences on participants’ careers:

- “We’ve actually published quite a bit. We just published a paper that came specifically out of that new project I was mentioning back at the start, back in March 2015. We’ve also run special sessions at meetings and organized workshops, both in [a country in South America] and at our national meetings here. It’s been very fruitful.”
- “I didn’t do any teaching while I was in [a country in Europe], but I did do a lot of scientific presentations and applications with colleagues in the lab.”
- “...because I’ve had a bunch of [collaborators from the host country] in my lab over the years, we’ve published extensively, they’ve made numerous presentations, and that’s the fun part.”

- “I’d build on that with the field experience and the students... in knowing how some incredible people that do this work in the village..., knowing their life stories and what they do to do their work, is invaluable to prepare ... at least begin the conversation with students before you take them into that context. So, that was really valuable from the field side of it.”
- “On the teaching side, it was one of the best experiences I have had in trying to improve the way in which I talk about the field that I teach in, and being there was one of the greatest experiences I have had.”
- “I was fundamentally blown away by the quality of group work that I saw students demonstrate in the classroom. The ability for groups of four students, or five students, or three students, two students, to solve problems equally, and to be at the same level at the end of an exercise or something, blew away what I see with American students...Whereas, with my teams in [a country in East Africa], I was blown away by how much eye contact, how much face to face problem solving was occurring. I’d be like, “Okay, five minutes is up!” They’re still working. “Ten minutes! Fifteen minutes!” And it would take a lot ... that’s what I haven’t learned, just build my whole sessions differently ... but at the end of fifteen minutes, all four of the students could equally then write out what it is we’re going to achieve. There was a sense of not wanting to stop until everyone was on the same page.”
- “It was really great to be able understand the culture, but especially what I wrote about in my essay was ... here, we’ve been very China-focused, but [a country in East Asia] is the second largest population that we have. So, especially with those two, they have the mandatory military service, and so they’re going through some different transitions in how we can be better able to serve those students. I think that was a big focal point for me too.”
- “So, I learned to be more adaptable and also to identify what was critical to communication and what wasn’t. So, Swahili is the primary language for students who are coming into the university. And we use English but, especially with my accent and everything, it was not very easy. So, I had to develop a lot of time in my teaching for them to communicate with each other and to allow it to be in multiple languages, from Swahili, etc.”
- “I also learned what was important to communicate. There were some language barriers sometimes. Also, communicating with international students ... but that part was not all that different from OSU, or from my experience in the U.S.”

### Focus Group Theme: Building Professional Networks and Establishing Lasting Relationships

Fulbright award recipients described the partnerships that occurred because of their Fulbright tenure and shared they built long-term relationships with other researchers, professionals or community-members they worked with around the world. It was conveyed the Fulbright experience has lasting impacts on international relationships through research and teaching opportunities, and the existence of this ongoing and growing network appears to be a significant benefit of participation in Fulbright. Below are selected quotes from the focus group:

- “We spent a week in [a country in East Asia] and we spent a week traveling the rest of the peninsula... then we were all able to meet in Denver for the NAFSA conference and then we went very shortly after to [a country in East Asia]. So we were able to meet those colleagues again, so it really helped build relationships and we’ve done presentations and collaborations since then.”
- “And so when I first started this whole idea as a dissertation student, I only had one paper to go by and it was this guy named [name] ... When I found out who he was, his whole life trajectory just became very real to me. And furthermore, his family survived a massive earthquake inland, which is kind of the ongoing reality ... is that as glaciers shrink they get steeper... So it’s just having this real tangible story to tell people brings it home. And I could go on. I think I should probably write a book about this guy because I have a lot of first-hand knowledge. He passed away in 2007, so it’s been 10 years. Anyway, I’ve maintained a tight relationship with his family ever since.”
- “It’s hard for me to disentangle some of the relationships and science, which is a good sign, where it’s become a lot more co-generated as opposed to ‘one side or the other.’”

### Focus Group Theme: Diversifying Students’ Learning and Research Experiences

The focus group participants were asked how their Fulbright experiences have had an impact in other ways. Several participants referred to the opportunities that the Fulbright programs provided for students to practice research. Several noted that Fulbright is valuable for diversifying students’ learning and research experiences. The students gained opportunities to produce research publications and other research engagements. The following are exemplar quotes selected from the focus group:

- “I had some students come over when I was there. Each student came over for six weeks and an undergrad came over for the alternative spring break for 10 days and I think that was very powerful for both of them to see a different hospital and different medical care and different research opportunities.”
- “We have two papers that we’re working on. So, two papers in progress. I anticipate that they will be published, but honestly I don’t know for sure. And, we have some presentations and my student did a presentation on some of the data that she was involved in...”

“So, there is a journal of social sciences that is there at the University ... and we had a group of seven students stay behind for a month after the end of their study abroad for an internship. A group of those students worked with faculty ... to basically, for lack of a better word, vet what we were doing against the literature, and against experiences within [the country]; that “What will be the change” question.”

- “We have two students who are publishing a journal article with my faculty head at the [University in East Africa] and the journal of social sciences there.”



### Focus Group Theme: Campus Climate

The focus group participants were asked about their experiences within their department or college, their overall perceptions about the Ohio State campus climate regarding Fulbright awards and how their Fulbright was handled by their department. They described the support they received from The Ohio State University Office of International Affairs (OIA) as they developed their application materials. There were some disparities in how the Fulbright is valued across units. Some comments shared during the focus group included Fulbright awards were not equally or positively recognized within departments. Some focus group participants shared they encountered roadblocks to taking leave and reported they felt their department was not explicitly supportive. Below are some examples of quotes with specific reference to scholars' perceptions about campus climate:

- “It was really helpful to have someone who could assist me in crafting the message at the Fulbright office.”
- “We did a website story, and they put it in onCampus.”
- “They [my department] just did a newsletter and my bio includes [my Fulbright] ... now they’re sort of, I think, using it [my experience].”
- “It seemed like there were a ton of kudos from the university, and pretty immediately. But, I had a lot of trouble at the department level.”
- It wasn’t positive... there wasn’t like a, “Yeah! That’s so awesome!”
- “It was lukewarm supported but it was very self-directed.”
- “Sometimes I feel like they wouldn’t [support] it because they don’t think I deserved the money. Like they think I was on vacation or something like that. So, those aspects were really quite negative.”
- “I think I was the first one in the department, and it all happened very quickly, so I could’ve seen other things had there been more of a planning process, but I found out about this program very shortly before the deadline... So, everything had to happen very quickly, and there weren’t very many discussions about “How is this all gonna work and where is this coming from?” It’s just like, I went and that was that. But, had there been more planning, more discussion, I definitely could’ve seen more roadblocks coming up.”
- “I think there is definitely interest from faculty in learning more about the [Fulbright], applying and doing some kind of international research where it takes huge experience.”





**James Gregory**

Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering  
2014 - 2015 U.S. Fulbright Scholar  
Israel



# RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTION

Results of our study captured many of the ways in which the Fulbright Scholar Program positively impacts individual grantees as well as contributes to positive institution-wide culture surrounding Ohio State's internationalization goals and their intended benefits. However, there are clear challenges that have been indicated as well. Based on these challenges, we offer the following recommendations:

## **Continue to promote the Fulbright Scholar Program opportunities campus wide**

- Share report details to contribute to and support a positive climate for Fulbright awards
- Target gaps of knowledge across the university and emphasize how Fulbright benefits and strategically fits into individual colleges' internationalization goals
- Continue to offer Fulbright application development support for applicants
- Share resources on Fulbright application process, assistance and programs broadly including the regional campuses

## **Hold Q&A sessions within departments/units to assist in clarifying to unit heads as well as to faculty/staff the opportunities and benefits of participation in the Fulbright Scholar Program**

- Clarify the competitive nature of the program and the application process
- Attend college-wide or departmental meetings, which may reach a broader audience than an optional Q&A session, perhaps targeting those units with historically less representation
- Attend Council of Deans meeting (university-wide) and/or school/college leadership meetings to share information on Fulbright impact, programs and processes

## **Articulate a process through which Fulbright scholars may have their grant award and project outcomes incorporated into faculty annual reports and reviews for Tenure and Promotion**

- Ensure that departments recognize how Fulbright experiences fit into departmental goals for teaching, research and service
- Provide examples to department heads and P&T committees as to how Fulbright experiences contribute to individual long-term career goals and accomplishments, productive research partnerships and opportunities that increase likelihood of achieving Ohio State's goal of a strengthened and broader global reach

## **Develop a university-wide policy statement that details consistent approaches across departments in terms of Fulbright awards, faculty leave, sabbatical, and/or special assignment appointments**

- Convene campus-wide stakeholder/administrators meeting to begin discussions on mechanisms to financially support departments when faculty have been awarded Fulbright
- Office of International Affairs (OIA) should document and clarify how Fulbright awards have been handled across different departments within one or two calendar years
- Continue to encourage Fulbright applicants to work with OIA prior to submission in order to track how leave is handled across departments
- Recommend that colleges or departments cover financial costs associated with adjunct hires to offset instructional gaps for Fulbright leaves
- Consider Ohio State Office of Research support for adjunct support to departments





**Khandakar Rafiq Islam**

Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center  
2014 - 2015 U.S. Fulbright Scholar  
Turkey



## APPENDIX: FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

### 1. How would you describe the impact that your Fulbright experience has had on your teaching, research or service?

Fulbright experience is valuable in that it provides nuggets of stories about real people and real impact to describe to students. We can provide live stories to remind students in the practice of science that science is a human endeavor.

Knowing people's life stories and what they do in their work in the village, is invaluable to prepare us and our students. This allows us to "...at least begin the conversation with students before you take them into that context." PowerPoint software was not available, so "I learned to be more adaptable and also to identify what was critical to communication and what wasn't."

The ways that researchers in my host country do and approach research is pretty different from what we in the U.S. do.

Fulbright gave me a good opportunity to see other international offices and how they operate, including the services they provide and how they approach different things. The experience helped me to understand the culture better, and be better equipped to serve students, especially those from countries having mandatory military service.

"I came back with a greater appreciation for the importance, when working with people in developing countries, about consideration of practical aspects that [host country nationals] have to deal with."

Through Fulbright I have been working on two papers and expect them to be published. Also I have had some presentations and my student did a presentation.

Impact includes helping to review manuscripts prior to submission, and collaborating with host-country researchers and publishing extensively.

"We've actually published quite a bit...We've also run special sessions at meetings and organized workshops, both in [my host country] and at our national meetings here. It's been very fruitful. It's hard for me to disentangle some of the relationships and science, which is a good sign, where it's become a lot more co-generated as opposed to 'one side or the other'."

"One of the most inspiring parts of this Fulbright experience was being able to see how students that were getting PhDs internationally were coming back and finding jobs in [host country]."

"We were able to get a director award from the USAID as part of the NSF peer award. This is a great collaboration where NSF or other federal agencies won't pay salaries to international scientists, but if you have an active NSF grant, they'll use that as a way for your collaborator to write an add-on proposal for the length of the duration of your grant, to get a salary through USAID, who does pay."

I was able to use the study conducted during my Fulbright as a validator for a grant.

"I learned to be more adaptable and also to identify what was critical to communication and what wasn't. So, Swahili is the primary language for students who are coming into the university. And we use English but, especially with my accent and everything, it was not very easy. So, I had to develop a lot of time in my teaching for them to communicate with each other and to allow it to be in multiple languages, from Swahili, etc."

## 2. How would you describe the impact that your Fulbright experience has had in other ways?

During their internships, OSU students are publishing a journal article with [host-country] faculty in the [host-country's] Journal of Social Sciences.

"The water project that our engineers in [host country] and here at OSU are working on is going to transform the lives of people in the village. In particular, women who are tasked with getting water at present, which is a full day's job ... we've tried to be very aware and purposeful ... of having community development workers as part of [the design], and sociologists, and anthropologists."

"I have been invited for two editorships. The new institute I'm referring to in [host country] has a journal, so I've been asked to serve on that board."

There has been impact on building networks with colleagues from other universities. For example, "... presenting [Fulbright program] at Ohio State, presenting at regional conferences ... I did a poster session at the annual conference with one of my [host country] cohorts to get the word out that these grants are available."

The Fulbright experience influences attainment of academic positions. "For someone who's interested in climate and glaciers ... going from glacial geology dissertation [to] where my last chapter came out of this Fulbright experience ... I attribute my position to the Fulbright."

Fulbright has increased my culture awareness. For example, I was surprised about the quality of group work that [host country] students demonstrate in the classroom, particularly comparing the difference in learning styles between U.S. and [host country] students. "With my teams in [host country], I was blown away by how much eye contact, how much face to face problem solving was occurring... but at the end of fifteen minutes, all four of the students could equally then write out what it is we're going to achieve. There was a sense of not wanting to stop until everyone was on the same page."

The Fulbright experience had an impact on my family. My child learned to speak a different language. My child's learning environment changed when coming back to U.S. Unsure whether this experience has a positive or negative impact on a child.

"I know it disrupted some things for my kids that they had going on, but overall I think it was a win. I think it was enriching."

The one-year leave because of the Fulbright program may be the reason why some grants are under-enrolling.

"I still had a number of funded projects ongoing in my lab while I was in [host country], but between email and Skype... I don't feel that we lost any time because there were excellent people working on the projects."

"I was falling off a lot of things, grants, projects, other things that I need to be hitting... but once I figured out how to structure my day and put up barriers around certain things and manage my time, it became some of the most productive time I've ever had. It just took me a while to re-frame."

Wi-Fi was a huge challenge.



### 3. How was your Fulbright award handled by your departments?

I had mixed support, department versus college, where some folks were very encouraging and others were not. “You’re stepping away from commitments that we thought you were committed to.”

“It seemed like there was a ton of kudos from the university, and pretty immediately. But, I had a lot of trouble at the department level.”

“My chair told me I was not allowed to go, and was not really excited at all. So did the Dean.”

“Salary was the really big point of contention. I also got tons of misinformation about that. I had to find the rules myself.”

“Sometimes I feel like [the department] wouldn’t do it because they don’t think I deserved the money. Like they think I was on vacation or something like that. So, those aspects were really quite negative.”

“It wasn’t positive, ... there wasn’t like a, “Yeah! That’s so awesome!””

“It was lukewarm supported but it was very self-directed.”

“The negative reaction might have also been about sabbaticals. Not a lot of people in my area take a sabbatical, even though they’re eligible.”

“[The department] just did a newsletter and my bio was included ... now they’re sort of, I think, using it.”

“We did a website story and they put it in ‘On Campus.’”

### 4. How did the Fulbright award impact your annual review process?

“I think it’s viewed as another positive little bullet point, but it’s hard to qualify that, I guess.”

“I think... it’s gonna be a positive thing at my review because I’ve delivered on what I said I would do from my department, and what I do at my job, and what I do at Fulbright.”

### 5. What are your perceptions of campus climate regarding the Fulbright awards?

“I don’t know what would happen if someone got a Fulbright and they weren’t eligible for sabbatical.”

“It was good to know that there are different lengths of Fulbright programs, some probably more acceptable.”

“It was really helpful to have someone who could assist me in crafting the message at the Fulbright office.”

“I think higher admin views these very positive. But has that translated down to colleges and department chairs?”

“[The reception] was really cool. I liked it. And it was a good networking opportunity as well.”

## 6. What recommendations you may have for Fulbright policy – i.e. for leave?

“I would encourage more people to apply. I think there’s probably a lot of room.”

Fulbright is a topic that could be added to the agenda in a meeting where all the chairs have a meeting with upper administration. “To try to educate chairs about Fulbright and how it’s viewed by higher admin as well as nationally.”

As part of a broader strategic initiative between two universities, having real documents helped articulate what was a real need.

“Knowledge, really, just because we’re not [all] teachers.” Being able to understand that there are different types of Fulbright programs and recognize that there are opportunities out there.

“I would have been happy to create some space in that for someone from OIA or someone to talk about, more about Fulbright...”

“If there were certain opportunities that I know were coming up ... [I would highlight] that at our international meeting coming up; or just having some sort of news blurb because there’s a lot of new media out there. “ Work more closely with universities that already have MOUs. Would be good to have “ ...a mechanism for trying to communicate with those universities [which have an MOU with Ohio State], and the idea of what you experienced, in exchange, one for one; and learn where those institutions are at since we have formal agreements in place and what might be of their particular interests.”

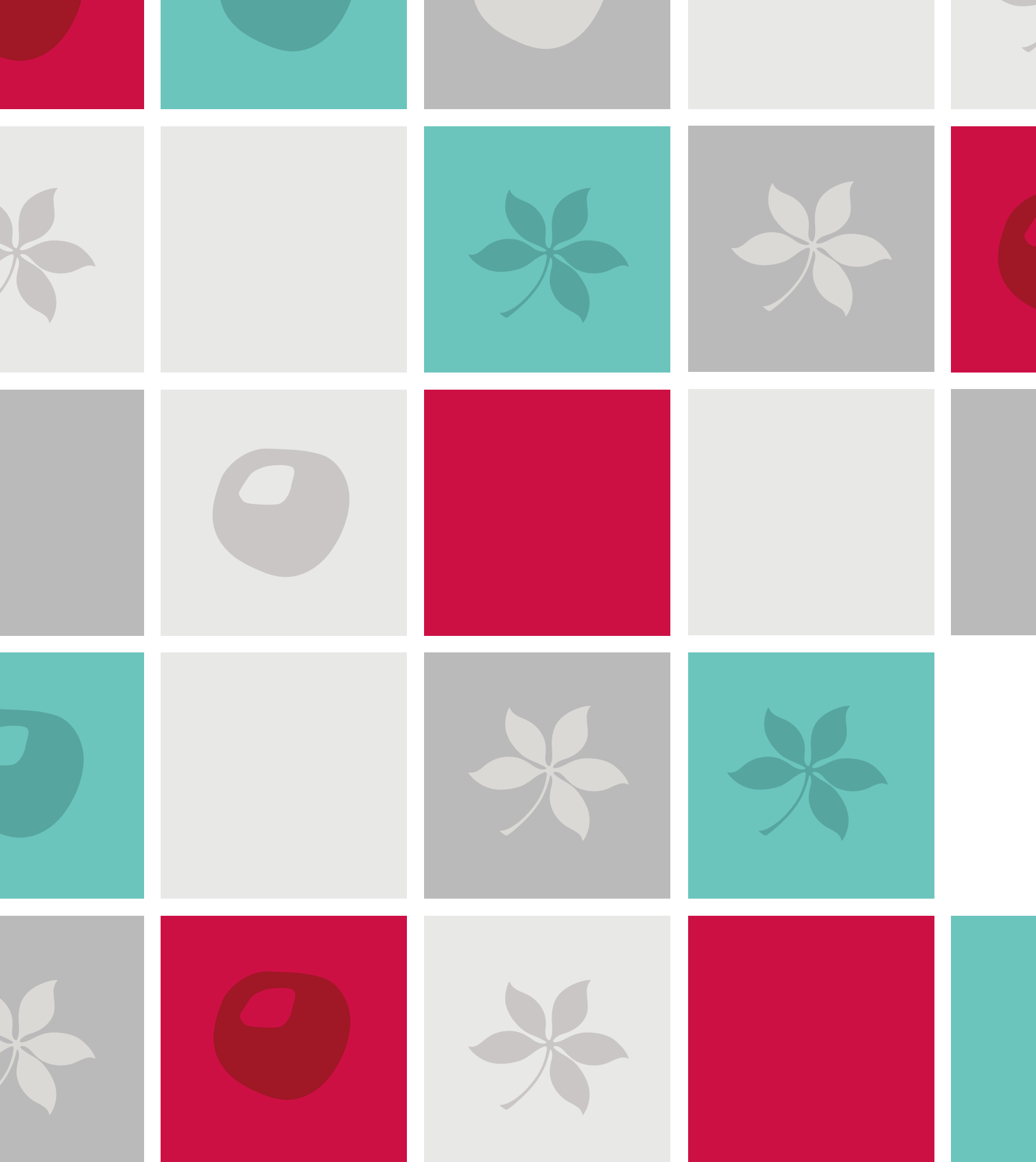
## 7. Is there any other information about Fulbright impact you would like us to know?

Need to work on IRB approval here in order to use the data collected in another country. Unsure of the possibility that OIA could help. “The paperwork side was kind of a challenge... I probably have to get a data transfer agreement if we want to do any subsequent analysis...”

Fulbright Scholars interact with students in host countries, and can identify sharp students. “OSU keeps talking about “more international studies”, and I think that’s something that the Fulbright program can, by definition, have a real important impact; [that is], finding quality students and encouraging them to come to OSU for their advanced education.”

Support for student exchange: “Could there be something like an add-on, if you get a Fulbright... you can apply to bring a student back, or something?”





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