

J. William Fulbright Commission
for Educational Exchange
in the Slovak Republic

ANNUAL PROGRAM REPORT

For the U.S. Government Fiscal Year:
October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022
Academic Year 2021-22

Lýdia Tobiášová – Executive Director
November 2022

A. THE COMMISSION

The J. William Fulbright Commission for Educational Exchange in the Slovak Republic is a bi-national, not-for-profit organization, whose mission is to promote mutual understanding and cooperation between the people of the United States of America and the Slovak Republic through educational and cultural exchanges.

The Commission was established by an executive agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the United States of America in 1994 (319/1994 Coll.) The subsequent agreement signed in 2005 (98/2005 Coll.) was amended in 2017 (303/2017 Coll.). In 2017, the Slovak authorities started issuing national visas to Fulbright scholarship recipients and their dependents who have been exempted from visa fees since.

The main responsibilities of the Commission as follows:

- administer grants and fellowships for U.S. and Slovak nationals to study, research, or lecture;
- identify and select the best candidates in both countries and engage them in academic exchanges within the highest standards of the Fulbright Program;
- identify fields in which mutual cooperation is desirable to further develop and increase expertise in particular fields;
- extend activities by establishing and supporting cost sharing programs with participating institutions;
- spread awareness and provide information about study and research opportunities in the United States.

In addition to the administration of the Fulbright Program, the Commission is the only official institution in Slovakia certified to provide accurate, comprehensive, and current information about studies in the U.S. through its educational advising center [EducationUSA](#), which is part of the worldwide educational advising network of the U.S. Department of State.

The Fulbright Commission is governed by the bi-national **Board of the Commission** which oversees the operation and activities of the Commission. The Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic appoints Slovak Board members and the U.S. Ambassador to the Slovak Republic appoints American Board members. Both serve as Honorary Co-Chairpersons of the Board of the Commission.

The Board has the responsibility for setting long term goals and priorities of the program, program activities, selection and nomination of grantees, and coordination of finances of the Commission.

Honorary Co-Chairpersons:

[Branislav GRÖHLING](#) Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic (until September 2022)

[Bridget BRINK](#) U.S. Ambassador to the Slovak Republic (until July 2022)

[Gautam RANA](#) U.S. Ambassador to the Slovak Republic (since September 2022)

U.S. Members:

[Tamara STERNBERG-GRELLER](#) Counselor for Public Affairs, U.S Embassy Bratislava, Treasurer (since August 2021)

Tara HALL	Deputy Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Embassy Bratislava
Linda STEYNE	Lecturer at the Department of British and American Studies, Faculty of Arts, Comenius University in Bratislava
Alan DYKSTRA	Freelance Consultant/Educator

Slovak Members:

Jozef BÁTORA	Professor, Faculty of Arts, Comenius University in Bratislava
Marek MOŠKA	Director General, Section of International Relations and European Affairs, Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, Alternate Treasurer
Daniela OSTATNÍKOVÁ	Professor, Head of the Institute of Physiology, Comenius University in Bratislava
Jana TOMKOVÁ	Director, Department of Cultural Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic

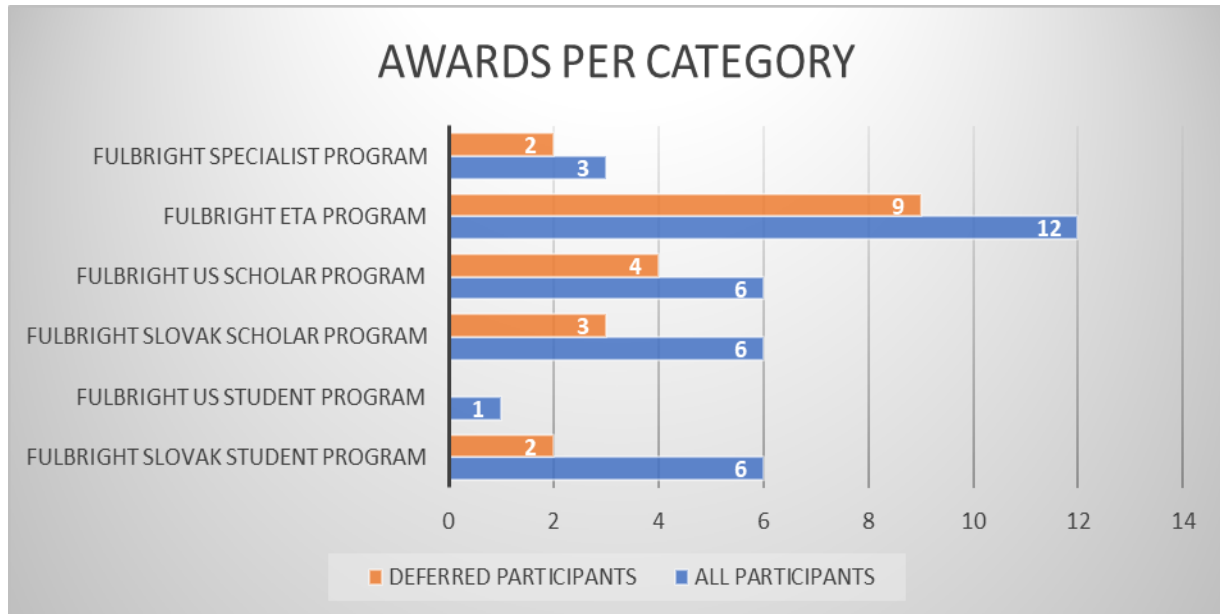
The Commission Staff:

Lýdia TOBIÁŠOVÁ	Executive Director
Denisa BEZÁKOVÁ	Finance Officer (until November 2021)
Denisa DOMARACKÁ	Finance Officer (since November 2021)
Zuzana KOPČANOVÁ	Program and Study Officer/EducationUSA Adviser
Dáša TAKO VELICHOVÁ	Program Officer

B. FULBRIGHT AWARDS

The Commission administers a variety of awards for both U.S. and Slovak citizens based on an open, merit-based competition and takes into account recommendations of selection committees focusing on professional skills, academic achievements, financial means available, and other program requirements; and announces the final nomination of Fulbright grantees.

The academic year 2021-22 continued to be affected by Covid -19 pandemic. Due to the global suspension of the Fulbright Program in 2020, the academic year 2021-22 had a combined cohort consisting of deferred grants from the academic year 2020-21 and the newly selected grantees in the respective year. Above mentioned resulted in the increase of grants in the academic year 2021-22. The total number of participants in Fulbright programs administered by the Commission reached 34 (20 deferred from AY 2020-21).



1. Fulbright Student Program

Slovak and U.S. graduate students can apply for 6 to 9 month scholarships to carry out independent research or study at Slovak or U.S. institutions, respectively. Candidates are required to prove an outstanding university record and to submit high-quality and well-conceived projects.

Slovak applicants may conduct an independent research, and if funding available, enroll in Master's programs. Fulbright Slovak Student Program is open to any field except for clinical medicine, M.BA and LL.M. Candidates without prior extensive U.S. study experience are given preference.

U.S. applicants can pursue individual research projects under tutorial of a Slovak expert in the respective field. Knowledge of Slovak language is desirable for commensurate with the level needed in fields like political science, history, linguistics, and anthropology.

Slovak Students:

Name	Vlasta KUBUŠOVÁ
Category	Research
Host Institution	University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA
Home Institution	Slovak University of Technology, Bratislava
Discipline / Specialization	Design
Project title	Future of material design and its positive impact, sustainable and ecological material alternatives to plastics, odor attributes of plastics
Months, Start Date	7 months/January 2022
Name	Marek LŮLEY
Category	Research
Host Institution	University of Miami, School of Architecture, Coral Gables, FL

Home Institution	Slovak University of Technology, Faculty of Architecture, Bratislava
Discipline / Specialization	Architecture/Urban Planning
Project title	Time-based architecture: Strategy of adaptability in architecture applied in local conditions
Months, Start Date	9 months/October 2021
Name	Katarína KOVÁČOVÁ
Category	Master's study
Host Institution	New York University, Gallatin School of Individualized Study, New York, NY
Home Institution	HSBC London
Discipline / Specialization	Economy/Circular Economy
Project title	Profitability and Concept of Circular Economy
Months, Start Date	9 months/August 2021
Name	Adam MÁČAJ
Category	Research
Host Institution	Northeastern University, Boston, MA
Home Institution	Comenius University, Faculty of Law, Bratislava
Discipline / Specialization	Law/Human Rights
Project title	Enforcement of Values of the European Union
Months, Start Date	6 months/September 2021
Name	Michaela MOKRÁ
Category	Research
Host Institution	University of California, Los Angeles, CA
Home Institution	Academy of Performing Arts, Bratislava
Discipline / Specialization	Film/Cinema Studies
Project title	Costume Design (new trends and technologies in costume design for film and television)
Months, Start Date	9 months/December 2021
Name	Alena VACHNOVÁ
Category	Master's study
Host Institution	Harvard University/John F. Kennedy School of Government, Cambridge, MA
Home Institution	DEDO Foundation, Košice
Discipline / Specialization	Public Policy/Social Policy
Project title	Public Administration
Months, Start Date	9 months/August 2021

U.S. Students:

Name	Jay Mendl RUMAS
Category	Open Research
Host Institution	University of Prešov, Institute of Rusyn Language and Culture, Prešov
Home Institution	University of Rhode Island, Department of Political Science, Kingston, RI
Discipline / Specialization	Political Science
Project title	When the Minority is the Majority: Appeal of Populism to Rusyn vs Slovak Individuals
Months, Start Date	9 months/September 2021

2. Fulbright Scholar Program

U.S. scholars with comprehensive experience propose projects on research or lecturing at Slovak institutions. The applications are welcomed in any field; although preference may be given to the needs of Slovak academic institutions. Candidates without extensive research or lecturing experience in the Slovak Republic are given preference.

Slovak scholars who hold a Ph.D. degree (in arts and some other fields comparable professional experience is required) must include an invitation letter from the U.S. institution in their application. All areas of research or lecturing, except clinical medicine, are eligible. Candidates without prior extensive U.S. research or study experience are given preference.

Slovak Scholars:

Name	Mária HAVELKOVÁ
Category	Research
Host Institution	Comenius University, Faculty of Law, Institute of Clinical Legal Education, Bratislava
Home Institution	Law/Public Law
Discipline / Specialization	Promoting Legal Aid as a Commitment of a State and Future Lawyers
Project title	Promoting Legal Aid as a Commitment of a State and Future Lawyers
Months, Start Date	5 months/January 2022
Name	Daniela MERESSA RUSNOKOVÁ
Category	Research
Host Institution	Syracuse University, College of Visual and Performing Arts, Department of Transmedia, Syracuse, NY
Home Institution	Freelance Documentary Filmmaker, Bratislava
Discipline / Specialization	Film / Cinema Studies / Documentary and experimental filmmaking
Project title	Grey Zone - Ballad About a Premature Baby
Months, Start Date	6 months/January 2022
Name	Pavel MEZEI
Category	Research
Host Institution	University of Montana, College of Forestry & Conversation, Department Ecosystem and Conversation Sciences, Missoula, MT, #2 University of Nevada, Reno, Department of Geography, Reno, NV
Home Institution	Technical University in Zvolen, Faculty of Forestry; Institute of Forest Ecology, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Zvolen
Discipline / Specialization	Forestry / Forest Ecology
Project title	Using Stable Isotopes in Tree Rings to Understand Tree Susceptibility and Survival in Bark Beetle Outbreaks
Months, Start Date	6 months/September 2021
Name	Pavol MUDROŇ
Category	Research
Host Institution	University of Wisconsin - Madison, School of Veterinary Medicine, Food Animal Production Medicine, Madison, WI
Home Institution	University of Veterinary Medicine and Pharmacy, Clinic of Cattle, Košice
Discipline / Specialization	Animal Sciences / Large Animal Husbandry
Project title	Epidemiology of digital dermatitis
Months, Start Date	6 months/January 2022

Name	Martina ŠEMELÁKOVÁ
Category	Research
Host Institution	The Wistar Institute, Gene Expression and Regulation, Philadelphia, PA
Home Institution	Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice, Faculty of Medicine, Department of Medical Biology, Košice
Discipline / Specialization	Biology / Molecular Biology
Project title	Identification of Novel Epstein Barr virus LMP1 Targets Regulated by PARP 1 to Modulate Expression of Oncogeneses
Months, Start Date	6 months/February 2022
Name	Štefan TKÁČ
Category	Teaching/Research
Host Institution	University of Arizona, College of Engineering, Department of Civil and Architect. Engineering, Tucson, AZ
Home Institution	Institute of Architectural Engineering, Technical University of Košice; American University of Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Discipline / Specialization	Urban Planning/ Urban Development & Planning
Project title	Efficiency Electric Power Grid Circles and its application on US micro-urban landscape
Months, Start Date	6 months/January 2022

U.S. Scholars

Name	Jeffrey Elton ANDERSON
Category	Teaching
Host Institution	Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice, Department of History, Faculty of Arts, Košice
Home Institution	University of Louisiana at Monroe, School of Humanities, College of Arts, Education, and Sciences, Monroe, LA
Discipline / Specialization	History / U.S. History
Project title	New Perspectives and Novel Subjects in American History
Months, Start Date	5 months/February 2022
Name	Gretchen Frances BENNETT
Category	Research
Host Institution	Slovak Academy of Sciences, Institute of History, Bratislava
Home Institution	Seattle University, Art and Art History Department, Seattle, WA
Discipline / Specialization	Literature/Creative Writing
Project title	Here is 1972: a research project, intended to result in a Creative Non-fiction Book
Months, Start Date	4 months/September 2021
Name	Michael Austin LUCAS
Category	Teaching / Research
Host Institution	University of Prešov, Faculty of Arts, Institute of Aesthetics and Art Culture, Prešov
Home Institution	California Polytechnic State University, College of Architecture and Environ. Design, San Luis Obispo, CA
Discipline / Specialization	Architecture / Architecture History
Project title	Dych Života: Breathing Life into the Slovak Wooden Churches of the Carpathian Mountains

Months, Start Date	4 months/September 2021
Name	Charles Arthur MARTIN DE BARTOLOME
Category	Teaching / Research
Host Institution	University of Economics in Bratislava, Faculty of National Economy, Department of Economics, Bratislava
Home Institution	University of Colorado, College of Arts and Sciences, Department of Economics, Boulder, CO
Discipline / Specialization	Economics / Public Economics
Project title	Research in optimal public expenditure levels, locations of families in a metro area, and smoking bans. Teaching microeconomics
Months, Start Date	5 months/September 2021
Name	Michael Joseph MURPHY
Category	Teaching
Host Institution	Slovak Medical University, Faculty of Nursing, Institute of Health Care Ethics, Bratislava
Home Institution	SUNY College of Agriculture and Technology at Cobleskill, School of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Cobleskill, NY
Discipline / Specialization	Medical Sciences/Bioethics/Medical Ethics
Project title	Intercultural Ethics Education: Biomedical Sciences and Emerging Technologies
Months, Start Date	3 months/February 2022
Name	Zuzana TOMAS
Category	Teaching/Research
Host Institution	Matej Bel University, Faculty of Education, Department of Social Work; Faculty of Humanities, Department of English and American Studies, Banská Bystrica
Home Institution	Eastern Michigan University, College of Arts and Sciences, Department of World Languages, Ypsilanti, MI
Discipline / Specialization	Education/Teaching
Project title	Enhancing Higher Education with Community-Engaged, Service-Learning Pedagogy in Slovakia
Months, Start Date	5 months/September 2021

3. English Teaching Assistant (ETA) Program

The Slovak secondary schools receive assistance in strengthening English language instructions by establishing a qualified native speaker presence. At the same time, U.S. participants gain from intensive cross-cultural interaction and research opportunities.

Due to the pandemic, the whole ETA cohort from the academic year 2020-21 was deferred to the academic year 2021-22 while 3 additional awards were granted.

Name	Evelyn Adrienne BERRYHILL
Host Institution	Gymnázium Jána Papánka, Bratislava
Home Institution	Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA
Major	Anthropology

Project title	TESOL
Months, Start Date	10 months/September 2021
Name	Caroline Olivia ELSER
Host Institution	Gymnázium Ludovíta Štúra, Zvolen
Home Institution	University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN
Major	History/Political Science
Project title	TESOL
Months, Start Date	10 months/September 2021
Name	Collen Mary GAIR
Host Institution	Gymnázium Pankúchova, Bratislava
Home Institution	Middlebury College, Middlebury, VT
Major	Neuroscience/English and American Literature
Project title	TESOL
Months, Start Date	10 months/September 2021
Name	Morgan Irene JOHNSON
Host Institution	Stredná odborná škola, Tisovec
Home Institution	Clarkson University, Potsdam, NY
Major	Electrical Engineering
Project title	TESOL
Months, Start Date	10 months/September 2021
Name	Corey Danyal KHAN
Host Institution	Spojená škola, Tvrdošín
Home Institution	Ohio State University, Columbus, OH
Major	History
Project title	TESOL
Months, Start Date	10 months/September 2021
Name	Devin Joy MACGOY
Host Institution	Gymnázium Ladislava Dúbravu, Dunajská Streda
Home Institution	Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.
Major	International Affairs
Project title	TESOL
Months, Start Date	10 months/September 2021
Name	Madeline Hall MACLAUGHLIN
Host Institution	Gymnázium L. Stockela, Bardejov
Home Institution	Tulane University of Louisiana, New Orleans, LA
Major	Political Science
Project title	TESOL
Months, Start Date	10 months/September 2021
Name	Matthew Travis MORTON
Host Institution	Gymnázium Komenského, Trebišov
Home Institution	At Large/University of North Texas, Denton, TX
Major	English
Project title	TESOL
Months, Start Date	10 months/September 2021

Name	Margaret NERVIG
Host Institution	Obchodná akadémia Dušana Janotu, Čadca
Home Institution	Drake University, Des Moines, IA
Major	Secondary Education
Project title	TESOL
Months, Start Date	10 months/September 2021
Name	Lydia Anne NARUM
Host Institution	Stredná športové škola, Trenčín
Home Institution	Salisbury University, Salisbury, MD
Major	Biology
Project title	TESOL
Months, Start Date	10 months/September 2021
Name	Elizabeth Logan PETKOSEK
Host Institution	Obchodná akadémia, Zlaté Moravce
Home Institution	University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA
Major	Economics & Foreign Affairs
Project title	TESOL
Months, Start Date	10 months/September 2021
Name	Connor Bryan SCHONTA
Host Institution	Gymnázium Mateja Hrebendu, Hnúst'á
Home Institution	Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA
Major	Diplomatic History
Project title	TESOL
Months, Start Date	10 months/September 2021

NOTE: Ms. Caroline Olivia Elser and Mr. Corey Danyal Khan withdrew from the Fulbright ETA program. Ms. Elser notified the Fulbright Commission, IIE and ECA on November 8, 2021. Mr. Khan notified the Fulbright Commission, IIE and ECA on January 6, 2022.

4. Fulbright Specialist Program

Slovak academic institutions can invite a U.S. expert for 2 to 6 weeks to lecture, assist in developing curricula and educational materials, participate or lead seminars and/or workshops, etc.

The program is a short-term complement to the traditional Fulbright Scholar Program. It attracts those U.S. experts who otherwise would not be able to participate in one or two semester program.

Name	Ermanno AFFUSO
Host Institution	Technical University of Kosice, Faculty of Economics
Home Institution	University of South Alabama, Mobile, AL
Discipline/Specialization	Economics
Months/Start Date	3 weeks/June 2022
Name	Jonathan ROME*
Host Institution	Comenius University in Bratislava, School of Medicine
Home Institution	The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA
Discipline/Specialization	Education/Education in Cardiopulmonary Physiology
Months/Start Date	2 weeks/April 2022

Name	Stephen WOOTEN
Host Institution	Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice
Home Institution	University of Oregon, Eugene, OR
Discipline/Specialization	Anthropology/Anthropology for Cultural Diplomacy
Months/Start Date	2 weeks/April 2022

***Prof. Jonathan Rome** has been awarded during the gala evening on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Pediatric Cardiac Center National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases by the Certificate of Appreciation as expression of gratitude for the personal asset to the improvement of Pediatric Cardiac Program in Slovakia. The gala evening took place on April 28, 2022 at the historic building of the Slovak National Theatre in Bratislava.

5. Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence (S-I-R) Program

Scholar-In-Residence Program assists U.S. higher education institutions in expanding academic exchange programs. By supporting non-U.S. Scholars through grants for teaching at institutions with no strong international component, both the U.S. institution and the scholar grantee benefit.

6. Inter-Country Travel Grant

Commission received and supported one ICT grant of **Professor Mary Jo ONDRECHEN**. During her stay at the Budapest University of Technology and Economics in Hungary, prof. Ondrechen was requested by the Department of Computer Sciences of Comenius University to give a lecture on *“Using Chemistry to Understand Genomic Data”* to an audience involving researchers and students interested in computational biology, genetics, biochemistry, and other related disciplines. The lecture took place from November 23 – 25, 2022.

7. Fulbright Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program

The Commission has launched the Fulbright TEA Program in Slovakia. The program will bring international secondary-level teachers to the United States for a six-week professional development opportunity to take academic seminars at a host university, observe and share their expertise with U.S. teachers and students, and develop action plans to promote media literacy and critical thinking skills in their home schools, classrooms, and communities. The program's Media Literacy Cohorts will include content-specific coursework with a focus on media literacy and critical thinking classroom skills.

Teachers are nominated to participate in the Fulbright TEA Program Media Literacy Cohort based on their educational experience, academic training, leadership, and professional experience.

To promote the program and recruit Slovak teachers, the Commission organized two information webinars (February 17 and March 8, 2022) with an overall attendance of 167. The Commission received 14 applications of which the Fulbright Commission pre-selected 7 top candidates that were invited for the virtual interviews taking place on April 13, 2022 via Zoom. The selection committee has nominated 4 candidates for final selection made by the U.S. Department of State. The Department of State selected three teachers: Ms. Lenka **ZGÚTOVÁ** (principal candidate), Daniel **GONOS** (principal candidate), and Natália **GETTLEROVÁ** (alternate candidate).

C. OTHER AWARDS

1. Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program

The program gives opportunity to mid-career professionals to participate in 10-month study and related professional experience at U.S. institutions in fields such as environmental management, finances, human resources management, urban planning, communications, drug abuse education, etc. Final selection of nominees from over 150 countries is made at the U.S. Department of State.

Name	Anna PODLESNÁ
Host Institution	Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI
Home Institution	Profesia, Bratislava
Field of Study	Economic Development
Project Title	Employment of people with disabilities
Months, Start Date	10 months/August 2021

After successful completion of the Humprey Program, Ms. Podlesná received further financial support from the **Alumni Impact Award**. In cooperation with her mentor prof. Connie Sung Ms. Podlesná developed the concept of international public-private partnership (**Profesia Lab**) which may help to bridge disability employment gap in open labor market in Slovakia by using the best practices and knowledge in the employment of people with disabilities from Michigan State University. The main objective of her project is to improve the transition of youth with disabilities from schools to competitive employment settings in Slovakia by implementing the *Assistive Soft Skills and Employment Training* (ASSET program) developed by experts from Michigan State University. The ASSET program will be launched at the conference *Neurodiversity in the workplace* on November 22, 2022 in Bratislava in a partnership with Fulbright Slovakia among others. More details can be found at: profesia.live/neurodiversity.

2. Study of the U.S. Institutes (SUSIs)

The Study of the U.S. Institutes are 5-week programs focusing on American Studies and civic society affairs. The candidates are selected through worldwide competition. Fulbright Slovakia, together with the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava, conducted online interviews for two SUSIs programs: SUSIs for Student Leaders and SUSIs for Scholars that were carried out in June and July 2022.

- **Ján Cipár** from the University of Economics in Bratislava stayed at the Michigan State University on the SUSIs on Civic Engagement program;
- **Martina Martausová** from Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice stayed at the New York University on the SUSIs on U.S. Culture & Values program.

3. Ronald and Eileen Weiser Professional Development Award

The Weiser Award (not sponsored by the U.S. Department of State) gives opportunity to Slovak scholars to pursue short-term research visits (4 to 6 weeks) at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA. Candidates may submit projects in any field of research or teaching with faculty partners at the University of Michigan. These awards are made possible thanks to a gift from Ambassador Ronald Weiser, U.S. Ambassador to Slovakia from 2001-04, and his wife, Eileen Lappin Weiser. There were no Weiser Fellows in the academic year 2021-22 as a result of the suspension of the program due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

4. Cybersecurity Program

Fulbright Poland together with Fulbright Commissions in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia as well as partners from the U.S. organized cybersecurity exchange program. The visit, designed for university representatives, was carried out in a hybrid form – combining virtual meetings with an in-person visit to the U.S. East Coast. Two Slovak candidates were accepted and participated in a hybrid form of the program from March 10 to June 23, 2021 - Ing. Boris Bučko, PhD. from Žilinská Univerzita v Žiline, Faculty of Management Science and Informatics, Department of Mathematical Methods and Operations Research and JUDr. Soňa Sopúchová, PhD. from Comenius University, Faculty of Law, Institute of Information Technology Law and Intellectual Property Law.

After the online component, both Slovak participants traveled to the United States for the in-person component of the program in March 2022. Ms. Sopúchová carried out the program from March 12 to 24, 2022 and Mr. Bučko carried out the program from March 26 to April 7, 2022.

D. GRANT SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

Commission carries out different activities throughout the year to support Fulbright programs, Fulbright grantees and alumni, such as recruitment campaigns, selections of candidates for each program, promotional and outreach activities, educational advising, and hosting or supporting events, seminars and conferences, whether on-line or in-person.

- **The Orientation Program**

Regular orientation seminars are being held for both Slovak and American grantees and are mandatory components of the Fulbright program.

Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar (PDO) for outgoing Slovak grantees was held in-person on June 16, 2022 in order to brief them on important issues related to their departure for the U.S. and the successful completion of their grant. The PDO's main agenda included terms and conditions of the Fulbright and Humphrey awards, visa application, health insurance and financial aspects of the award. Representatives of the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava, Ms. Tamara Sternberg-Greller and Ms. Emily Teickenson, shared up-to-date information on entry regulations in the U.S. and provided valuable insights on the U.S. to Slovak grantees. Some of the Fulbright alumni also joined the orientation and shared their practical experience with current grantees.



Orientation Seminar for Incoming U.S. grantees was organized in September 2021 in order to familiarize U.S. grantees with Slovak history, cultural and social background, economy, education system etc. Furthermore, a review of the terms and conditions of their grant, financial, visa, and health issues are an essential part of the orientation. A crash course on Slovak language has proven to be of importance to U.S. grantees. The Commission

annually reviews and updates the program in order to implement the guidance and protocol for a variety of possible crisis situations, diversity & equity & inclusion, mental health and well-being, and other emerging issues. The orientation is also a platform to meet and network with fellow grantees as well as representatives of the U.S. Embassy, Fulbright alumni and organizations and institutions involved in Slovak-American exchanges and relations.

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, **Orientation for U.S. grantees coming for the Spring Term** was held on-line on February 22, 2022. Recent U.S. scholar alumni participated to meet and greet incoming grantees.



In order to provide a continuing support to our grantees, the Commission organized several zoom-calls throughout the year with current and prospective grantees, especially a Call on Ukraine on March 4, 2022 with all U.S. Fulbrighters and the PAO – Ms. Tamara Sternberg-Greller on current issues in Ukraine.

- **The Annual Mid-Year Conference**

Due to the ongoing pandemic, the annual mid-year conference was postponed from January to the end of April (April 28 – May 1, 2022). The conference took place in Trenčianske Teplice. It created the opportunity for U.S. grantees to share and exchange their experiences and present their goals and achievements as well as discuss personal and professional insights with the Commission's Staff. It provided the Commission with different perspectives on the Fulbright Program in Slovakia in order to adopt necessary changes to improve the administration of the program and support to the grantees. The conference program also reflected current socio-political issues and the grantees got a chance to discuss the war conflict in Ukraine with Ms. Zuzana Reptová, Fulbright Alumna, and Matej Kandrík from Stratpol.



- **The Appreciation Award Ceremony**

On May 24, 2022, the Fulbright Commission prepared an award ceremony for all Fulbright grantees in the academic year 2021/2022 to appreciate the grantees for their efforts and activities during the whole academic year. The ceremony was hosted by the Deputy Chief of Mission – Mr. Nicholas Namba at the Ambassador's residence and followed by a jazz concert by Ester Wiesnerová.

- Educational Advising

The EducationUSA Advising Center of the Commission as part of the worldwide network of the U.S. Department of State provides current, unbiased, and realistic information on study programs in the U.S., counseling on all matters connected with the U.S. educational system, U.S. standardized tests, application procedures, financial aid, visa issues, etc. to the interested public. It operates daily and provides free consulting services upon appointment.

The Center supports and trains the employees of American Corners located in public libraries in Bratislava*, Banská Bystrica, and Košice. The centers are a common effort of the U.S. Department of State and U.S. embassies with the aim of providing better resources for people seeking information on the United States. The Center also serves U.S. partners and institutions as a source of information on Slovak and European higher education systems, e.g. verification and explanation of Slovak credentials, providing resources of information, etc.

*American Center Bratislava, which also served as a reference EducationUSA center, was closed in March 2022 as a decision of the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava.

- On October 21, 2021, EducationUSA Slovakia was invited to talk to **29 high school students of Gymnázium Hubeného**. The event took place in the University Library in Bratislava on the topic **5 Steps to Study in the USA**. The EducationUSA adviser discussed what undergraduate studies at a U.S. university are like. Students learned more about school selection, application and admission process, and how to finance their studies. Students who were brave enough to ask a question got a small gift branded with EducationUSA and each of them got a copy of a brochure „Study in the U.S.“ that was published by EducationUSA Slovakia.
- **Meeting with American Spaces Coordinators** - Fulbright Commission and EducationUSA met with American Spaces Coordinators during their annual workshop held at the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava on **November 3, 2021**. The Commission staff provided them with updates on Fulbright programs and the EducationUSA advisor briefed them on her participation at the EAIE conference.
- **Studying in the U.S.: An Exploration of Advantages & Differences**, November 18, 2021 - guest lecture Zuzana Tomaš, Fulbright U.S. Scholar
- **English Teachers' Roundtable**, December 9, 2021 – guest lecture Zuzana Tomaš, Fulbright U.S. Scholar, 132 registered participants.
- On March 28, 2022, EducationUSA Adviser conducted a **virtual presentation to 23 high school students of Gymnázium sv. Edity Steinovej in Košice**. The presentation was focused on study possibilities at universities in the U.S. It also included a short comparison of both Slovak and American school systems and standardized tests and the students were also presented with other options for academic exchanges.
- **EAIE Community Exchange Conference** - EducationUSA Adviser Zuzana Kopčanová attended the online EAIE Community Exchange Conference that took place on September 28 – October 1, 2022. It was a virtual event with more than 70 hours of live, as well as on-demand content for participants to explore. The event offered content on a variety of topics connected with international education within the European context
- **Essay Writing Workshop (webinar)** was held on May 25, 2022 and was co-organized by EducationUSA Slovakia, EducationUSA Czech Republic, and New York University Abu Dhabi to help students improve their essay writing skills. After the introduction to EducationUSA services in both countries, Ms. Zsuzsanna Kovács, NYUAD outreach officer provided students with brief information on New York University Abu Dhabi study opportunities and admission requirements. This was followed by the "interactive" part when students were presented with three essay prompts with possible examples to discuss what the best option is and why
- **NAFSA Campus Visit – University of Wyoming** - EducationUSA Advisor Zuzana Kopčanová was invited to join an international group of 10 EducationUSA advisors to



visit the University of Wyoming that followed the NAFSA conference (May 4 – 8, 2022, Laramie). During a 5-day visit, the advisers were introduced to the university's admission criteria and selection process, a brief overview of the study programs and possibilities for international students, and met the management of all university departments. They also got the chance to discover the university campus, high-tech laboratories, and sports facilities and experience some of the cultural activities for international students.

- **Meeting with the coordinators of American Corner in Košice (June 23, 2022)** - EducationUSA Advisor Zuzana Kopčanová met with both coordinators of the American Corner in Košice. During a short meeting, she briefed the coordinators on the open applications for Fulbright programs, as well as updated them on the latest trends in international education shared during the NAFSA conference and her visit to the University of Wyoming.
- EducationUSA Slovakia published an updated version of the brochure **“Ako na štúdium v USA”**. The booklet contains basic information on the educational system in the US, outlines and explains the major differences between Slovak and American education systems and helps Slovak applicants (and their parents) better understand the complexity of admission procedures at universities in the US.

- **Alumni**

The Commission continues to deepen the collaboration with the community of Fulbright alumni, especially with the Slovak Fulbright Alumni Association (SFAA). Fulbright alumni assist the Commission in different ways, i.e. they serve as consultants and evaluators of project proposals, participate at orientation seminars and mid-year conferences, and thus, help to promote the goals of the Fulbright Program. The Commission will also continue to encourage alumni to participate in the events and activities of the Commission. Fulbright and Humphrey alumni are also supporting the U.S. Embassy's activities with their expertise.

Commission-supported alumni activities:

- **Ľubomír Dunaj** (Fulbright Slovak Scholar Program 2019-2020) co-organized the conference HANS-HERBERT KÖGLER'S CRITICAL HERMENEUTICS. Hans-Herbert Kögler's Critical Hermeneutics, a new book edited by Ľubomír Dunaj, our #Fulbright alumnus, and by Kurt C. M. Mertel
- The Slovak Fulbright Alumni Association (SFAA) with support from the Commission and the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava, organized the second **Alumni Engagement Summit 2022** that took place in Trenčianske Teplice on June 10 – 12, 2022. The summit was also open to alumni of other U.S. State Department exchange programs, including the Humphrey Program and SUSIs and more than 70 alumni participated. The program was organized into 4 discussion panels covering the latest developments in Slovak society – i.e., Women in Leadership, Economic Prosperity and Recovery, Education and Society, Role of Media in a Polarized Society, and Wellbeing.



- **Outreach**

The core outreach and recruitment activities to attract prospective candidates of Fulbright awards rely mainly on visits to those Slovak universities outside of the capital, reaching out to audiences with different backgrounds, re-connecting with alumni from different parts of the country and promoting Fulbright opportunities for individuals, as well as institutions. Regular visits to high schools hosting ETAs are also of high importance. These visits are connected with EducationUSA outreach activities and advising services for high school students outside

of the capital. Based on the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic, online workshops remain an important part of the recruitment process, on which Fulbright alumni and/or U.S. universities representatives can participate easily.

In the academic year 2021-22 the Commission and the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava intensified mutual cooperation by participating in a series of different events organized either by the Commission or the U.S. Embassy:



- **SK-US map of cooperation** - on October 5, the skuscooperation.sk project was officially presented to the general public. Commission was invited to cooperate with the U.S. Embassy.

- **ELT Meetup** - The Commission's staff participated on two ELT meetings in Košice on May 19, 2022 in Košice (ED Lýdia Tobiášová) and in Banská Bystrica on June 7, 2022 (Dáša Tako Velichová).

- **American Day in Prešov, June 24, 2022** – the Commission participated at the event organized by the U.S. Embassy that took



place on the main square of Prešov. The purpose of the event was to promote American culture, history, and nature, as well as work and study possibilities in the United States. The Commission presented its exchange programs and EducationUSA advising services.



Other events and activities:

- **Q&A hour about ETA, SUSIs, and other programs** – December 20, 2021, and January 3, 2022
- **Voodoo and Hoodoo, magic religion of African Americans**, March 17, 2022 – guest lecture Jeffrey Anderson, Fulbright U.S. Scholar, 123 registered
- **Fulbright Slovak Scholar Program Q&A**, June 21, 2021, 131 registered participants
- **EDAMBA International Scientific Conference for Doctoral Students and Post-Doctoral Scholars – November, 2021** - online presentation of Fulbright scholarships to doctoral students at University of Economics in Bratislava. The presentation was focused on Fulbright programs for PhD. and post-doctoral students and young researchers and their home institutions.
- **October 25, 2021** – online conference **“Changing Mindsets, New Opportunities & New Partnerships through the ETA Program”** hosted jointly by the Fulbright Commissions from Czech Republic, Germany, Poland and Slovakia on the occasion of the celebration of 30 years of Fulbright programs in the Czech Republic. The panel presented the achievements of Fulbright English Teaching Assistants from four European countries and the long-term impacts that their Fulbright grants have had on themselves and their host communities. Alumni of Fulbright Czech Republic, Poland, Germany and Slovak Republic discussed (1) changing perspectives through art, (2) supporting and promoting diversity, (3) expanding worldviews and future study and career opportunities and (4) the power of international exchange for educators. Fulbright



Slovakia was represented by **Grace Sprockett, Fulbright Slovakia ETA Alumna 2018-2019**, who focused on the teaching aspect of the ETA program.

Promotion in Slovak Media:

- **August 30, 2021** – The Slovak Spectator article: “**Fulbright is a life-changing experience, say participants**” - <https://spectator.sme.sk/c/22715944/fulbright-program-scholarships-75th-anniversary-slovakia-graduates.html>
- **TA3 Good Morning** - ED Lýdia Tobiášová presented the Fulbright Program in Slovakia during TA3 live morning discussion on August 9, 2022

YouTube – Commission added new promo videos to its YouTube channel

- On October 5, the skuscooperation.sk project was officially presented to the general public. Commission was invited to cooperate with the U.S. Embassy.
- On March 28, 2022, new webpage was launched.

1. 75th Anniversary of the Fulbright Program

Receptions remain a traditional form of social networking and interacting with current grantees, alumni and other stakeholders. The Commission will hold a reception during the orientation seminar for incoming U.S. grantees, as well as a small get-together for outgoing Slovak grantees.

September 8, 2021 – The Commission held a **reception celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Fulbright Program**. Our partners, the U.S. Embassy in Slovakia and the Slovak Ministry of Education, Research, Science and Sport joined the Commission and together welcomed our partners, friends and alumni. A short promo video highlighting personal experience of Slovak Fulbrighters was prepared <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kpjXRw4HzmM>

AmCham Newsletter – **75th anniversary of the Fulbright Program** was included in monthly newsletter. <https://amcham.sk/press-room/news/273570-fulbright-program-celebrates-its-75th-anniversary-become-a-fulbrighter>



Alumni Spotlight Series – Celebrating 75 years of Fulbrighters’ impact and shared knowledge we launched monthly alumni spotlight series.

2. The Handbook for U.S. Grantees and the Handbook for Slovak Grantees and the Emergency Plan

The handbooks and other materials for grantees are being updated for each academic year. The Commission provides grantees in all programs with useful hints and guidelines on the specific requirements of each program and information of all aspects of their stay in Slovakia. The Commission closely cooperated with the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava in order to promote educational and cultural opportunities for Slovaks in the United States and took part at series of events organized by the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava.

G. ADMINISTRATION/STAFF AND FUNDING

1. The Commission and the Commission's Staff

Located in the center of Bratislava, the Commission's office is easily accessible via public transportation. The Slovak Ministry of Education covers expenses for space, utilities, telephone, security, and internet connection.

Social media – Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn – are crucial in communication with the interested audience. It will be used to reach out to broaden the audience, raise awareness of the Commission's activities, grantees/alumni and their impact, and the overall prestige of the Fulbright Program. The Commission's web page will remain the primary source and administrative tool for information and guidance on the Fulbright Program's opportunities and other scholarships.

Active co-operation with representatives of respective governments, partner agencies and Fulbright Commissions worldwide have become essential for maintaining the quality of operations and administration.

The knowledge and application of Slovak, European and U.S. laws is crucial for successful administration of the Fulbright Program.

The Commission staff will participate in various activities, such as professional training, seminars and conferences which focus on issues of domestic and international higher education, education at all educational levels, international policy, civil society, non-profit activities, and marketing activities.

Lýdia Tobiášová informed the Board on the Staff change as follows:

Denisa Bezáková – Finance officer has ended her assignment with the Commission on October 31, 2022. Denisa Domaracká was hired as a new finance officer.

On November 1, 2021 the Commission moved its offices to a new building on Panenská 29, 811 03 Bratislava, which requires the change of its official seat. In order to do so, the updated Statute of the Commission (Att. 2) reflecting the change of the address was submitted to the Board of the Commission and approved on its meeting. Subsequently, Lýdia Tobiášová will notify the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic of the change of its official seat. After receiving the note of the Ministry of Interior, Lýdia Tobiášová will notify all relevant authorities of the change of its seat.

2. Funding

U.S. and Slovak contributions will remain the main source of funding. In-kind contributions are provided through the administration of other programs and partnering with U.S. universities and institutions. On November 1, 2021 the Commission moved its offices to a new building on Panenská 29, 811 03 Bratislava, which requires the change of its official seat. In order to do so, the updated Statute of the Commission (Att. 2) reflecting the change of the address was submitted to the Board of the Commission and approved on its meeting. Subsequently, Lýdia Tobiášová will notify the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic of the change of its official seat. After receiving the note of the Ministry of Interior, Lýdia Tobiášová will notify all relevant authorities of the change of its seat.

Lýdia Tobiášová informed the Board on the changes in the Staff of the Commission. Financial officer - Denisa Bezáková ended her employment with the Commission on November 30, 2021. **Denisa Domaracká, Ph.D.** replaced Denisa Bezáková. Her employment started with a probationary period on November 1, 2021.

The respective fiscal year of the Fulbright Commission is observed as set by U.S. (October 1 – September 30) and Slovak (January 1 – December 31) regulations. The financial income is composed of two sources of funding: allocation from the U.S. Government and allocation from the Slovak Government.

In-kind contributions to the Commission include tuition waivers, funds allocated to other programs through other U.S. or Slovak government activities, health insurance for the grantees, private in-kind sponsorship etc.

Annually the Commission is subject to an independent audit of receipts and disbursements and on the internal control structure. The Slovak Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport also audits the expenses from the Slovak government contribution separately.

Staff Training - staff received training on social media (June 13 and June 14). Training on Piktochart and other related tools was held on August 5 and August 9, 2022.

September 8, 2021 – The Commission held a **reception celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Fulbright Program**. Our partners, the U.S. Embassy in Slovakia and the Slovak Ministry of Education, Research, Science and Sport joined the Commission and together welcomed our partners, friends and alumni. A short promo video highlighting personal experience of Slovak Fulbrighters was prepared
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kpjXRw4HzmM>

- AmCham Newsletter– **75th anniversary of the Fulbright Program** was included in monthly newsletter.
<https://amcham.sk/press-room/news/273570-fulbright-program-celebrates-its-75th-anniversary-become-a-fulbrighter>

- **October 25, 2021** - The online panel, “**Changing Mindsets, New Opportunities & New Partnerships through the ETA Program**” hosted jointly by the Fulbright Commissions from Czech Republic, Germany, Poland and Slovakia on the occasion of Czech Fulbright

Commission Country Day - a celebration of 75 years of Fulbright worldwide and 30 years of Fulbright programs in the Czech Republic. The panel presented the achievements of Fulbright English Teaching Assistants from four European countries and the long-term impacts that their Fulbright grants have had on themselves and their host communities. Alumni of Fulbright Czech Republic, Poland, Germany and Slovak Republic discussed: (1) changing perspectives through art, (2) supporting and promoting diversity, (3) expanding worldviews and future study and career opportunities and (4) the power of international exchange for educators. Fulbright Slovakia was represented by **Grace Sprockett, Fulbright Slovakia ETA Alumna 2018-2019**, who focused on the teaching aspect of the ETA program.

ITEM 8:

- **August 16 – 18, 2021 – Staff visit at the Czech Fulbright Commission** in the Prague office with the aim to exchange and share best practices. In order to do so, joint staff meeting as well as one-on-one consultations were organized.
- Lýdia Tobiášová informed the Board on the changes in the Staff of the Commission. Financial officer - Denisa Bezáková will end her employment with the Commission on November 30, 2021. **Denisa Domaracká** who will replace Denisa Bezáková started a probationary period on November 1, 2021. She is currently undergoing on-the-job training in cooperation with Denisa Bezáková and supervised by Lýdia Tobiášová.
- **Hubert H. Humphrey Program** - The Slovak Fulbright Commission nominated two candidates for the 2022-23 Humphrey Program: **Gabriela Mezeiová** (Thriving Communities/ Educational Administration, Planning and Policy), and **Lívia El'ková** (Human and Institutional Development/ Public Policy Analysis and Public Administration)
- **October 5, 2021** - Lýdia Tobiášová took part at the press conference hosted by the U.S. Embassy Bratislava on the occasion of the launch of the new website skuscooperation.sk.

- **November 3, 2021** – Lýdia Tobiášová together with program officers – Dáša Tako Velichová and Zuzana Kopčanová met with the representatives of American Spaces at the U.S. Embassy Bratislava to discuss issues of advising centers and to explore opportunities for organizing joint activities in order to promote study in the USA and other programs offered by the US Embassy and the Commission.

Funding

Review of Financial Funding Fiscal Year 2022

INCOME	USD
Government Funding	615,607
U. S. Government Funding	387,309
Slovak Partner Government Funding	228,298
In-Kind Contributions	49,738
Fulbright Specialist Program	
US Embassy Contribution	5,000
Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship	22,738
Cybersecurity	22,000
SUSIs	
Surplus Funds from Previous Years	347,829
TOTAL INCOME	1,013,174
EXPENSES	USD
Program Expenses	369,904
Non-Grant Program Expenses*	17,250
Administrative Expenses	163,397
TOTAL EXPENSES	550,551

*Non-Grant Program Expenses cover:

- Information Programs for U.S. and Slovak Grantees
- Grant Supplement Expenses for U.S. and Slovak Grantees
- Educational Material
- Web Page and Social Media Management
- In-Country Travel
- Operation of the Advising Center

Not included are costs for the Accident and Sickness Insurance for all grantees provided by the U.S. State Department.

exchange rate 1 EUR = 0,9748 USD as of 30 September 2022