

Annual Report FY 2015

Fulbright

1 October 2014 – 30 September 2015



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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Another busy year has gone by – and I am proud to say that the Fulbright Program in Iceland has grown stronger. The Commission continued to develop important partnerships and do its part to bring a little more reason and knowledge to the world through the work of its outstanding Fulbright fellows and scholars. A major highlight of the year was the groundbreaking partnership concluded with the National Science Foundation on Arctic research. We signed an agreement for a three-year pilot project to bring U.S. scholars and fellows to Iceland to conduct research in a wide variety of fields in the social and natural sciences, as they relate to the Arctic. NSF will provide funding for Fulbright-NSF Arctic Research Grants and the Commission will administer the grants program, as well as provide infrastructure, services, and support to grantees. This is the first such partnership between the NSF and Fulbright. It will bring many U.S. scientists to Iceland to do important research in an area that is prioritized in both countries. It will strengthen cooperation between the two countries, creating important partnerships between institutions and individual scholars. Our first recipients of this grant arrived in Iceland in the fall of 2015: Dr. Robert Wheelersburg, Professor of Anthropology at Elizabethtown College, and PhD student Em Jackson from the University of Oregon. Special thanks go to Anna Kerttula, Arctic Social Sciences Program Director at NSF for her unwavering commitment to bringing this project to fruition.

Anyone who follows the work of Fulbright in Iceland will know that the Arctic has become a major focus of our work. In addition to the Fulbright-NSF grants, we are participating in the Fulbright Arctic Initiative (FAI). The FAI brings together Fulbright scholars from all Arctic Council states to collaborate across disciplines on pressing issues facing the Arctic. We are proud that Dr. Bjarni Magnússon, Assistant Professor at Reykjavik University Law School, was chosen as a member of this first cohort, which will finish its work in the fall of 2016, after an 18-month collaboration. The Commission is also happy to note that the Fulbright-Ministry for Foreign Affairs Arctic Scholar Grant is off to a good start. Dr. Rebecca Pincus, Distinguished Visiting Professor of Maritime Studies at the Center for Arctic Study and Policy at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, arrived in Iceland in August for the start of her semester in Iceland.

I would like to thank Minister of Education, Science and Culture Illugi Gunnarsson and U.S. Ambassador Rob Barber for their support. I would also like to thank the Fulbright Board of Directors for its hard work throughout the year, as well as our partners at ECA, CIES, IIE, NSF, the Icelandic Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, and the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Last but not least, I thank our fabulous Icelandic and U.S. grantees for a successful FY2015.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Belinda Theriault". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line above the name.

Belinda Theriault

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN



As a representative of the U.S. government in Iceland, I can say that having the responsibility to serve on the Fulbright Board is one of the great pleasures of my job. As someone who is passionate about the role of educational exchange in improving our world, I embrace the opportunity to make a difference through the United States' flagship initiative, the Fulbright Program. Knowing how important Fulbright is to the U.S.-Icelandic bilateral relationship, its historic role, and the relative strength of the program relative to the size of Iceland makes me strive to ensure that Fulbright in Iceland is utilized to the fullest extent, to the benefit of both countries and peoples.

I have been truly impressed by both the U.S. and Icelandic grantees that it has been my good fortune to meet. Whether a biologist discovering a new life form on an Icelandic glacier, a blind student heading for the US to study for a master's in psychology so that he can come back to Iceland to empower the disabled, or a young teacher passionate about making a difference in the school system – to mention but a few of the excellent individuals we are proud to call Fulbrighters – these people deserve our support.

During my year as Chairman of the Board, I consulted regularly with the Executive Director on a wide variety of issues. The Board as a whole was regularly informed and consulted regarding the work of the Commission. The Board was very satisfied with the direction of the work and especially the new agreement between the Commission and the National Science Foundation (NSF). The importance of this new partnership cannot be overstated, and it brings substantial benefits to all parties – the Fulbright Program, the Fulbright Commission, and NSF, not to mention the scholars, higher education institutions, and research facilities that will have the opportunity to engage in collaborative Arctic research due to this agreement.

There is much to celebrate, but there is still cause for caution. As the smallest Fulbright Commission in the world, the Icelandic Commission is still in a difficult financial situation. Securing adequate long-term funding is and will continue to be a priority for us. Over the past 15 years, there has been a substantial decrease in the number of grants awarded each year. With so many highly qualified candidates applying, it is hard to have to say no to so many who are fully deserving of a grant and who have so much to offer to the program. In addition, grant amounts have not risen in line with costs. If the Commission is to remain viable, this must be rectified. It has been our goal to achieve parity in funding between the two governments, and we on the Board hope this will be achieved over the next couple of years. For the sake of the program, we continue to look at any and all opportunities for expansion, and we hope that new opportunities, such as the agreement with NSF, can be replicated with other organizations.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Brian Beckmann". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Brian Beckmann, Chairman of the Board FY2015

I. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND ACTIVITIES

The Commission implements a selective grant program for both graduate students and scholars. Grantees include Icelandic students who are awarded grants to commence graduate studies in the U.S., Icelandic scholars who are awarded grants to undertake research in the U.S. for 3-12 months, U.S. students who are awarded Fulbright grants to spend 9 months in a study program or doing research in Iceland, and U.S. scholars who teach and conduct research at the university level for a semester or come as research scholars for a period of 3-12 months. In addition, the Commission provides opportunities for Icelandic institutions to receive U.S. scholars for shorter periods. These opportunities include grants for Fulbright Specialists who come to Iceland for 2-6 weeks and inter-country travel grants for U.S. Fulbright scholars in other European countries who come to Iceland for up to one week. Icelandic scholars also have an opportunity to teach at the college level in the U.S. through the Scholar-in-Residence program. Finally, the Commission is able to offer an Icelandic student the opportunity to participate in a five-week summer institute.

Iceland is currently participating in the Fulbright Arctic Initiative and has grant partnership agreements with the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the National Science Foundation



**Fulbright Commission Board Meeting
with honorary co-chairs in attendance, April 2015**

in the U.S. The Commission administers the Boas Award for LLM studies at Harvard and the Cobb Family Fellowship for graduate studies at the University of Miami, which are accompanied by Fulbright travel grants.

In addition to the grant programs and advising activities, the Commission has a wider mandate with regard to enhancing the bilateral U.S.-Iceland relationship. To this end, the Commission undertakes a variety of activities.

The Commission consistently receives outstanding applications from Americans and Icelanders, scholars and students. Grantees are selected by the Fulbright Commission Board, in cooperation with the Fulbright Scholarship Board in Washington, D.C. Academic excellence, project merit, leadership abilities, the ability to meet challenges, civic-mindedness, and diversity are among the criteria that are weighed by Board members when choosing from among the many excellent applicants each year. Below is a list of grantees for 2015-2016, many of whom began their grant period in September 2014, one month before the end of the fiscal year, and grantees for 2014-2015, who were grantees for the majority of FY2015. In addition to those listed here, numerous Icelandic students from previous years remain grantees during their continued studies in the U.S.

1. Grantees 2015-2016

	Field	Home	Host
Icelandic students			
Ásbjörg Einarsdóttir	Engineering	University of Iceland	Stanford University
Elín Ósk Helgadóttir	Law	University of Iceland	University of Miami
Eyþór Kamban Þrastarson	Psychology	University of Iceland	Louisiana Tech University
Gunnlaugur Björnsson	Music	Hamrahlíð College	Yale University
Ingibjörg G. Friðriksdóttir	Music	Iceland Academy of the Arts	Mills College
Magnús Örn Sigurðsson	Soc.-Cult. Anthropology	University of Iceland	Rice University
Þorleifur Örn Gunnarsson	Education	University of Iceland	Columbia University
Cobb Family Fellowship			
Elín Ósk Helgadóttir	Law	University of Iceland	University of Miami
Summer Institute			
Anna Gyða Sigurgísladóttir	Social Entrepreneurship	University of Iceland	Indiana University
Icelandic Scholars			
Fulbright Arctic Initiative			
Bjarni Már Magnússon	Law	Reykjavik University	Duke University
U.S. students			
Nicholas Hoffman	Medieval Studies	Vassar College	University of Iceland
Jerilynn Jackson	Geography	University of Oregon	University of Iceland
Elijah Petzold	Language and Literature	At-Large, Rhode Island	University of Iceland
Rose Rustowicz	Remote Sensing	Rochester Inst. of Tech.	University of Iceland
U.S. scholars			
Linda Gray	Nat. American Studies	Union Inst. and University	University of Iceland
Janelle Knox-Hayes	Public Policy	Georgia Inst. of Technology	University of Iceland
Leigh O'Brien	Education	State Uni. of New York	University of Iceland
Rebecca Pincus	Public Policy	University of Vermont	U Iceland//U Akureyri
Tok Thompson	Anthropology	University of S. California	University of Iceland
Robert Wheelersburg	Anthropology	Elizabethtown College	University of Iceland
Fulbright Arctic Initiative			
Gwen Holdmann	Arctic Research	National Energy Authority	U of Alaska, Fairbanks

2. Grantees 2014-2015

	Field	Home	Host
Icelandic students			
Chrissie Guðmundsdóttir	Music	Iceland Academy of the Arts	University of Arizona
Erlendur Sveinsson	Film	The Icelandic Film School	Columbia University
Heimir Þórisson	Systems Engineering	University of Iceland	University of Virginia
Jóhanna Pálsdóttir	Mech. Engineering	University of Iceland	Purdue University
Kári Ragnarsson	Law	University of Iceland	Harvard University
Kristján Jónsson	Computer Science	University of Iceland	Uni. of California, San Diego
Víðir Petersen	Law	University of Iceland	Harvard University
Frank Boas Award			
Kári Ragnarsson	Law	University of Iceland	Harvard University
Víðir Petersen	Law	University of Iceland	Harvard University
Summer Institute			
Katrín Gunnarsdóttir	Env. Stewardship	East Iceland Tech. College	University of Kansas
Icelandic Scholars			
Marjan Sirjani	Computer Science	Reykjavik University	Uni. of California, Berkeley
Páll Melsted	Computer Science	University of Iceland	Uni. of California, Berkeley
U.S. students			
Alyssa Grahame	Political Science	University of Massachusetts	University of Iceland
Sophia Wassermann	Env. Science	Vassar College	University of Iceland
Scott Shigeoka	Music, MTVU award	At-Large, District of Columbia	Iceland Academy of the Arts
Julie Summers	Icelandic	At-Large, Washington	University of Iceland
U.S. scholars			
Janelle Knox-Hayes	International Relations	Georgia Inst. of Technology	University of Iceland
Daniel Shain	Biology	Rutgers University	University of Iceland
Kristofer Neslund	Accounting	Ashland University	University of Iceland

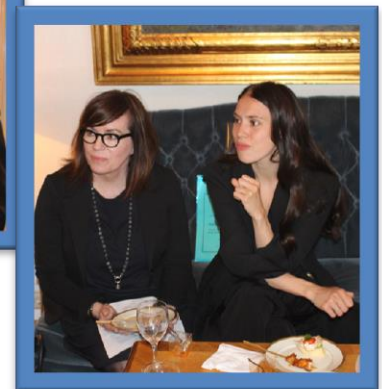
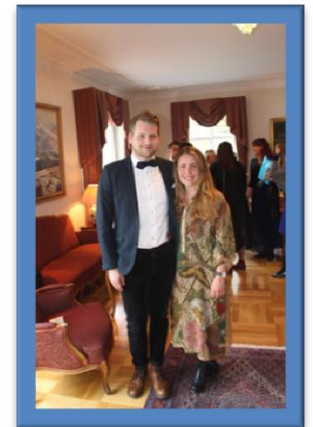


Icelandic grantees: supporting the local team, working at the Hobby-Eberly Telescope, and fieldwork in the Mojave Desert.

3. Summary of Grant-Supporting Activities

A. Events for Icelandic grantees

In spring 2015, two orientation meetings were held for grantees leaving for the U.S. for the 2015-2016 academic year, one in March and one in April. The Commission also held a reception for Icelandic grantees, co-hosted by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture at the Government Guest House on the 8th of June. The reception was attended by Icelandic grantees and their guests, the Minister for Education, Science and Culture, the U.S. Ambassador, members of the Fulbright Board, Commission staff and alumni representatives.



Icelandic grantees and family members enjoying themselves with Fulbright representatives at the Government Guest House

In the spring of 2015, seven Icelandic students participated in Fulbright enrichment seminars or workshops, where they had an opportunity to engage with other Fulbright fellows on important topics of the day. These seminars offer Fulbright fellows an opportunity to delve into particular themes, such as environmental initiatives for a sustainable future. Various additional local opportunities were offered to Icelandic grantees during the year.

Two Icelandic students participated in the Gateway orientation program sponsored by the U.S. State Department in August 2015. This five-day program, which is offered to first-year Fulbright foreign students upon their arrival in the U.S., provides an overview of the Fulbright program, its goals, student responsibilities, and specifics of U.S. academic and cultural life, as well as leadership training and networking opportunities. The opportunity to meet other Fulbright fellows from around the world is one of the most valuable elements of the Gateway experience. In FY 2015, students travelled to Gateway seminars in Florida and Nevada.

B. Events for American grantees

The Commission organizes a variety of events for U.S. grantees through its enrichment program, which was first introduced in FY2012. The program's monthly grantee events are tailored to give grantees an opportunity to explore new places, gain insight into Icelandic society and customs, and foster a sense of community among the grantees and between the grantees and the Commission. A member of the Fulbright Board often joins in grantee events, providing a welcome opportunity for Board members to get to know the grantees they have selected.

Towards the end of their stay, all U.S. students and scholars present their projects at special events hosted by the Commission. For Fulbright scholars in Iceland for the fall semester, an event is held in November/December. A larger event is held in the spring. In the past four years, this has established itself as an important tradition, both for the grantees themselves and for the Commission, the contracting parties, alumni, and other friends of Fulbright.

Towards the end of the fiscal year, in August/September 2014, the Commission welcomed a new group of U.S. grantees. Grantees participated in a half-day orientation session at the Commission in the beginning of September. Talks were given by the Commission Executive Director and



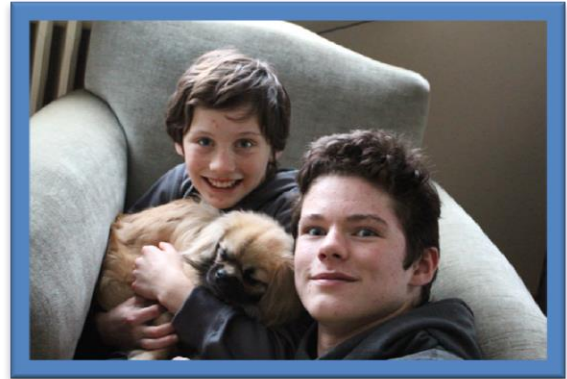
Getting into the holiday spirit at a Christmas concert

Adviser, U.S. Embassy Consular Officer and incoming Fulbright Board Member Matthew Horner, and Fulbright alumna Julie Summers. After the session, participants enjoyed a meal featuring Icelandic lamb and fish at a downtown restaurant.

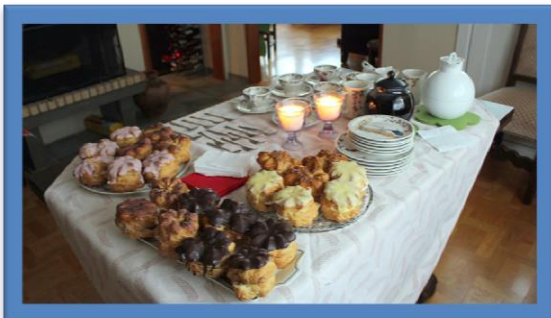
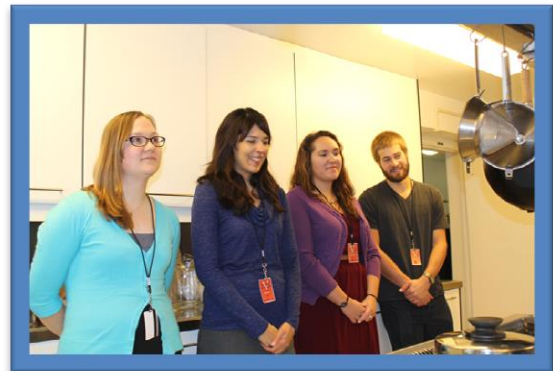
In addition to the grantee events, the ED meets with grantees at different times and grantees are invited to additional events at both the Commission and the U.S. Embassy.

Enrichment activities in FY2015:

October: Cooking class at the U.S. Embassy
November: Popular sports: Handball game
December: Christmas concert
Scholar presentation
January: Visit to Alþingi, the Parliament of Iceland
February: Bun Day celebration at the ED's home
March: Iceland Expo and café visit
April: Hellisheiði Power Plant, Geothermal Exhibition
May: Grantee presentation event
September: Orientation for incoming U.S. grantees



Accompanying family members joined us for Bun Day



U.S. grantees: handball enthusiasts, following an Icelandic cooking lesson, Bun Day spread, and scholar presentation

C. Fulbright at Arctic Circle Conference

Fulbright participated in the Arctic Circle Conference in Reykjavik, which took place from 31 October to 2 November 2014. In attendance were lead scholars for the Fulbright Arctic Initiative, Drs. Ross Virginia and Mike Sfraga; Steve Money from the U.S. State Department; Lawrence Mason from CIES; and Executive Directors from Fulbright Commissions in Sweden, Norway, Iceland, and Finland. The Commission hosted internal meetings for discussions on Fulbright's work in the Arctic. Petter Næss, ED of the



Fulbright Commission in Norway, chaired a Fulbright breakout session on increasing knowledge in the Arctic, with EDs Terhi Mölsa from Finland, Belinda Theriault from Iceland, and Eric Jönsson from Sweden as panelists, along with Lars Kullerud, President of the University of the Arctic, and Steve Money from the U.S. State Department. In addition, FAI lead scholars and the State Department introduced the Fulbright Arctic Initiative during a plenary session of the conference.

D. Agreement with the NSF



Shaking on the newly signed agreement

In January 2015, the Commission concluded an agreement with the National Science Foundation, signed by the Commission ED and Eric Saltzman, Section Head at NSF. The agreement set up a three-year pilot project under

which the Fulbright Commission and NSF will cooperate on a grants program for Arctic research in both the social and the natural sciences. This is the first time the NSF and a Fulbright Commission conclude this type of agreement. The NSF will provide funding, and the Fulbright Commission will provide multiple grants for Arctic research in Iceland by U.S. scholars and fellows. The permitted grant length ranges from three to 12 months. This agreement is a significant milestone in the work of the Commission, which views the NSF as an important partner.



Ambassador Haarde and Assistant Secretary of State Ryan Evan



State Department guests

E. Other events



i. U.S. alumnus and composer Nathan Hall visited Iceland in September. On this occasion the Fulbright Commission and U.S. Embassy co-hosted a concert at Harpa, where Nathan premiered a new piano piece, *24 Preludes*, performed by pianist Rose Lachman. Duo Harpverk performed another original piece of Nathan's, entitled *Jökulsárlón*.



ii. Although this event was organized not by the Commission but through a Fulbright-MtvU grant to Iceland, this report must highlight Saga Fest, an original music and arts festival conceptualized by Fulbright fellow Scott Shigeoka. The two-day festival focused on sustainability, community building, and transformation –



connecting

people to each other and to nature.

Saga Fest, which took place on the

farm Stokkseyrarsel in South Iceland, featured live music performances by 17 local and

international acts. Also, 27 artists from many different countries created deeply engaging art experiences. Events and activities ranged from workshops on skateboard design, meditation and yoga, shamanism, storytelling, free-form dance, puppet making, jam sessions, drum circles, and freestyle rapping.



"I had a very busy and productive NSF–Fulbright grant period in Iceland. My four major activities included teaching a graduate course on the Arctic in the University of Iceland's newly created West Nordic Studies master's program, and three research topics: Iceland's security/defense posture, Iceland's Arctic identity politics, and the relationship between U.S. soldiers and Icelandic women during WWII. Perhaps more importantly, I was able to create and sustain professional relationships for the first time with the University of Iceland, its research centers, and several faculty members involved with Arctic research."

Dr. Robert P. Wheelersburg, Professor of Anthropology, Elizabethtown College

4. Other Commission Activities

A. Communications

The Commission continued to prioritize communications with a wide variety of stakeholders, including alumni and current grantees, former Board members, universities and schools, sponsors and partners, prospective applicants and advisees, and relevant organizations. The 5th and 6th issues of the Commission newsletter were published in January and July 2015. The ED had an article published in the daily newspaper *Morgunblaðið* in January 2015 in connection with the agreement signed with the National Science Foundation to establish a grants program on Arctic research in Iceland. Facebook was the main focus of the Commission's social media outreach.

B. Outreach

Various outreach activities take place throughout the year. Also, in early fall each year, the ED makes special visits to all or most of the universities in Iceland, in connection with the upcoming application deadlines for core Fulbright grants. In August/September FY2015, the ED visited Bifröst University, the Agricultural University of Iceland, Hólar University, the University of Iceland, the Iceland Academy of the Arts, and Reykjavik University. During these visits, she gave talks on graduate education opportunities in the U.S. and on Fulbright grant opportunities, combining general outreach with advising activities. She also met with faculty to discuss opportunities for Icelandic scholars to conduct research in the U.S., as well as opportunities to host U.S. scholars.

The ED liaised with a number of partners over the year. These included Government and Parliament representatives, business people, and representatives of institutions of higher education in Iceland and the U.S. To name a few examples, Ambassador Geir Haarde visited the Commission before leaving to take up his new position in Washington, DC, and U.S. Ambassador Robert Barber visited the Commission for consultations soon after arriving in Iceland. The ED gave a presentation to a meeting of the Standing Committee of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region in May 2015, highlighting Fulbright activities in the Arctic and opportunities for cooperation.



Ambassador Barber visited the Commission soon after his arrival in Iceland to meet with the ED and Chairman of the Board

C. Other

The Commission worked on various new procedures and initiatives during the year to enhance efficiency and improve the grant experience. The Fulbright Buddy System was developed towards the end of FY2015. This is a new initiative to provide added assistance to U.S. grantees while they are in Iceland. Each grantee is paired with an Icelandic buddy drawn from the alumni pool. This buddy is charged with providing assistance and advice on all things Icelandic and a sympathetic ear, as well as some authentic experiences. A big thank you goes out to the alumni who took part in this pioneer project in the fall of 2015: Grétar Ívarsson (Fulbright 1981), Árni Geirsson (Fulbright 1984), Terry Lacy (Fulbright 1973), Davíð Björnsson (Fulbright 1982), Friðrik Ársælsson (Fulbright/Boas 2013), Nina Margrét Rolfsdóttir (Cobb 2012), Heiðar Ásberg Atlason (Cobb 2001), Íris Björk Hreinsdóttir (Cobb 2012).

The Commission attended meetings and submitted remarks to the Ministry of the Interior as it worked to develop a new draft law on foreigners in Iceland. Commission suggestions pertained to the status of U.S. Fulbright grantees and various immigration procedures. A new form was developed for universities to provide feedback to the Commission on U.S. scholars they have received through Fulbright.



Icelandic grantee engagement in the U.S.: At the University of North Texas Kristin Farmer Autism Center, Gateway Miami Fulbright orientation, and volunteering at the Potomac Watershed Cleanup Day during a Fulbright enrichment seminar

II. ADVISING ACTIVITIES

1. The advising center and advising services

A. General advising and outreach

The opening hours of the advising center remained unchanged in FY 2015, and the center was open on Tuesday mornings and afternoons and Thursday afternoons. Additional appointments were given outside opening hours as needed. Telephone and e-mail inquiries were answered on a daily basis, to the extent possible. The center welcomes individuals interested in both undergraduate and graduate studies and provides comprehensive one-on-one advising services for all fields and levels of university education.

The advising center maintains a substantial library of reference materials that students and scholars can use in-house, in addition to electronic databases. Furthermore, students can borrow preparation books for all tests that they must take when applying to U.S. schools, including TOEFL, SAT/ACT, GRE and GMAT. While the library intends to keep a supply of certain key reference books and guides, as well as a comprehensive range of test preparation books, its main emphasis is now on assisting students with online information.



Fulbright Adviser Randver talking with students
at College Day Reykjavik

The ED and the adviser have worked together to provide services for those contemplating graduate studies in the U.S., through speaking engagements, participation in fairs, and increased contact with appropriate staff at the universities. Speaking engagements to highlight Fulbright grant opportunities often also feature student advising, and vice versa. Thus all opportunities are used to create synergies between grant promotion and advising. The Fulbright adviser also provides services to students contemplating undergraduate studies in the U.S., on an individual and group basis.

The Fulbright EducationUSA adviser made three visits to upper secondary schools during FY2015, including to Borgarholt College, Ármúli Comprehensive College and the Commercial College. The adviser also took part in three international days at the University of Iceland and Reykjavik University, with a Fulbright/EducationUSA table. In addition to annual visits made to each university, the ED also gave talks on graduate studies upon request by individual universities.

B. College Day Reykjavik



Students attend a lecture at College Day Reykjavik

FY2015 saw the continuation of our collaboration with the Scandinavian College Fair – Nordic Tour. This event was co-organized by the College Council and the Commission, with support from the U.S. Embassy. Reykjavik University provided an excellent venue for this year's fair, and AMÍS generously funded a reception in honor of the U.S. college representatives who attended. Around 300 participants attended the fair. Attendees had the opportunity to meet with representatives of 19

U.S. universities and listen to a wide variety of expert lectures on topics, including Icelandic student loans for U.S. study, acquiring a student visa, how to write a winning college application, and tips for applying to graduate school. University representatives were impressed with the high quality of students who attended the fair.

C. Other advising activities

The Commission also participated in various interactive online advising events organized by EducationUSA, such as online chat sessions, web conferences, and fairs during FY2015. Such events give students the opportunity to chat with representatives from U.S. colleges and universities and attend interactive online lectures on studies in the U.S.

"I am so pleased that I took advantage of the opportunity to attend a Fulbright Gateway Orientation in Miami. This five-day program, organized by Miami Dade College, was packed with lectures, visits and interactions that helped prepare us for academic and social life in the U.S. Participants included 70 Fulbright fellows of 42 nationalities. What a great way to start off my Fulbright year and make new friends from around the world.

Within a couple of weeks of arriving at the university following the Gateway Program, I had the honor of being elected as a Student Senator for masters' students at the Department of Arts & Humanities at the Teacher's College, a unique opportunity to make a difference and gain insight into the working of the U.S. education system. My U.S. university experience is surpassing my expectations."

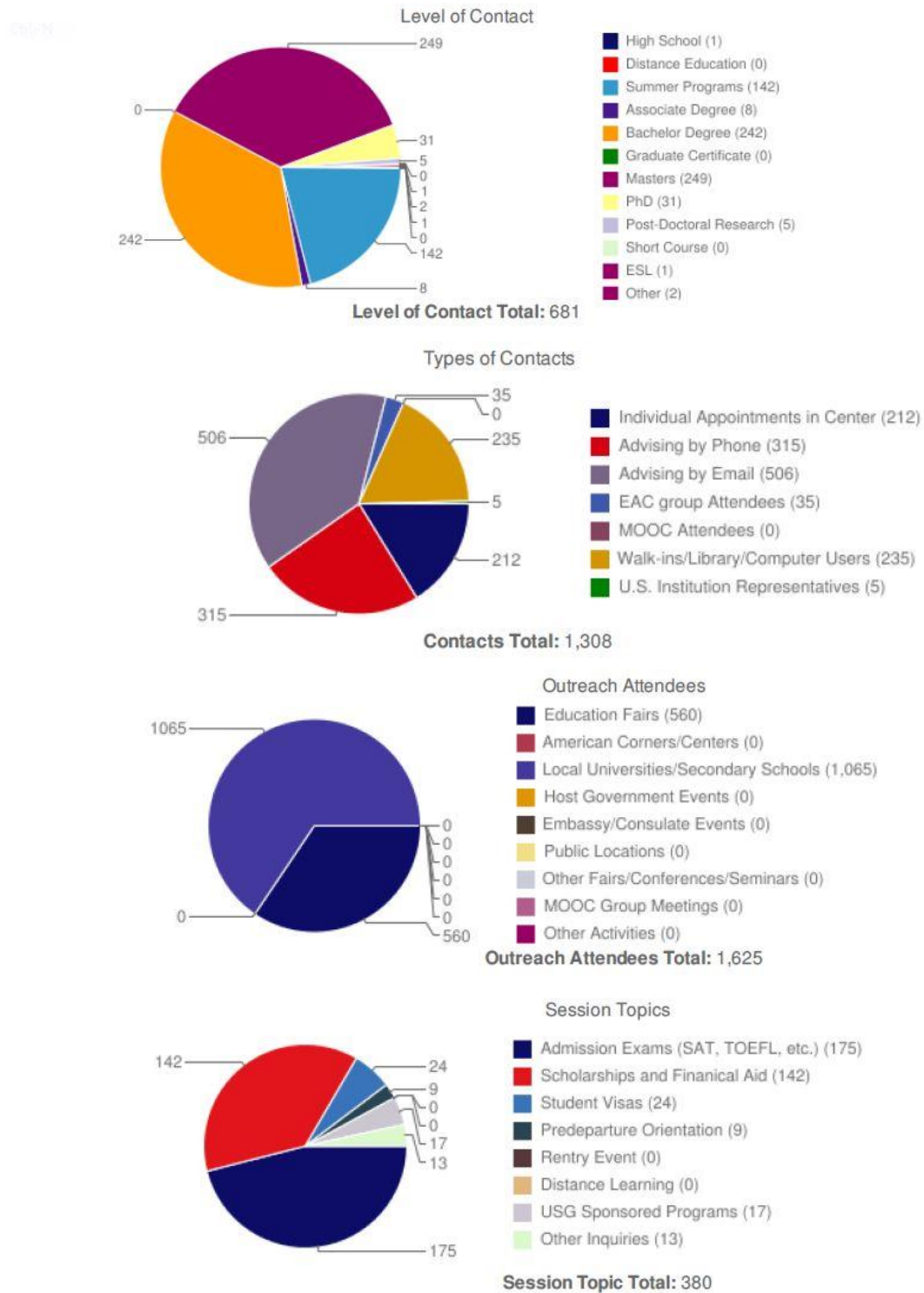
Þorleifur Örn Gunnarsson, Fulbright fellow, Columbia University, Master's Program in Education

**Fulbright Commission partner
and sponsor in FY2015:**

Vesturgarður ehf.

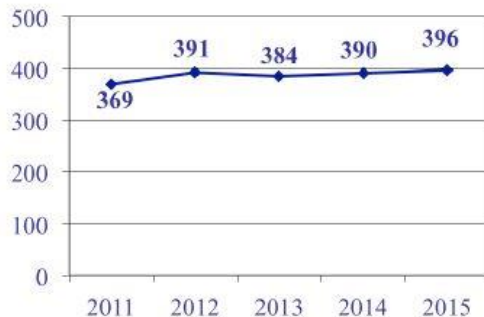
2. Advising statistics

A. Advising Center FY2015

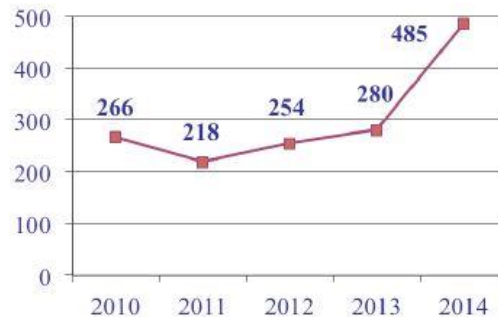


B. EducationUSA statistics on Iceland 2015

ICELANDIC STUDENTS IN THE U.S.



U.S. STUDENTS IN ICELAND



ICELANDIC STUDENTS IN THE U.S.

Year	# of Students
2010/2011 Academic Year	369
2014/2015 Academic Year	396
5-Year % Change	+7.3%

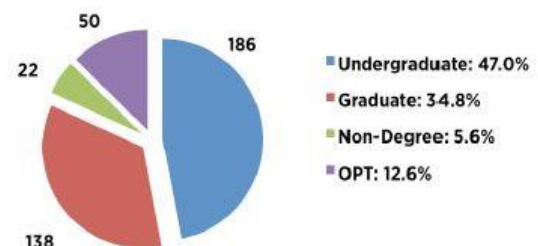
U.S. STUDY ABROAD IN ICELAND

Year	# of Students
2012/2013 Academic Year	280
2013/2014 Academic Year	485
1-Year % Change	+73.2%

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Type of Institution	% of Students
4-Year Institutions	90.2%
2-year Community Colleges	9.8%

ICELANDIC STUDENTS BY LEVEL



STUDENTS BY TYPE OF INSTITUTION

Level of Study	% at Public Institutions	% at Private Institutions
Undergraduate	54.6%	45.4%
Graduate	45.3%	54.7%

IMPORTANT TRENDS AND HIGHLIGHTS

- The U.S. is the 2nd study abroad destination for Icelandic students following Denmark. (Source: UNESCO 2013)
- Between 2013/14 and 2014/15 the number of Icelandic students in the U.S. grew by 1.5%.
- Iceland has the highest proportion of graduate students in the U.S. of any of the Nordic countries.
- Columbia University, the New School, Academy of Art University, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, and New York University were the top host institutions of Icelandic students in the U.S. during 2014/15 academic year.

Data Source: 2015 Open Doors® Report on International Educational Exchange, published by the Institute of International Education supported by a grant from the Department of State's Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs

Learn more about the EducationUSA Advising Center in Iceland: www.educationusa.state.gov
 Learn more about Open Doors: <http://www.iie.org/en/Research-and-Publications/Open-Doors>

III. ALUMNI ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES

The Fulbright Alumni Association in Iceland (FFSI) is an important partner of the Fulbright Commission. Founded in 2008, the Association has from the outset played an active role in fostering a sense of community among grant recipients. Alumni Board meetings are generally held at the Commission offices, with Commission and U.S. Embassy participation.

Alumni activities in FY 2015 included the following events:

- The Alumni Association hosted its annual Thanksgiving fundraising dinner in November 2014. Fulbright alumnus Dr. Vilhjálmur Egilsson, Rector of Bifröst University, was the keynote speaker. A raffle was held to raise money for Fulbright, with many Icelandic companies donating prizes.
- The annual meeting was held in January at the Commission, where Elinóra Inga Sigurðardóttir, Fulbright fellow 1992 at the University of Minnesota Summer Geology Program, was elected Chairman for 2015. Other members of the alumni board for 2015 were elected: Björgvin Sigurðsson, Guðmundur Ingi Guðbrandsson, Íris Björk Hreinsdóttir, Pétur Þorsteinsson, Ragnhildur Sigurðardóttir, and Sigríður Kristjánsdóttir.
- Two events were held under the Alumni Talk Series:
 - Dr. Bryndís Brandsdóttir, Fulbright scholar 1992, visiting researcher at Columbia University, PhD in geophysics and senior research scientist at the Institute of Earth Sciences, delivered a lecture about volcanic and seismic activity in Iceland.
 - Dr. Margrét Jónsdóttir Njarðvík, Fulbright fellow 1992, PhD in Spanish literature from Princeton University, gave a talk entitled “How to create a niche on the market, combining your academic skills with your passion”.

In addition to these events, Alumni Board members participate in a number of Commission and Embassy activities each year.



Alumni Thanksgiving, November 2014

IV. BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF

1. Fulbright Board of Directors

Honorary Co-Chairs:

Illugi Gunnarsson, Minister of Education and Culture

Robert C. Barber, U.S. Ambassador to Iceland (from February 2015)

U.S. Board members:

Brian Beckmann **Chairman of the Board**, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Embassy

Marcy Brown **Treasurer**, Consular Officer, U.S. Embassy

Anna Benassi Translator and musician

Paula Gould CMO, GreenQloud

Alternate:

Dr. Albert Vernon Smith PhD biology, Director of Statistical Genetics, Icelandic Heart Association, Assistant Professor, University of Iceland

Icelandic Board members:

Dr. Margrét Jónsdóttir Njarðvík **Vice-Chairman of the Board**, PhD in Spanish language, Fulbright Student Program alumna, CEO of Mundo

Jóhannes Þórðarson M.Arch, partner at Gláma Kím Architects and former Dean, Department of Design and Architecture, Iceland Academy of the Arts

Dr. Friðrika Harðardóttir PhD immunology, Director, International Office, University of Iceland

Dr. Haraldur Bernharðsson Associate Professor in Medieval Studies, University of Iceland

Alternate:

Ríkarður Ríkarðsson M.Sc. electrical engineering, Director of Business Development, Landsvirkjun National Power Company



Fulbright Board members: attending the reception for outgoing Icelandic grantees, the Chair and Vice-Chair with the Chairman of the Alumni Association and the ED, the December Board meeting and Albert manning the grill at an informal get-together.

The Board of Directors has important responsibilities in connection with carrying out the goals of the bilateral agreement between Iceland and the U.S. and realizing long-term program objectives. A major responsibility of the Board involves selecting grant recipients, which includes reading grant applications and interviewing candidates. In addition, the Board oversees the work of the Commission and members participate in Commission activities. The Board works closely with the ED. Individual Board members, who volunteer their time and expertise, are instrumental in achieving the goals of the Commission. The Board met five times during FY2015: in October, November, December, February, and April. Between meetings, consultations between the ED and the Board took place as necessary.

Warm thanks go to Marcy Brown, who left the Board at the end of FY2015. She was very helpful during her years on the Board, especially in her capacity as Treasurer.

“Without the help of a Fulbright grant, I would not have been able to visit the University of California, Berkeley, last year. My visit initiated a very fruitful collaboration with the research group of Professor Edward Lee at Berkeley. I am now closely involved in supervising one of his PhD students working on Internet of Things (IoT) applications, and we have recently submitted a scientific paper on that work to an international conference being held in Iceland. We are also collaborating on a project on adaptive systems, together with PhD students from both sides. The latter project will potentially lead to a wide spectrum of applications and future collaborations. I will visit UC Berkeley again in April. I am very excited about the collaboration and the new fields of research that are opened to me.”

Dr. Marjan Sirjani, Professor of Computer Science, Reykjavik University

2. Fulbright Commission Staff

The Commission staff consists of the Executive Director and an adviser/administrative officer. The adviser held a 70% position during the fiscal year due to budgetary constraints. The adviser/admin position was held by three temporary employees during FY2015, Tatiana Dimitrova, who filled the position from October to December 2014, María Helga Guðmundsdóttir, who stepped in for three months at the beginning of 2015, and Randver Kári Randversson who came in on a one-year contract in the spring of 2015.

It should be noted that the Commission's goal is to return the advisor's post to a full-time, permanent position. This will be necessary if the Commission is to continue to provide an adequate level of service and fulfill its commitments vis-à-vis the contracting parties.

Conferences, meetings, and training

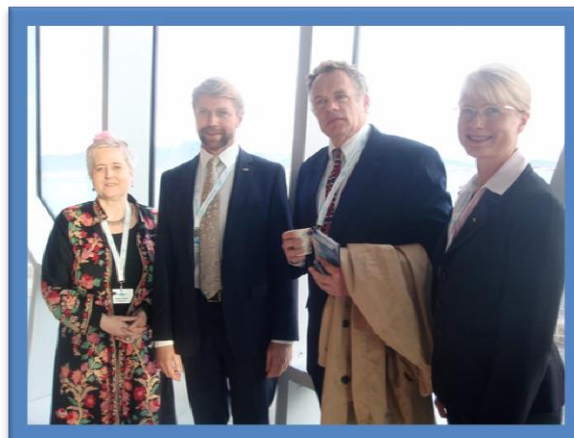


In April the ED attended a meeting of European Fulbright Executive Directors in Lisbon. The meeting centered on various administrative and budgetary issues, as well as strategic discussions with the U.S. State Department.

The ED also attended the annual NAFSA



conference, which was held in Boston in late May. In addition to the conference itself, a number of Fulbright meetings took place. These were attended by EDs from around the world, IIE and CIES staff, State Department representatives, FSB Board members, and additional partners. EDs were also provided with various networking opportunities during the conference.



The Commission welcomed Nordic EDs to Arctic Circle

V. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Below is the Financial Statement for FY2015, including a Statement by the Executive Director, Auditor's Report, Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Status of Funds Report, and Notes to the Financial Statements. The Statement is prepared by the Commission's accountant and Executive Director and audited by the Icelandic National Audit Office (INAO).

INAO is an independent body operating under the auspices of the Icelandic Parliament, Alþingi. The Office is a part of the legislative branch and its monitoring of the executive branch. Its main role is to audit the State accounts and the financial statements of State bodies and to monitor and promote improvements in the financial management of the State and in the use of public funds. The Office's remit covers all ministries, agencies and other State bodies, including public companies in which the State has majority holding, and all budgetary chapters. The Office is also authorized to audit private companies, associations, non-profit organizations, or any other bodies that receive Government funds or guarantees.

The National Audit Act stipulates that the Office shall have access to all data important for the performance of its tasks. It may call for financial and performance-related data from all State bodies. It is also permitted access to original documents and reports prepared in relation to invoices issued to the Government, in order to verify the content of the invoices and the Treasury's payment obligations. Furthermore, the Office may request reports on the disposal of grants and other contributions from Government funds, and assess whether such payments have achieved the intended results.

The legal status, role, and mandate of the INAO are laid down in the National Audit Act of 1997. The Office consults the standards and guidelines of the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI), the standards of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), and the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), in so far as these are applicable to State auditing.

The Presidential Committee of Alþingi appoints the Auditor General for a period of six years, and the Auditor General employs the staff. The staff members must be completely independent of the ministries and organizations they audit.

ICELAND - UNITED STATES
EDUCATIONAL COMMISSION

Financial Statement and Balance Sheet
for the Fiscal Year 2014 - 2015 (FY 2015)

Amounts are in ISK

April 2016

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Statement by the Executive Director

In FY2015, the Icelandic government contribution, received from the Ministry of Education, amounted to 14.5 million ISK, the same as the previous fiscal year. In addition, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs provided 2.550.000 ISK. The US government monetary contribution remained steady at 213,374 USD. Both governments provide additional funding or in-kind contributions, which when included, bring the government funding ratio to 68% US and 32% Icelandic. This does not include various US government expenditures which are not part of the Commission's annual accounts.

Grant commitments made in one year, may be paid out in the same fiscal year or they may be partially or wholly paid in the next fiscal year. For FY2015, the Commission awarded 7 grants to Icelandic graduate students, 3 Fulbright grants and 1 joint Fulbright-ÁMI grant to US students and 6 grants to US scholars. In addition, 1 Icelandic scholar received an award to participate in the Fulbright Arctic Initiative, 1 Icelandic student took part in a summer institute and 1 Icelandic student received the Cobb Family Fellowship.

In FY2014, the Commission awarded 7 Fulbright grants to Icelandic graduate students, 3 Fulbright grants and 1 joint Fulbright-ÁMI grant to US students, 2 grants to Icelandic scholars and 3 grants to US scholars. In addition 2 Icelandic student received Boas awards, and 1 took part in a summer institute.

The Commission accounts are based on cash accounting, and thus show only funds received and dispersed through the Commission accounts during the fiscal year in question. Receivables and debt are not shown, but these are generally roughly in balance. Revenue of the fiscal year from 1 October 2014 to 30 September 2015 amounted to roughly 53,5 million ISK, with expenditures at approximately 55.5 million ISK. Taking into account interest and exchange rate revenue, the deficit is approximately half a million ISK, which is covered by funds on hand from the previous year. Cash assets are for the most part already obligated.

This year we continue to develop the financial statement to include non-cash contributions, both governmental and non-governmental. For FY2015 this includes an Icelandic government contribution through the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic language studies, the Cobb Family Fellowship and other in-kind contributions from the public and private sectors. This allows the financial statement to better reflect actual financial value. This is done in consultation with the State Auditor and only contributions that are verifiable and quantifiable are included.

However, there are still important contributions, which are not part of the financial statement. These substantial awards are part of the Commission's grant programs, but are funded directly through Fulbright cooperating agencies and other partners. These non-cash contributions provide substantial additional value to the grants program, which is not captured in the annual accounts. It is important to provide information on these contributions, to give a more accurate picture of the Commission's value. Below is a list of non-cash contributions not included in the annual accounts, limited to direct contributions that are quantifiable. **This amounts to approximately 2 million ISK in grant and grant-supporting funds, which is not part of the income statement.** The figures below are documented, but are not part of the audit, and are published under the responsibility of the ED.

Non-cash contributions not included in the financial statement	USD
Gateway seminars paid by IIE	3.039
Fulbright enrichment seminars paid by IIE	12.001
Total quantifiable non-cash contributions not included in annual accounts	15.040

These figures do not include various additional indirect benefits such as additional grants and scholarships received by students, which can be partly attributed to their Fulbright status, and amount to close to an **additional 142.000 USD.**

As Executive Director of the Fulbright Commission in Iceland, I hereby confirm and accept the financial statements for FY2015.



Auditor's report

To the board of the Iceland - United States Educational Commission

I have audited the accompanying general purpose financial statements of The Iceland - United States Educational Commission, as of and for the financial year ended September 30th 2015, as listed in the table of contents. This financial statement is the responsibility of the management. My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit.

I conducted my audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. These standards require that I plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. I believe that my audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In my opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Iceland - United States Educational Commission, at September 30 2014, and the results of its operations and the cash flows of its proprietary fund types for the year then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles in Iceland.

National Audit Office, 29 April 2016



Sveinn Arason,
Auditor general.

Iceland - United States Educational Commission

INCOME STATEMENT

October 1 2014 - September 30 2015

	FY 2015 ISK	FY 2014 ISK
Revenues		
Allocation, US government.....	27.346.565	27.263.114
Allocation, Icelandic government.....	14.500.000	14.500.000
Other contributions, US government.....	9.002.920	2.763.384
Other contributions, Icelandic government.....	2.550.000	2.421.400
Other contributions.....	159.515	788.150
Total revenues	53.559.000	47.736.048
Expenditures		
Program costs, Scholar program.....	15.112.661	4.952.533
Program costs, Student program.....	18.095.934	19.873.918
Program costs, Other program.....	167.779	340.271
Salary and salary related costs.....	14.486.678	13.603.488
Rent and utilities.....	3.204.161	3.122.980
Services.....	1.114.587	1.120.200
Supplies.....	293.016	353.090
Travel, training and transport	1.694.915	783.119
Communication and PR.....	540.297	319.016
Grant supporting activities.....	980.630	1.154.670
Total expenditures	55.690.658	45.623.285
Income (deficit) before interest expense/revenue	(2.131.658)	2.112.763
Interest expense/revenue.....	66.070	122.080
Exchange rate profit/(loss).....	1.597.336	(726.136)
(Loss)/Income for the year	(468.252)	1.508.707

NON-CASH CONTRIBUTIONS

October 1 2014 - September 30 2015

	ISK	ISK
Grant and grant-supporting		
Government grant for Icelandic studies, Árnastofnun.....	1.160.000	1.160.000
Icelandic government non-cash contributions.....	227.647	0
Host institution expenses attributable to US scholars.....	535.018	0
US Embassy contributions.....	250.176	250.788
Cobb Family Fellowship.....	1.954.500	0
Total non-cash grant and grant-supporting contributions	4.127.341	1.410.788
Administrative		
Rent discount.....	464.866	451.881
Auditing services	480.000	480.000
Total non-cash administrative contributions	944.866	931.881
Total non-cash contributions	5.072.207	2.342.669

Iceland - United States Educational Commission

BALANCE SHEET

September 30 2015

	FY 2015 ISK	FY 2014 ISK
Assets		
Cash (USD)	7.007.855	6.954.332
Cash (ISK).....	4.120.228	4.599.055
	<u>11.128.083</u>	<u>11.553.387</u>
 Trust account		
Alumni - Trust account.....	<u>367.164</u>	<u>49.264</u>
 Total Assets	<u><u>11.495.247</u></u>	<u><u>11.602.651</u></u>
 Liabilities		
Income-tax deduction	278.185	273.883
Pension fund deduction.....	<u>237.420</u>	<u>198.774</u>
	<u>515.605</u>	<u>472.657</u>
 Trust account		
Alumni - Trust account.....	<u>367.164</u>	<u>49.264</u>
 Equity		
Funds on hand October 1.....	11.080.730	9.572.023
Income for the year.....	<u>(468.252)</u>	<u>1.508.707</u>
Funds on hand September 30.....	<u>10.612.478</u>	<u>11.080.730</u>
 Total Liabilities and Equity	<u><u>11.495.247</u></u>	<u><u>11.602.651</u></u>

Iceland - United States Educational Commission

STATUS OF FUNDS REPORT

October 1 2014 - September 30 2015

		FY 2015 ISK
1.	FUNDS ON HAND OCTOBER 1 2014.....	11.553.387
	-Current liabilities	<u>-472.657</u>
		11.080.730
2.	RECEIPTS: CURRENT FISCAL YEAR	
	1. Received from U.S. Mission.....	36.349.485
	2. Host Government Contribution.....	17.050.000
	3. Other Contributions.....	159.515
	5. Interests on Deposits.....	66.070
	6. Exchange fluctuation.....	<u>1.597.336</u>
		55.222.406
3.	DISBURSEMENT: CURRENT FISCAL YEAR	
	1. Administration.....	14.650.200
	2. Counseling.....	6.683.454
	3. Grant supporting activities.....	980.630
	4. Program.....	<u>33.376.374</u>
		55.690.658
4.	FUNDS ON HAND SEPTEMBER 30 2015.....	11.128.083
	-Current liabilities.....	<u>-515.605</u>
		10.612.478

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Accounting records have been kept according to Icelandic law and the ECA Fulbright Manual for Bi-national Commissions and Foundations.
2. The accounts are based on cash accounting.
3. The bank balances as per statements from Íslandsbanki hf., accounts no. 560169 and 405300, have been verified at September 30 2015 as ISK 1.802.454 and ISK 2.317.774, taking into account payments at the end of the fiscal year.
4. A dollar account no. 102882 in Íslandsbanki hf. has been verified as at September 30 2015 USD 55.028,31, or ISK 7.007.855 (exchange rate booked at daily rate of 127,35).
5. There is no petty cash.
6. The Icelandic government contribution for 2015, of 14,5 million ISK, was paid in two installments, early year and summer. The US government contribution for FY2014 was used in FY2015.
7. Other US government contributions include funding for the Fulbright Arctic Initiative, an allocation from EducationUSA, and funding for the MtvU grant.
8. Other Icelandic government contribution is the Fulbright MFA Arctic Scholar grant.
9. Other contribution is a small donation.
10. Alumni - Trust account: This account is kept in trust for the Alumni Association. The funds do not belong to the Fulbright Commission.
11. Awards granted in one fiscal year are in some cases paid out the same year, in other cases they are paid out in part or in full in the next fiscal year.

US Scholars	10.337.301
Icelandic Scholars	4.775.360
US Students	6.487.334
Icelandic students	11.608.600
Other grant programs	167.779
12. Fulbright-MFA Arctic Scholar fund disbursements

Grant payments	1.165.530
Grant supporting	14.859
Admin costs	85.863
Total expenditures	1.312.478

The balance of MFA funds at end of FY2015 is 3.386.016 ISK.
13. Fulbright-NSF Arctic Research fund disbursements

Grant payments	1.364.220
Grant supporting	12.027
Admin costs	96.337
Total expenditures	1.472.584

Total NSF disbursements amount to approximately 11,505 USD.
14. Although not part of the annual accounts, an inventory of non-expendable property is maintained by the Commission and has been updated for FY2015. Current value is 1.245.833 ISK.
15. Non-expendable property is insured for ISK 6.720.500 (fire, burglary, etc.) from July 1 2015 to June 30 2016.
16. The bonding company, Sjóvá - Almennar tryggingar hf. confirms that Ms. Belinda Theriault has been bonded to the amount of USD 25.000. This insurance is valid for the period from July 1 to June 30 and renewed annually.

Notes to the Financial Statements

17. Total cash contributions from the US government amount to 36.349.485 ISK, while the Icelandic government contributions amount to 17.050.000 ISK, or a ratio of 68% to 32%. When non-cash contributions on the balance sheet are included, the government allocation ratio is 66% US to 34% Icelandic.
18. Ratio of administrative costs to grant costs, including non-cash expenditures shown in the income statement.

	IKR.	%
Grants and grant supporting activities	38.484.345	63%
Administrative costs	22.278.520	37%
Total costs	<u>60.762.865</u>	<u>100%</u>

