



Study of the U.S. Institutes (SUSIs) for Student Leaders

PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND DESCRIPTION

1. The 2024 Study of the U.S. Institute for Student Leaders is a five-week program conducted in English taking place at the Institute for Training and Development (ITD) in Amherst, Massachusetts from January 13 to February 17, 2024.

2. Study of the U.S. Institutes (SUSIs) for Student Leaders are intensive short-term academic programs whose purpose is to provide groups of undergraduate student leaders with a deeper understanding of the United States while simultaneously enhancing their leadership skills. The Institutes consist of a four-week academic residency with a balanced series of seminar discussions, readings, group presentations, and lectures. Site visits, leadership development, cultural activities, and community service complement the coursework and academic sessions. If conditions allow, the Institutes will include a one-week integrated study tour in the United States. Note that if the program must take place virtually, participants will engage in similar activities but online from their home countries.

3. The Study of the U.S. Branch has sponsored Student Leader Institutes since 2003. This Institute is one of five under the umbrella of SUSIs for Student Leaders the Western Hemisphere administered by the Institute for Training and Development (ITD) and one of two to be implemented in winter 2024. This is one of two SUSIs for Student Leaders from the Western Hemisphere under the theme of Entrepreneurship and Economic Development.

4. The SUSI on Entrepreneurship and Economic Development will provide participants with an overview of principles of entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship by reviewing the development, history, challenges, and successes of U.S. enterprises, business leadership and women's economic empowerment, in the United States and globally. Topics may include, but are not limited to, social capital strategies for sustainable economic development, financial literacy, banking, microfinance, organizational development and management, innovation, emerging markets and risk analysis, strategic business planning, corporate social responsibility, and minorities in entrepreneurship. Specific program elements will include visits to community development organizations, economic development centers, a local makerspace, or a courthouse. Sessions cover debate techniques, the business model canvas, and art activism. The program includes travel to Boston and New York City and a study tour to Tucson, Arizona. Community service might include engagement at a food pantry.

CANDIDATE DESCRIPTION AND QUALIFICATIONS

5. Participants are expected to be highly motivated first through third year undergraduate students from colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher education, who demonstrate leadership through academic work, community involvement, and extracurricular activities. Their fields of study will be varied and may include the sciences, social sciences, humanities, education, business, and other professional fields. Emphasis should be made on recruiting participants from historically underserved and disadvantaged groups, including women, minority communities, Afro-Latino and indigenous communities, and individuals with disabilities, and who have little or no international experience. When possible, the SUSI team requests that posts nominate candidates from a diverse group of universities and higher education institutions. Please see paragraph 25 for more information on the number of nominations that may be submitted.

6. Candidates nominated for this program will:

- demonstrate English language proficiency (speaking, reading, writing, listening);
- demonstrate interest in the topic of Entrepreneurship and Economic Development;
- be between 18 and 25 years of age;
- have at least one semester left of their undergraduate studies, and be committed to returning to their home universities following completion of the program;
- demonstrate strong leadership qualities and potential in their university and community activities;

- indicate a serious interest in learning about the United States;
- have a sustained high level of academic achievement, as indicated by grades, awards, and teacher recommendations;
- demonstrate commitment to community service and extracurricular university activities;
- have little or no prior study or travel experience in the United States or elsewhere outside of their home country;
- be mature, responsible, independent, confident, open-minded, tolerant, thoughtful, and inquisitive;
- be willing and able to fully participate in an intensive academic program, community service, and educational travel; and
- be comfortable with campus life, prepared to share living accommodations, and able to adjust to cultural and social practices different from those of their home country.

OTHER ESSENTIAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

7. Program Funding: Through an award to ITD, ECA will cover all participant costs, including program administration; international and visa travel, travel allowances, domestic travel and ground transportation; book, cultural, mailing and incidental allowances; and housing and subsistence as well as arrange and pay for participants' international and visa travel costs and travel allowances within set limits and in coordination with posts. If the program is conducted virtually, ECA will work with ITD to provide a technology stipend to all participants.

8. Program Requirements and Restrictions: Candidates should be made aware that they are applying for an intensive and rigorous academic Institute and are expected to fully participate in all aspects of the program. Participants must attend all lectures, participate in all required organized activities, and complete all assignments. Due to the intensive nature of the program, participants should not expect to fulfill professional or academic obligations, including remote work for jobs or internships, classwork, or examinations for their home university, while in the United States. Doing so will count as an unexcused absence from program activities. Family members and/or friends may not accompany or join participants for any part of the program. Please make these requirements clear to all nominees.

9. English Language Ability: English Language knowledge and/or proficiency are required to participate in this program. All candidates must be proficient in English so that they can actively participate in the academic program. Therefore, candidate interviews must be conducted in English. Host institutions will consider the varying levels of participants' comprehension and speaking ability and will prepare lectures and discussions that meet the highest academic standards while using language appropriate for students where English is their second or third language.

10. Housing and Meal Arrangements: Housing will be in shared or single university dorms on campus or full-service hotels within walking distance of most classroom activities. Male and female participants will be housed in separate quarters. In addition to regular group meals and a university meal plan, participants may have access to a kitchen to cook some meals on their own. It is important that nominees are aware of these arrangements and that they are comfortable with such accommodations.

11. Special Accommodations: Care will be taken to ensure that any special requirements regarding diet, daily worship, housing, and medical care are satisfied. Special accommodations will be made available to the greatest extent possible. Should a participant need to quarantine due to health and safety concerns, accommodations will follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and host institution guidelines.

12. Health Benefits: All participants will receive the Department of State's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) health benefit during the U.S.-based in-person component, which provides coverage of up to \$100,000 with a \$25 co-pay per medical visit and a \$75 co-pay per emergency room visit, for the duration of the program. Pre-existing conditions may be covered up to \$100,000, subject to policy exclusions and limitations. Information on the health benefit program may be found online at <https://www.sevencorners.com/gov/usdos>.

13. Travel Policy: Participants are not allowed to arrive in the United States prior to the start date of the SUSI or remain in the United States after the end date. Similarly, participants will not be permitted to leave

the SUSI to visit relatives or friends while in the United States. If a relative or friend wishes to visit a participant, it will be considered on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the ECA program officer and the host institution. Participants are required to return to their home countries immediately following the end of the Institute.

14. Grounds for Program Dismissal: Violations of program rules, host institution rules, or local, state, or federal laws can be grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. It is important that these requirements and restrictions be made clear to all candidates before nominations are submitted.

15. Virtual Program Contingency: Should health, safety, and travel conditions pose significant challenges to the program, the SUSIs will pivot to a virtual format. The virtual program will consist of a minimum of 36 hours of required programming and will be a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning. To the extent possible, the virtual programming will include lectures, small group discussions, videos, readings, panels, site visits, assignments, and individual and group activities. Participants will be required to fully participate in the entire virtual program from their location.

16. Connectivity: Should the program need to pivot to a virtual format, participants would need access to a computer and a stable internet connection. If a participant does not have access to these two items, ITD will work with the participant and post to facilitate access. Participants would be expected to actively engage in all program activities, and therefore, they should immediately notify ITD and post of any issues with their online access during the duration of the program as well as any difficulties affecting their participation.