



G | M | F The German Marshall Fund
of the United States
STRENGTHENING TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION

**YOUNG TRANSATLANTIC INNOVATION LEADERS INITIATIVE FELLOWSHIP (YTILI)
APPLICATION DEADLINE: 5pm EST, Friday, March 2, 2018**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ELIGIBILITY

- *Who is eligible to apply?* Entrepreneurs and innovators between the ages of 24-35 with citizenship and legal permanent residence in any of the 45 participating countries are eligible to apply for the fellowship. Applicants should currently be involved in founding or scaling a commercial or social venture. The participating countries include: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, and United Kingdom.
- *I am currently 35 years old. Am I eligible?* Yes, if you were 35 by January 29, 2018, which was the opening date of the application, then you are eligible to apply. **Only applicants between the ages of 24-35 by January 29, 2018 are eligible to participate in the fellowship program.**
- *Do I have to be a founder or can I work at a start-up?* Founders will get the most out of the YTILI experience and the fellowship deliverables are oriented towards supporting ventures already founded and currently scaling. Applicants who are working at a start-up can apply, but should provide thoughtful responses to the application questions about how the YTILI experience will benefit their work.
- *Do you require that the two years of professional experience be at the same company?* No, your experience can be with multiple organizations and spread over the course of your career. It is important that you have at least two years of total experience in working at a start-up, including founding a venture.
- *What do I need to know about the visa process for the program?* The YTILI program is an exchange visitor program sponsored by the German Marshall Fund of the United States and is funded by the U.S. Department of State. In order to arrive in the U.S. for the YTILI program you will need a J-1 Visa. This J-1 Visa will only be valid for the duration of the YTILI 2018 program. As the YTILI program is funded by the government of U.S., you will be subject to the two-year home-country foreign residency requirement. You must return to your country of last permanent residence for at least two years, cumulatively, at the end of your exchange visitor program. You are not prohibited from traveling to the United States or conducting business in the United States but may not benefit from certain employment-based or family-based visas until the foreign residency requirement is satisfied. If you are unable to return to your country of last permanent residence to fulfill the two-year requirement, you must obtain a waiver approved by the Department of Homeland Security prior to changing status in the United States or being issued a visa in certain categories for travel to the United States. Please read through the U.S. Department of State's J-1 Visa Common Questions here: <https://j1visa.state.gov/participants/common-questions/>.
- *I have participated in a previous exchange program sponsored by an organization in the U.S. Am I eligible to participate as a YTILI Fellow?* When you agree to participate in the YTILI program you will be issued a J-1 Exchange Visitor Program Visa that will cover the duration of your U.S. experience. If you already have a valid J-1 Visa for another program, you will not be able to participate in the YTILI program as you cannot have two valid J-1 Visas at the same time. Having another class of visa for the U.S. such as a B1 or B2 Tourist visa does not conflict with obtaining a J-1 Visa for the YTILI program.

APPLICATION & PROGRAM QUESTIONS

- *What is the application process and selection timeline?* Applicants are asked to complete an eligibility quiz before starting the application. This will determine if you meet the eligibility criteria of the program. Eligible applicants will be given access to the complete fellowship application. You may start the application and complete it at a later time; however, we encourage you to complete the application in one sitting. Semi-finalists will be asked to interview with U.S. embassy staff at the U.S. embassy or consulate in their current resident countries between the dates of March 19-30, 2018. Finalists will be selected in early April 2018.

- *When will I be notified of my application status?* Applicants who have submitted a complete application will be notified of their application status in early March 2018.
- *What is covered as part of my fellowship experience?* If selected as a fellow, the program will cover J-1 Visa support, round-trip air travel from fellow's current city of residence to Lisbon, Portugal for the Opening Convening on June 4-7, 2018; round trip air travel from the fellow's current city of residence to the United States for activities during October 14-21, 2018 for the one-week professional placement in a U.S. city, as well as the Washington, DC final programming experience on October 21-24, 2018; online platform and related trainings; accommodations, meals, and local transportation for events in Portugal and the U.S. related to the program, and accident and sickness insurance.
- *Does the application have to be completed in English?* Yes, all application questions must be completed in English. All required attachments, including reference letters, must also be completed in English. Applicants must be proficient in the English language, as all fellowship experience activities will be conducted in English.
- *I traveled to the U.S. a long time ago and can't remember the specific dates. Can I still apply?* Yes, you can still complete the initial application. If you advance to a semi-finalist, then you may be asked to provide more specific details on your past travel to the U.S.
- *What is the time commitment of the fellowship?* Fellows will be required to be available for travel to the Opening Convening in Portugal June 4-7, 2018, as well as to the U.S. for the immersion experience from October 14-24, 2018. Fellows will also be required to participate in activities such as webinars and submitting blog postings from May 2018-December 2018.

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS – CV, Pitch Deck/Video

- *Am I required to use the EuroPass CV format?* We request that you use the EuroPass CV format so that applicants are providing consistent information about their education, work experience and skills. You are not required to use the EuroPass template, but we do ask that you include the same categories of information in your CV.
- *The EuroPass CV format suggests that I provide PDF copies of my degrees and awards as evidence. Is this necessary?* No, it is not necessary to provide backup documentation or evidence of your degrees or awards received.
- *I have made many presentations and authored many papers in my career. Am I required to list all of them in the EuroPass CV format?* You are not required to list all of them, but we encourage you to select the presentations and publications that you feel will most help the review committee assess your application based on the review criteria.
- *Do you have any tips about how to prepare the pitch deck?* Please follow the guidance in the pitch deck template. We encourage you to be creative, but concise.
- *The pitch deck template is in a Microsoft power point format that I can't open. Do I have to use this program to create my pitch deck?* If you do not have this program and can't open the attachment, please email the YTILI team – ytili@gmfus.org – to receive a PDF copy of the instructions. You are not required to use Microsoft power point as the format, but you are required to upload the final pitch deck as a PDF.
- *My pitch video is only in my native language; can I still submit it?* All pitch decks and pitch videos are required to be in the English language. If your video is in your native language, then we suggest you upload pitch deck instead or consider how to add subtitles to your video.
- *Should the pitch deck (or video) be on an existing business or a new business that I want to start?* Your pitch should relate to whatever venture will be your focus for the learning during the YTILI program. All successful applicants must be engaged in some stage of starting or growing/scaling a venture in order to maximize the opportunity of the YTILI experience. If you intend to make your existing venture the focus of your application and learning objectives for the fellowship, then you should focus certain application responses and the pitch deck on this venture. If you choose to start a new venture, then you should focus certain application responses and the pitch deck on this new idea.