

Fulbright-Kommission Berlin

C I R C U L A R I 2 0 0 9

Dear Fulbright Scholar,

Welcome to the German-American Fulbright Program! We congratulate you on this very special experience and share your excitement about your upcoming start in Germany.

This document, the Circular I, will provide you with all the critical information on your Fulbright Grant. **It is the last routine pre-departure information you will receive from us.**

Your official grant authorization including the Terms and Conditions of Award is also enclosed. **Please sign the grant authorization form and return it to us by postal mail.** All other communication can take place via email unless otherwise specified.

If you have further questions, please note the names of Fulbright staff with whom you will be dealing: **Dr. Rolf Hoffmann** is Executive Director of the Fulbright Commission. The American Programs (responsible for practically all of your matters) consists of **Mr. Reiner Rohr**, Chief of the American Programs, **Ms. Catharina Hänsch**, **Ms. Julie Mc Bride** and **Ms. Ines Horbert**. The Fiscal Unit, with **Ms. Claudia Adams** and **Ms. Jessica Edmondson**, is responsible for the disbursement of funds.

Here is our contact information:

Telephone

When calling from the U.S.: 011 49 30 28 44 43 773

When calling within Germany: 030 28 44 43 773

Fax

From the U.S.: 011 49 30 28 44 43 42

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Email

americanprograms@fulbright.de

Mailing Address

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Oranienburger Str. 13-14
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We wish you a very pleasant start of your Fulbright grant to Germany!

C I R C U L A R I 2 0 0 9

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PART A: INFORMATION FOR ALL GRANTEES

I. INTRODUCTION

In a series of Circulars, we will inform you about current issues of interest and importance for your well-being in Germany. We have drawn on the experiences and suggestions of your predecessors over many years. Please **keep this information** for further reference. It will save you time, money and nerves. We would like to make sure that all of your benefits connected with this Fulbright grant are both well protected and accessible to you. Our recommendations or requirements in these Circulars remain valid unless you have a letter or document from the Commission which officially acknowledges a deviation from the existing regulations if at all possible. We suggest that you read the entire Circular first before filling out any of the attached forms. The "Terms and Conditions of Award", which are attached to the grant document, are also a basis for reference.

The German-American Fulbright Program is sponsoring approximately 280 American grantees this year. Because of the large number of participants, it has become necessary to address whole "grant categories" in the form of standardized letters.

For ease of reading, Circular I is divided into three sections:

- Part A (Information for All Grantees)
- Part B (Information for Your Specific Grant Category)
Categories of Grantees:

<u>Professor:</u>	All senior and junior researchers and lecturers (application through CIES)
<u>Young Journalist:</u>	Young American journalists (application through IIE)
<u>Student:</u>	University students including doctoral candidates (application through IIE)
<u>Teaching Assistant:</u>	Fulbright travel/maintenance grants with high school assignment through Pedagogic Exchange Service (PAD) (application through IIE)
- Part C (Forms and Enclosures)

These documents (A,B,C) can also be found on our homepage ([www.fulbright.de/ To Germany / 2009-2010 /Circular I](http://www.fulbright.de/To_Germany_/2009-2010/Circular_I)). Let us know if you have difficulties accessing our website, as further information will be provided to you online in the future.

Nevertheless, you may not find exact answers to all your individual questions in this Circular or you may feel that some of the information does not correspond to your special situation. If you are uncertain about any of our rules and regulations, your rights, Fulbright benefits, transportation, or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact us to seek early and comprehensive clarification.

Our program partners in the US are:

CIES
IIE

In Germany all your Fulbright matters are handled by the Fulbright-Commission in Berlin. For Teaching Assistants the Pedagogic Exchange Service is responsible, as well as for all school assignment-related matters.

II. FULBRIGHT GRANT AUTHORIZATION

The most important document is your Fulbright Grant Authorization. The following is an item-by-item explanation of the Grant Authorization.

Item 1 - Name and Permanent Address of Grantee

As a rule we have quoted your permanent address as given in your application. This address is important as it defines your transportation benefits. These benefits are normally provided for transportation between your permanent address and your destination in Germany. If you have changed your permanent address since applying, it is necessary that you inform us and the US Fulbright program agencies in writing about your new address. You must indicate the reasons for any such changes as this may have consequences for your travel and grant benefits. We request that you send us a postal letter stating the old and the new address, give the reasons for the change, and sign the letter.



Item 2 - Date

This date shows when the Fulbright grant authorization was issued. We ask you to accept or decline the Fulbright award within **21 days** of this date. If there are any reasons to request an extension, it is necessary that you clarify this with us in writing. If we do not hear from you within 21 days of the issuance of the grant document we will have to assume that you are not interested, and we will withdraw our grant offer.

Item 3 - Duration of Grant

The entry in this item shows you the actual grant period. Your grant period can normally not be changed or adjusted unless you have received our written authorization.

We expect that you will arrive in Germany before or at the inception of your grant period and that you will stay in Germany until the end of your grant period, unless you have received written permission from us to interrupt your stay (e.g. for trips back to the United States).

Late arrival (of 7 or more days after the inception date of your grant) in Germany will result in an appropriate adjustment of your grant benefits, particularly of your maintenance allowance. However, your presence will be required for your orientation meeting, normally at the beginning of your grant period.

For trips outside the Germany and Europe we have a special "Leave of Absence" policy which restricts benefits and travel duration. Further information will be provided.

Item 4 - Category of Grant

We have five major grant categories: a) Professors (Fulbright Distinguished Chair, Senior Scholars, Junior Researchers, and Junior Lecturers), b) University Students (including recent graduates and graduate fellows), c) Teaching Assistants of German secondary schools, d) Young American Journalists and e) Travel Only Grants.

Item 5 - Field

Describes your main area of project-related academic activities according to the various grant categories. The Fulbright grant will offer benefits with the condition that you pursue project activities based on your application, your assignment and your grant duration, by using the available resources and your own academic background in harmony with the goals of the Fulbright program. We will ask you about your project development routinely. One such measure is the forthcoming request of completing mid-term or year-end reports. If you cannot pursue your projects adequately, please get in touch with us so that we can help you find a solution.

Item 6 – Orientation and Orientation Conferences

General: For each grant category we offer separate and specific orientation meetings. The Commission assumes the expenses for accommodation and meals during the conferences for the grantee and accompanying spouse and children. The orientation conferences will cover a number of logistical, administrative and financial topics. In addition, there will be opportunities to discuss experiences with former

grantees and to consult with staff members of the Commission about various programs and projects. Representatives of our program partners will also be present at the orientation conferences.

Participation in your orientation meeting is mandatory, unless it lies outside your grant period. Most of the information provided is not available otherwise.

More information is provided in the special section of your grant category.

Item 7 – Institution of Affiliation in Germany

This item identifies the host institution, university or school, which will be the center of your project-related activities. Depending on your category, we will give you further information on necessary affiliation or enrollment procedures.

Item 8 - Financial Coverage of Grant

Please note that all program benefits, with the exception of those paid directly by the Commission (e.g. transportation benefits), are disbursed in Euro. There will not be any adjustment as a result of fluctuations in currency exchange rates, so you can count on stable Euro benefits while in Germany. It is not possible to have your benefits disbursed to an account in the United States. All benefits are disburseable only to you the grantee and to your bank account in Germany.

Item 8A – Maintenance Allowance

The amount listed here is the monthly lump-sum stipend that will be provided by monthly bank transfers. Please note that a monthly installment may be prorated if your grant period includes a fraction of a month in addition to a number of full months. Your actual “pay period” always begins with the inception date of your grant. This means that we will pay you for the first month on or around the inception date, the second installment will come on or around the same date in the following months, etc. This also means that the last payment will be made about one month before the end of your actual grant period and may include a prorated amount if your grant period does not end evenly. The monthly installments you receive are meant as a lump-sum contribution towards your living and project costs in Germany, unless otherwise stated.

Item 8A – Spouse Allowance

For married, full-maintenance grantees (excluding teaching assistant and travel-only categories): Please refer to “Terms and Conditions of Award” about the support of dependents and the section on “Spouse Allowance” under “Additional Information” for a concrete definition of benefits for accompanying spouses.

Item 8A – Settling-In Allowance

This is an allowance that can only be provided to grantees in the full-maintenance university student category.

Item 8B - Transportation

Your transportation benefits include pre-paid air tickets through our U.S. travel agent, STA Travel, between an airport close to your permanent address in the U.S. and your destination in Germany (orientation meeting or host institution), and back to the U.S. We normally do not reimburse connecting transportation in the U.S. (between place of departure and airport) as we provide a small lump-sum towards these expenses (see under baggage allowance below).

Fly America guidelines have been provided to you by IIE. Please contact the Commission regarding travel arrangements, including whether the Fly America guideline must be followed for your travel.

Item 8B - Within the U.S.

We ask you to make your own private arrangements to reach your airport of departure. We normally do not provide any additional allowance or reimbursement for that trip.

Item 8B - International

General:

Travel and all other benefits are subject to your signing and accepting the enclosed Fulbright grant authorization.

Travel dates must be in close correspondence with your grant period. It is absolutely necessary that you use Fulbright paid flights at the beginning and the end of the grant period respectively. Any travel home during the grant period must be done on a separate, privately-bought ticket.

We provide economically priced tickets (a mandate of your sponsoring governments) for the grant-related purpose.

Flights can be booked on any airline and with any necessary stop over to meet these criteria.

As a rule, you must book your flight through STA Travel **by May 30, 2009**. This will give you and us access to better prices. You will receive specific information on how to book your ticket in the special section of your grant category.

Your Maximum Travel Allowance:

USD 1.200 has been established as the maximum transatlantic allowance for your east and westbound flights plus a possible date-change fee of up to USD 100 for the homebound portion. Unused portions cannot be used for other purposes. Excess costs must be borne by you. Under special circumstances (awkward departure places or times) the Commission may consider somewhat higher allowances. Please notify us in such cases.

Possible exceptions require prior written approval from the Commission.

Some Limitations:

- STA Travel may provide tickets with a temporary (dummy) homebound travel date in the spring of 2010 for reservation reasons, which **you must change** for a fee after arrival in Germany and before the given homebound travel date by contacting the relevant airline or our travel agent. You are responsible for making this date change **before the listed homebound flight**, if this is not your proper flight date, otherwise your ticket will completely lose its value, and the Commission will not be able to provide you with a new ticket.
- Our travel agent may also require that you purchase a student or other ID in order to access lower student or teacher fares (usually necessary for people older than 26 years). In that case the ID fee can be covered by the Commission as charged by STA Travel.
- Necessary connecting (train) travel inside Germany can be reimbursed by the Commission based on the general "Reimbursement Policy" (described in the Additional Information section).

Tickets for Family Members

The Commission, unfortunately, cannot contribute to the transportation costs of your dependents; nor can we simply provide a cash allowance to arrange your own transportation with your family. The possible incompatibility of your family's needs and our travel regulations will require scholarly ingenuity and flexibility on your part!

Since housing can be a serious problem in Germany, grantees with dependents should very carefully consider whether it would be best for them to travel alone to Germany initially and let their families follow after having found housing. **Let us know if we can be of further assistance in this matter.**

Value of Tickets (air and train)

Please guard your received tickets like cash. If lost or stolen or otherwise invalidated, they cannot be replaced by the Commission.

Exclusion of Liability

The Commission and its partners cannot assume any liability or responsibility for cancellations, lack of service, delays, or damage or loss of baggage, etc. resulting from our travel agency or any airline in connection with your national and international transportation. You may consider relevant insurances.

How to get your ticket

We cooperate with **one specific** STA Travel in the U.S. They have a list of all Fulbright grantees, and you should contact them soon to reserve your ticket if you accept the Fulbright award. The Commission will pay STA Travel directly for the round-trip ticket up to authorized maximum limits (see above).

Please contact them to start the process:

www.statravel.com/fulbright
telephone hotline: 800-836-4115
email: travelhelp@statravel.com

Please identify yourself as a Fulbright awardee for 2009/2010.

Ask for a "Fulbright" round-trip ticket between your home and the orientation site - or nearest reasonable international airports - and between host university city and home in the summer 2010. They might offer a return flight date well before your normal summer travel date for reservation system reason, and you can change that date later after arrival in Germany.

Alternative to STA tickets:

If you prefer to make your own travel arrangements you could do so with the following conditions:

You accept the full responsibility for the booking of your ticket or tickets, the travel arrangements, the costs, and for being and staying in Germany for the duration of your Fulbright award. The Fulbright Commission would consider a reimbursement of your actual and documented transportation expenses up to the maximum allowance but not exceeding your actual travel expenses, and only for travel that is directly related to your Fulbright award. With this offer we try to give you (esp. families) somewhat more flexibility, and also hope that this might be a possibility to save transportation expenses in the interest of the entire Fulbright program (unfortunately, we can not apply any possible savings towards your personal Fulbright account). If you prefer to make your own travel arrangements please get in touch with us early to avoid any disappointments. Again, you can avoid any such risks by booking through STA Travel as described above.

Item 8B - Within Germany:

Grant-related travel (e.g. from airport to host city) can be reimbursed. For a detailed description of our reimbursement policy within Germany please refer to the "Reimbursement Policy" section under Additional Information.

Item 8B - Baggage Allowance

Euro 150 total will be provided for both eastbound and westbound grant-related transportation and will be disbursed to you in Germany. This applies to all grant categories that include regular transportation benefits.

This money is intended for your private travel between your home and the airport of departure and for possible excess baggage. This is a lump-sum allowance for which no accounts need to be rendered and which you receive whether you have baggage and home-to-airport expenses or not. The allowance will usually come in two installments, one at the beginning of your grant and one towards the end.

Item 8C – Health and Accident Insurance

Every grantee is routinely covered by two types of health insurance, the following combination usually apply:

- (1) *Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges* (for all grantees)
- (2) *VICTORIA Health and Accident Insurance* (for grantees in the following categories: Professors, University Students, Journalists), university students under 30 years may also have an option for a special student scheme.
- (3) Deutscher Ring (arranged by PAD for Teaching Assistants)

- a) **Victoria Health and Accident Insurance through the Fulbright Commission**
(applies to Professors, University Students and Journalists)

The Fulbright Commission in Germany provides comprehensive health insurance coverage during the actual grant period for most grantees and for eligible dependents. The program that we describe below guarantees more than just a basic coverage in medical emergencies and cases of illness. However, the Commission and its partners in Germany and the U.S. cannot assume responsibility for all costs that may accrue as a result of illnesses or accidents. Therefore, we alert you to certain limitations and draw your attention to the Terms and Conditions of the health insurance program as they may apply to you.

The Commission's German health insurance program is provided by the private **Victoria Krankenversicherung (VICTORIA)** in the framework of a group contract between VICTORIA and the Commission. Grantees are automatically registered.

Grantees may voluntarily purchase coverage through VICTORIA for limited additional periods such as before the start of the orientation meeting or after the grant period.

Language course participants will be covered by Victoria for the period of the orientation meeting until grant termination, including the language course period.

For a detailed description of VICTORIA Health and Accident Insurance benefits please refer to the section on "Victoria Health and Accident Insurance" under Additional Information.

NOTE: For grantees in the University Student Category there is an option for the German Public Health Insurance (Gesetzliche Krankenversicherung für Studenten unter 30 Jahren) instead of Victoria Insurance

As a **matriculated student** you could register yourself for a "public" health insurance like AOK, BEK, or TKK (usually recommended by the International Office) instead of accepting our VICTORIA coverage. Please note that this option only makes sense in some specific cases (if you are married, or have had German public health insurance before). You will find information about this option in your special section (Part B).

b) Deutscher Ring Krankenversicherung
(*applies to all Teaching Assistants*)

Grantees in the Teaching Assistant category will be enrolled in health and accident insurance through Deutscher Ring Krankenversicherung, as arranged by PAD; therefore, the information related to VICTORIA is not applicable to you. You will receive comprehensive information on the insurance policy through PAD. There are no other options.

c) Health and Accident Insurance through the Department of State

The U.S. Department of State automatically provides limited insurance coverage under the Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) for every American Fulbright grantee (spouses and children, however, are not included). We will call this "**Basic**" **Health and Accident Insurance Coverage**. Please check the website and ASPE Guide carefully:

The insurance is administered by (as of April 2007):

Seven Corners, Inc.
P.O. Box 3724
Carmel, Indiana 46082-3724 USA
Telephone: 1-800-461-0430 (toll free for grantees in the United States) or 317-818-2867
(a collect call for grantees outside of the United States)
E-Mail: aspeinfo@sevencorners.com
Website: www.usdos.sevencorners.com

Coverage is limited to \$100,000 (\$25 deductible) and is in effect only during grant activities, i.e.

direct travel preceding or following the grant period, and during the grant period at your host institution.

Information on this coverage has been or will be sent to you through our cooperating American agency. Further material such as claim forms and ID will be provided upon request after arrival. Please note that this insurance coverage is limited (in coverage and duration, i.e. the ASPE does not provide coverage for pre-existing conditions) as it is part of a worldwide health insurance program covering all Fulbright grantees. Unfortunately, dependents cannot be covered under the ASPE.

d) **Consideration of Additional U.S. Health Insurance**

This is recommended if you have a *pre-existing condition*, e.g. diabetes, requiring special continued treatment or medication. If you need to be on continued medication in Germany, you will have to bring your supply or pay for it yourself. Please do not take this matter lightly. The Commission will not be able to assist you with any unforeseen medical expenses! If you are at all unsure as to what qualifies as a pre-existing condition, please contact us with a description of your case.

You may want to check with ASPE on your situation.

Item 8D – Other Benefits

Item 8D – Incidental Allowance

An incidental allowance will be provided for the senior scholar and university student categories only. Unfortunately, travel-only categories and teaching assistants are not eligible to receive this allowance. The exact amount of the incidental allowance will be disclosed in your special section (Part B of the Circular). This allowance is provided in recognition of certain expenses connected with project, assignment, registration or matriculation formalities.

Item 9 - Special Provisions

Your Fulbright grant includes the following special provisions:

a) All grantees:

In connection with your application for a Fulbright award you are required to submit a health report to the U.S. agency where you applied. This is a part of U.S. regulations as stipulated by the J. William Fulbright Board of Foreign Scholarships (FSB). It is absolutely essential that we receive notification of a **satisfactory medical report** through the Institute of International Education (all student categories) or the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (all senior scholar and journalist categories). Normally, you will be contacted by our American partner organization after they have received notification from us of your selection status. Without such approval your grant will not go into effect.

b) All grantees:

We appreciate your concurrence to allowing the Fulbright program to use your name, e-mail address, institutional affiliation as well as program related pictures to connect you with other Fulbright Alumni and professional contacts in the interest of your project or assignment in Germany. If you disagree with all or part of this clause please contact us in writing.

c) University students and teaching assistants:

If you have not already done so, or if you had not yet completed your Bachelor-Degree at the time of application for the Fulbright grant, you must submit proof of your completed BA or BS degree. The Commission can only disburse benefits to you after we have received proof that you have received (at least) a bachelor or equivalent degree. It is your responsibility to inform the Commission about the completion of this prerequisite, especially if you receive the degree after submission of your application.

Item 10 - Authorizing Officer

The Fulbright grant offer must always be signed by the Commission's director or an officer authorized by him.

**Item 11 - Acceptance or Declination of Award**

If you wish to accept the award, please enter the date and sign the "Acceptance" line.

If you cannot accept the award, please enter the date and your signature in the "Cannot Accept" line.

Please note that you should indicate your acceptance or declination **within 21 days** of the issuance date of the award.

Finally, please make sure that you retain the original of the award for your own files, send one signed copy to the Fulbright Commission in Berlin (see the address at the top of the award authorization) and send the requested copies to our cooperating partners in the U.S.

III. ADDITIONAL GRANT FORMALITIES

The following section includes additional pieces of information as they relate to the planning, preparation and realization of your award.

1) Citizenship

All Fulbright grantees must be U.S. citizens and in possession of a valid U.S. passport. Those with a second passport must use the U.S. passport for all Fulbright grant-related activities. Grantees with U.S. and German dual citizenship normally cannot receive grants. If this is the case, please let us know so that we can advise you.

2) Visa Regulations

For longer stays in Germany – as with a Fulbright grant – you must obtain a residence permit from a local Foreign Registration Office (*Ausländerbehörde*) after arriving in Germany. This permit is in lieu of a visa. If you have family members with non-U.S. passports, please check with the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Washington, D.C. (see **List of Contacts**, Part C), or with the German consulate in your area. The Commission will help you with the residence permit and explain matters during the orientation conferences upon arrival in Germany. In other words: You as an American Fulbright grantee can enter Germany with just a valid passport. We recommend not applying for a visa in the U.S.

3) Income Tax

All grantees who receive maintenance from the Commission are exempt from German income tax.

U.S. Income Tax: The Fulbright Commission has absolutely no authority nor may we give you any legal advice in matters pertaining to the U.S. tax system. We suggest, therefore, that you clarify your tax situation with your local IRS office, tax consultant, or the respective partner agency (CIES or IIE) before you leave for Germany. You can also visit www.irs.gov and search for "Fulbright."

Upon your written request, the Commission will issue statements confirming Fulbright benefits received during a given calendar year. However, these are not official W2 forms. Professors and teachers will find additional information on this topic in the appropriate section of their specific grant category.

4) Communication with the Fulbright Commission

It is essential that the Commission knows the home address and e-mail address at which you can be reached between now and your departure for Germany. As grantees will travel individually across the Atlantic, you are asked to write to us immediately upon arrival in Germany to inform us of a (temporary) address. This facilitates due receipt of grant benefits. It is imperative that we are always able to reach you. Please inform us immediately if and when you move to another address. Should you have a telephone, mobile phone, or fax number where messages can be left, we would also appreciate having this

information. We know from experience that in some cases (as in emergencies or transportation matters) it will be necessary to contact you quickly.

When sending e-mails please always identify yourself clearly with at least your full name as some e-mail addresses do not clearly identify the sender. Please keep in mind that we receive a high volume of emails and are not always able to acknowledge each one, but will address matters of immediate importance. You can find all our contact information on the first page of this Circular.

5)  **Your Next Steps**

Please send signed copies of your **grant authorization** to Fulbright and the respective U.S. partner(s) as listed on your grant authorization.

Please send your completed **medical form** to the respective U.S. partner organization.

Please book your **plane ticket** before May 30, 2009.

IV. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1) **Immunizations**

At the present time no vaccinations are required upon entering Germany or returning from Germany to the United States and you are not required to get an HIV Test upon entering Germany.

2) **Housing**

Finding housing will probably be the biggest hurdle to overcome on the way to a rewarding stay in Germany. For this reason, we suggest that you do not take this matter lightly. Do not put off your housing search because you think there is still plenty of time until you leave for Germany. Please see Part B: Information for your specific grant category for additional information on housing and accommodations.

3) **Spouse Allowance**

Additional benefits for married grantees will depend on your grant category (available only for full-maintenance university students, journalists, professors) and legal married status and legal residential status of the couple. Our definition of and benefits for "Accompanying Spouses" follows:

- a) The term "spouse" is restricted to partners legally married as defined in Germany.
- b) The term "accompanying" is restricted to those spouses who leave a permanent legal residence outside Germany to join the grantee at his or her temporary legal residence in Germany for at least 3 consecutive months. Otherwise a spouse is "visiting" and thus not eligible for Commission allowances.
- c) The term "spouse allowance" refers to the monthly supplement granted by the Commission as well as to all other benefits extended to the spouse (i.e. participation in orientation seminars, the mid-year Berlin meeting, health insurance and language course where applicable).
- d) Eligible married grantees will receive a spouse allowance of Euro 276 per month (different conditions in the teacher category). In general, this amount is included in the maintenance allowance, and the respective box on your grant authorization is checked.
- e) Spouse allowance benefits can only be provided if the spouse resides in Germany together with the grantee. Absences from Germany are subject to the same regulations as for grantees (see regulations for leaves of absences under item 4) "Temporary Return to the U.S. or Other Continents During Grant Period".
- f) Not eligible for the monthly "spouse allowance" payment are all travel-only grantees and those full and partial maintenance grantees who receive a spouse or family allowance from another sponsor or whose spouse receives a grant or income him/herself.

It is also essential that you indicate which dependents will accompany you and for how long; the **Fiscal Questionnaire** (Part C) is provided for this purpose and is explained below. If your dependents' status has changed since your application, please inform us promptly so that we can add or cancel due grant benefits for dependents.

4) **Our Reimbursement Policy within Germany**

It may be necessary for you to purchase train tickets (or use other modes of transportation) to travel from your airport of arrival in Germany to your destination (orientation site, host institution). As a rule, we can reimburse you for documented costs if they are within our maximum allowances. If you are unable to clearly document your costs, we can only provide a *standard reimbursement* defined as:

One half of the regular 2nd class train fare for direct grant-related travel. We assume that the majority of our grantees will buy BahnCards (see box). If you do not have a BahnCard, we reimburse actual documented costs up to the 2nd class fare.

BahnCard

We strongly suggest that you buy a BahnCard 25 or BahnCard 50. The BahnCard 25 costs Euro 57 independent of age. The BahnCard 50 costs Euro 115 for people up to 26 years of age and Euro 225 for people older than 26 years. It is valid for one year and immediately gives you a 25% or 50% discount on all train fares (2nd class). Please check www.bahn.de and there under international guest, our offers, BahnCards for the most updated information and for information on additional BahnCards (partner cards, seniors, etc.).

Our reimbursement policy is based on the train fare system in Germany. This means that you should book train tickets at least 7 days ahead of time to utilize maximum savings, and / or travel together with other people. If you travel by any other means (car, air, bicycle) we will provide a standard reimbursement (50 % regular 2nd class train fare) and you do not need to provide any documentation.

Possible reimbursable grant-related travel is:

- from airport of arrival to host city
- from host city to airport at the end of the grant
- to and from the orientation meeting if applicable
- to and from our mid-year meeting in Berlin in 2010

In the U.S.: There is normally no specific reimbursement possible as we provide the *baggage and connecting travel allowance of Euro 150 total*.

5) **VICTORIA Health and Accident Insurance**

(Not applicable for Teaching Assistants – for them insurance through Deutscher Ring is arranged and explained by the PAD)

Below you will find:

- Description of eligible grantees and dependents
- Description of VICTORIA benefits and limitations
- VICTORIA registration form for you and your eligible dependents (in Part C)
- Registration form for Voluntary Coverage (in Part C)
- *Merkblatt* / Information summary (insurance info sheet in Part C)

1. **Eligible Persons** – Coverage at Commission expenses will be provided to:

1.1. Fulbright students with full-maintenance grants in the university program, all senior scholars and young journalists.

1.2. **Ineligible** for VICTORIA Health Insurance as a grant benefit are teaching assistants and travel-only grantees.

1.3. **Dependents of Eligible Grantees**

Dependents will be registered for the same period as the grantee and based on the registration forms which you and your dependents submit to the Commission.

Definition of dependents: Eligible dependents are those who are also eligible for spouse allowance benefits (see II, item 8A). To summarize: In order to be eligible, the accompanying legal spouse of a grantee and accompanying legal children may have no independent income in Germany, may not receive health insurance benefits through another German source, and must stay for at least three months in Germany.

2. Coverage Period

2.1. For grantees (and dependents) coverage will be provided at Commission expense for the grant period as written in the grant authorization.

2.2 **Voluntary Coverage Periods:** Outside Commission-sponsored periods you can register through the Commission at your own expense and for a maximum of 6 months.

3. **Travel-Only Grantees** are responsible for obtaining their own German health insurance. The Commission encourages travel grant holders to register through the Commission for VICTORIA coverage. In detail: Travel grantees over 30 years should consider VICTORIA for the total period of their stay in Germany, or at least for the actual grant period at the cost of Euro 2.05/day. Travel grantees under 30 years of age should also consider VICTORIA at the cost of Euro 1.38/day. The Commission will assume no responsibility for claims or damages as a result of insufficient health insurance coverage. For information, costs, and registration, see below. Please use form "Voluntary Victoria health insurance coverage" (in Part C).

Teaching Assistants will be covered through a special Pädagogischer Austauschdienst (PAD) health insurance program. More information is provided in their special section.

4. Special Considerations for Students

As a matriculated student you may have the option to register yourself for a "public" health insurance like AOK, BEK or TKK (usually recommended by the Akademische Auslandsamt) instead of accepting our Victoria coverage.

This is recommended for married grantees, and those with pre-existing conditions that may be covered by the "public" type. The Commission would reimburse you for the premiums up to certain limits.

5. VICTORIA Benefits

5.1 VICTORIA is a private German company offering comprehensive health insurance coverage to American grantees and eligible dependents during specified grant periods. The Commission offers VICTORIA coverage to all eligible grantees.

5.2 **Premiums:** Paid for by Commission for grant period.

5.3 **Terms and Conditions:** Apply as specified by Victoria. Below we give you a rough summary of benefits and exclusions. For further details we refer you to the attached *Merkblatt* (Info Sheet) as provided by VICTORIA; upon written request we will supply you with the complete Terms and Conditions (in German).

5.3.1 **Coverage Area:** Germany; Europe, and worldwide up to 4 weeks for trips reported to the Commission; USA (only) after a 3-month waiting period and up to 4 weeks only, with prior Commission approval.

5.3.2 **Benefits:** Coverage is provided for medically necessary treatment including dental treatment, for hospitalization including surgery, for transportation to nearest hospital, for prescribed medication bought at pharmacies, for physical therapy and x-raying; certain benefits in case of death.

5.3.3 **Treatment (Ambulante Behandlung):** The insured has free choice among accredited doctors. If possible, the insured must visit the doctor's practice.

5.3.4 **Dental Cases (Zahnärztliche Behandlung):** Coverage is provided for pain-relieving treatment only, and fillings using the most economic material in acute cases of toothache.

5.3.5 **Hospitalization (Stationäre Behandlung):** The insured has free choice among regular, accredited hospitals. No coverage is provided for treatment at other institutions.

Important: VICTORIA will only pay for the basic tariff, *Regelleistung* (the standard, medical and accommodation services as for patients with "public" health insurance). Otherwise you may have to pay costs beyond authorized limits. Please avoid being charged as a Privatpatient although you are technically a privately insured person. Please note that single-room accommodation (*Einzelzimmer*) and treatment by leading doctors who charge separately (*privatärztliche Behandlung*) will NOT be covered by Victoria. If in doubt, ASK first before having to pay yourself.

Of course, you may choose any optional services offered; however, these will be at your expense.

Hospitalization is defined by at least an overnight stay at a hospital.

5.3.6 Exclusions:

Pregnancy-related costs are not covered.

Pre-existing Conditions: Any necessary follow-up treatment or medication resulting from illnesses, including accidents, cannot be covered if treated prior to insurance inception. For instance, grantees with diabetes needing insulin, testing, etc. cannot be covered by VICTORIA.

Also not covered are: Dental materials (e.g. inlays), psychotherapy, chronic diseases and check-ups or standard examinations (*Vorsorgeuntersuchung*), and devices like walking aids, glasses etc.

- 5.4 Reimbursement procedures:** The insured is normally required to pay the medical bill first and request reimbursement from VICTORIA within established limits by submitting the original bills showing name of patient, diagnosis, and itemization of treatment, according to current tariff regulations. Submitted prescriptions must show name, medication, price and stamp of pharmacy. In exceptional cases like hospitalizations, VICTORIA can contact the hospital to take over payment of authorized costs directly. If that is needed, the hospital should contact VICTORIA directly (see address below). Also, if the doctor's bill is beyond your means, VICTORIA will pay directly.
- 5.4.1. Special Condition:** With the acceptance of the health insurance coverage through VICTORIA, the insured authorizes VICTORIA to request and have access to all relevant information and data needed for the process from any party concerned.
- 5.4.2** VICTORIA's address for reimbursement or information requests:

VICTORIA KRANKENVERSICHERUNG AG
Abteilung KV 63
Hans-Böckler-Str. 36
40198 DÜSSELDORF
Phone: +49 (0)211-477-4733 or-5504
Fax: +49 (0)211-4774150
Email: auslandsreise.kranken@victoria.de

Please note that only this office at VICTORIA's headquarters deals with Fulbrighters' claims. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Commission or VICTORIA. We would like to see you in good health and aware of all Fulbright program benefits.

6. German Fulbright Alumni Association

The German Fulbright Alumni Association can also provide you with assistance. They are interested in informing you about their activities, can bring you together with German alumni from our program, and may have many helpful tips on university/bureaucratic procedures and, in some cases, on housing. Please write to them if interested:

Herr Cem Yüçetas
 Vice President Members
 Fulbright Alumni e.V.
 Email: members@fulbright-alumni.de

7. Current Grantees in Germany

For each grant category we have enclosed a list of the Fulbright grantees for the program year 2008/09. These are the grantees that are now in Germany. They might be able to share valuable information with you from their own experience.

We realize that we have just given you an overwhelming amount of information. If you have questions about any of the material, please do not hesitate to contact us.

You will be receiving information concerning your specific grant category shortly which should hopefully answer some of your individual questions.

Good luck with your departure preparations and have a safe trip. We look forward to meeting you in Germany and wish you all the best in the meantime.

Sincerely yours,

Reiner Rohr
 Chief, American Programs

Catharina Hänsch
 Program Officer

Ines Horbert
 Program Officer

Julie McBride
 Program Officer