

THE
News
FULBRIGHT FINLAND

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Empowering the
Next Generation of
Science Diplomats

Climate Change
and Security
in the Arctic

Connecting
Researchers in
Science and
Technology



**Trailblazing New
Ways to Cooperate**

Fulbright-LUT University Partnership

Expanding Finnish-U.S. Collaboration



We are honored to have the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland, **Elina Valtonen**, as our visiting columnist. She talks about the close partnership between Finland and the U.S., and the importance of increasing exchanges of talent and knowledge through the Fulbright Finland Foundation (p. 3).

Academic exchanges contribute to research and collaboration in areas critical to both countries, including technology, security, climate change, and the Arctic (p. 6-7). At the nexus of academia, industry, and society, Foundation alumni trailblaze novel collaborations across sectors (p. 5). They share their networks and forge new connections and long-term cooperation between Finnish and U.S. institutions (p.12, 14).

Embracing their knowledge diplomacy role, grantees cultivate skills in science communication to share their research with decision makers and for the benefit of the broader public (p. 10). At host institutions, they contribute to research and teaching, both individually, and collectively, with full cohorts of grantees presenting at the Foundation’s annual seminars that feed directly into university curricula (p. 11). As citizen-diplomats, they work to

create spaces for open conversation and strengthen people-to-people ties (p. 20).

The global higher education, research, and innovation landscape is constantly evolving, and the exchange of talent and knowledge must keep changing as well. We are thrilled to announce the expansion of our collaboration with the U.S. Department of Education bringing new exchange opportunities for educators (p. 8), and the comprehensive partnership agreement with LUT University, trailblazing novel ways of cooperating to increase academic exchanges amid the rapidly changing environment (p. 4).

Partnership awards included, in 2023 the Foundation awarded over 1,9 million euros in grants, and 114 new Finnish and U.S. grantees joined the Foundation’s network of change-makers (p. 22). We convey our deepest gratitude to our partners, donors, and alumni who made this possible, and look forward to continuing our work together in 2024 to expand Finnish-U.S. exchanges.

Terhi Mölsä
Chief Executive Officer
Fulbright Finland Foundation

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Cover photo: Maija Kettunen

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LAURI HEIKKINEN

Finland and the United States – Key Allies in Security, Technology, and Cherishing People-to-People Ties

Our Ministry partners with the Fulbright Finland Foundation to help empower the next generation of science diplomats.



The past years have strengthened the already strong bond between Finland and the United States. Finland's NATO membership, the growth in trade volumes, as well as increased cooperation on both the federal and state level are just some examples of this. The Finnish government is committed to doing her utmost to solidify the bilateral and transatlantic relationship further.

As an ally, the Finnish government stresses the importance of strategic partnerships, and their role in our common security and prosperity. NATO membership gives us another opportunity to push U.S.-Finland cooperation to the next level. The negotiations on a bilateral DCA, a defense cooperation agreement, are one clear example of this. It is a key building block within our wider bilateral relationship.

The DCA with the U.S. will enhance the security in the Nordic region and deepen our transatlantic bond. Once concluded, the DCA will create a clear framework and conditions for us to cooperate in all security situations. The DCA will also help us deter and defend together, and contribute to wider NATO objectives.

It is not only trade and security that bind us together – it is also our fundamental and shared values of democracy. This summer, as we welcomed both President Biden and Secretary of State Blinken to Helsinki, both countries stressed the importance of people-to-people connections between our citizens at all levels but also the role of emerging technologies.

COOPERATION IN EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES has become an integral pillar of our bilateral relations, producing significant mutual benefits for business, research, and national security. Whilst emerging technologies offer great opportunities, without jointly agreed rules they can become harmful or even dangerous. It is vital that, as frontrunners in research, development, and implementation

of emerging technologies, the United States and Finland actively work together to address security challenges, and drive the setting of international standards based on our democratic values.

Our Ministry partners with the Fulbright Finland Foundation to help empower the next generation of science diplomats. Overall, I am delighted that in the last couple of years there has been a steady increase in contact between Finnish and American academia. We have a good basis for this cooperation in place through the Finland-U.S. Science and Technology Agreement, our recent joint statements on quantum, nuclear energy, and 6G, as well as through active work on the state level with six partnership states. All of this is further strengthened by the work done by individuals in business and academia.

WE ALSO RECEIVED ADDITIONAL POSITIVE NEWS when the United States announced plans to increase its funding to all Fulbright Commissions in EU Member States during the U.S.-EU Summit this October. The EU made a similar pledge regarding the Fulbright-Schuman program. This will effectively increase the number of transatlantic academic exchanges in the coming years.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs works in close cooperation with the Fulbright Finland Foundation. We look forward to further building and expanding this unique partnership. The Fulbright Finland Foundation already has an outstanding network of over 6 100 grantees and alumni from the United States and Finland.

I want to thank the Fulbright Finland Foundation for the valuable work done to bring Finnish and American academics together and thereby strengthening ties between our countries.

Elina Valtonen

Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland



LUT University and Fulbright Finland Trailblazing New Ways to Cooperate

Text: LUT & FULBRIGHT FINLAND

LUT University and the Fulbright Finland Foundation have signed a cooperation agreement to expand their partnership and to explore new and novel ways of working together. The agreement manifests the two institutions' mutual interest in significantly increasing transatlantic academic collaboration and exchanges.

"The Fulbright Finland Foundation provides invaluable experience and networks for Finnish-U.S. academic collaboration. Together, we aim to explore new avenues for bridging the academic societies in Finland and the U.S.," says **Kirsimarja Blomqvist**, Professor of Business Studies at LUT and Board Member of the Foundation.

"I'm extremely excited that we've found mutual enthusiasm to explore opportunities together with Fulbright," adds **Petri Ajo**, Chief Growth Officer at LUT and a Fulbright alum. "My message to LUT staff and students is that whenever you consider

cooperation with Americans, consider Fulbright! I'm confident that the outcomes of our agreement will be exceptional."

LUT University and the Foundation already have an active partnership agreement on co-sponsoring Fulbright awards for U.S. graduate students. Since 2015, this partnership has brought 25 U.S. graduate students to LUT for a Master's degree.

Last year LUT University initiated discussions with the Foundation on broadening the collaboration from individual grant programs onto a wider university-level framework that would include multiple areas of activities and support research and transatlantic collaboration more broadly. The Foundation provides a comprehensive platform for Finnish-U.S. exchanges, and based on the new agreement, LUT and the Foundation are now exploring novel ways to utilize this platform even more, and to take advantage of the unique strengths of both partners to expand the exchange of knowledge and talent between Finland and the U.S.

"LUT University has been an excellent partner for us, and we look forward to expanding the collaboration and working together in new areas," Foundation CEO **Terhi Mölsä** concludes.

LUT University hosted the Foundation's Board of Directors at the Lappeenranta campus in September 2023 for a full-day program focusing on the university's research strengths. The partnership agreement was signed during the visit by LUT Rector **Juha-Matti Saksa** (center) and CEO **Terhi Mölsä**.

[www.fulbright.fi/
lut-graduate](http://www.fulbright.fi/lut-graduate)



TEEMU LEINONEN

Clean energy, water, and air are life-giving resources for which LUT University seeks new solutions with its expertise in technology, business, and social sciences. LUT helps society and businesses in their sustainable renewal. LUT's international community consists of nearly 8 000 members, and its campuses are in Lappeenranta and Lahti, Finland. LUT is one of the world's top universities for climate action. www.lut.fi

At the Nexus of Academia, Industry, and Society

TEEMU LEINONEN, LUT UNIVERSITY



*Fulbright alumni can augment their impact by building bridges between U.S. and Finnish institutions, sharing their research networks, extending cooperation beyond their grant year, and recommending Fulbright to their colleagues and students. **Petri Ajo** talks about his own Fulbright experience and his current work as LUT University's Chief Growth Officer.*

Ground drilling, surveying, and soil restoration projects made my first summer job. Looking back is fun. Analyzing your walk of life, it's easy to get a feeling that it was all part of a greater plan – the little things that happened at a certain time and place, leading to the present. Maybe it is this thought that keeps me looking for the next project in life, making sure I do my part in the great, universal adventure.

I did my undergraduate degree at LUT University in environmental technology, and a doctorate in chemical engineering. First year into my dissertation, there was a seminar called “The world is our oyster,” promoting researcher mobility.

The idea of an exchange period intrigued me, so I went to my Principal Investigator and asked if we had a policy on researcher exchange. Where should I go? How does this work? I was new to the business and totally clueless. She raised a brow, and gave a single piece of advice, the value of which it took me years to realize: “Check the Internet. See if you can find a good university.” At the time, I frankly didn't understand the brilliance of this suggestion. It later, however, came to me that I had been asking what the typical thing to do was, but she made me carve my own way. I was looking for limitations. Instead, she removed them all in one simple, elegant maneuver.

I did as I was told, and it was easy to find that the #1 place for me to go would be Caltech. I then went again to my PI, and this time she said, “If you are

considering the U.S., consider Fulbright.” Another sound piece of advice, and this one I understood right away.

A Game-Changing Scholarship

The ASLA-Fulbright Pre-Doctoral Research Fellowship at Caltech in 2015-16 was really a game-changer for me. I grew as a scientist, as a professional, and as a person more than I could ever have anticipated.

Back in Finland, renewed by the experience (and energized by the So-Cal sun), I preached about certain cultural practices that we should benchmark from the Americans. I believe I will carry those ideas with me always, and I do think I have managed to spread some good vibes.

Today, several years later, I have the ultimate privilege to work with the brilliant and good people around me, at the nexus of academia, industry, and society. I'm often asked what a Chief Growth Officer does, followed by wry guesses if it has “something to do with plants.” To play along, I could say my job is to discover potentially fruitful seedlings sprouting around the university, and then help them bloom.

Recently, a perfect opportunity stemmed for me to give something back to both the Fulbright Finland Foundation and my alma mater. Finnish universities are now looking at an excellent landscape for boosting U.S. activities, and we are really putting some skin in the game at LUT University. And I'd be sure to remember: if you consider the U.S., consider Fulbright.

Just a few weeks ago, as a manifest of a fantastic dialogue, LUT University and the Fulbright Finland Foundation signed a cooperation agreement to boldly explore new and trailblazing ways of cooperation. Goes without saying, I am very proud as an alumnus of both! Still from my perspective, this is merely a milestone marking one step in the Fulbright experience, and I can't wait to reach the next one. No doubt, there are more game-changers ahead.

Petri Ajo

Chief Growth Officer,
LUT University
2015-16 ASLA-Fulbright
Pre-Doctoral Research
Fellow
California Institute of
Technology

[www.fulbright.fi/
pre-doctoral](http://www.fulbright.fi/pre-doctoral)

Partnering for Arctic Research and Collaboration

The changed security landscape in the European Arctic, hybrid threats, community engagement, and Arctic climate interventions from indigenous youth perspective were among themes highlighted during the 6th Rovaniemi Arctic Spirit Conference organized by the City of Rovaniemi and the Arctic Center of the University of Lapland, together with various partners, including the Fulbright Finland Foundation. The conference brought together nearly 200 international Arctic experts from diverse fields.

The Arctic is a key strategic area in the Fulbright Finland Foundation's programs. In her plenary remarks, the Foundation CEO highlighted the Foundation's programs for Arctic research and collaboration and launched the call for the fourth round of the Fulbright Arctic Initiative.

www.rovaniemiarticspirit.fi

Text: Mirka McIntire

APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN

The Arctic is a priority area in three programs currently open for applications:

- Fulbright Finland Travel Grants for short-term research visits or institutional partnership building visits to the U.S. – apply by January 29, 2024: www.fulbright.fi/grant-programs-to-us/short-term-travel-grants-to-us
- Fulbright Specialist Program for inviting a U.S. Specialist to your institution for 2-6 weeks – apply by February 1, 2024: www.fulbright.fi/fulbright-specialist-program
- Fulbright Arctic Initiative for addressing key research and policy questions related to promoting Arctic Security – apply by March 1, 2024: www.fulbright.fi/fin-fai

Fulbright Arctic Initiative IV

The call for the fourth round of the Fulbright Arctic Initiative (FAI) is now open. The application deadline for the 2024–26 cohort is March 1, 2024.

Building on the scholarship of three earlier cohorts, FAI IV will bring together a network of professionals, practitioners, and researchers from the eight Arctic Council member states to collaborate on different dimensions of Arctic security.

During the 18-month program, the participants will take part in monthly webinars, thematic group collaborations, three in-person meetings, and an individual exchange experience. On this round, the interdisciplinary group collaboration will focus on three broad thematic areas: Climate Change and Arctic Resources, Arctic Security and Governance, and Mental Health and Well Being.

The cohort is co-led by Dr. **Elizabeth Rink** from Montana State University and Dr. **Lill Rastad Bjørst** from Aalborg University, who will provide intellectual leadership and guidance throughout the program.

Dr. Rink is also a two-time alumna of the Fulbright Finland Foundation. During the second FAI round, she conducted her individual exchange program at the Thule Institute at the University of Oulu where she studied perspectives of reproductive health among Sami living in Northern Finland. In spring 2023, she returned to the Thule Institute as a Fulbright Specialist to study the ethical challenges and solutions of collaborating on interdisciplinary research teams.

Text: Emmi Jelekäinen



Apply by March 1, 2024!
www.fulbright.fi/fin-fai

Navigating the Dynamics of Climate Change, Security, and Human Adaptation in the Arctic

In the Arctic, climate change has a profound impact, leading to substantial environmental and cultural shifts in Northern communities. Also, geopolitics has become increasingly prominent. The third round of the Fulbright Arctic Initiative (FAI) brought together professionals and researchers to focus on challenges and possibilities. It enabled us scholars to focus on Arctic issues at a general level while providing opportunities to emphasize the diversity in the Arctic.

In the FAI program, our work consisted of individual research projects with research exchange visits, a thematic group's joint project, and policy brief writing. In addition to this, we had monthly plenary sessions, where the experts' presentations inspired and deepened our knowledge, and meetings in Iceland and Canada. Finally, in April 2023, Fulbright Arctic Week in Washington offered the opportunity to present the policy recommendations at the Wilson Center to a live audience.

Between monthly FAI meetings, joint projects were taken forward in thematic groups. Our thematic research group studied the multifaceted dimensions of community health and well-being. We highlighted the importance of holistic well-being and the role of community empowerment and local knowledge in shaping health outcomes.

Continuing the Collaboration

Working at FAI for over two years was demanding and challenging. Due to the pandemic, we worked online for the first year. Despite this, we felt we exceeded our own goals, which underlines that the interdisciplinary research was meaningful and necessary. In our group, we are continuing our collaboration by writing scientific papers. Next summer



we will also host a session at the Arctic Congress in Bodø. Fulbright Arctic Initiative was not a project – it was a start for a process.

In the beginning, the most important thing for all of us was our research project and an exchange visit to a U.S. university (the University of New Mexico, in my case). At the end of the program, many of

Anu Soikkeli

2020-23 Fulbright Arctic Initiative Scholar
Associate Professor,
University of Oulu

www.fulbright.fi/fin-fai

Fulbright Arctic Initiative
was not a project – it was a
start for a process.

us agreed that the most meaningful was the opportunity for international interdisciplinary collaboration and creating and strengthening the network.

Working on shared themes from the perspective of one's discipline certainly stimulated international cooperation on Arctic issues.

Photo: Anu Soikkeli at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History during the FAI final plenary week in Washington, D.C.

Fulbright Finland Expands Collaboration with the U.S. Department of Education



The Fulbright Finland Foundation is expanding its U.S.-Finnish collaboration in programs for primary and secondary school educators. In partnership with the U.S. Department of Education, the Foundation will organize, for the first time, a Fulbright-Hays Seminar in Finland in the summer 2024. The theme of the four-week program is *Demystifying the Infrastructure of Happiness in Finnish Society*.

Funded by the Department of Education, the Fulbright-Hays Seminars provide short-term international study for U.S. educators in the social sciences and humanities for the purpose of improving their understanding and knowledge of the peoples and cultures of other countries.

Finland has topped the World Happiness Index for six consecutive years, and the upcoming

seminar will provide 16 U.S. educators and administrators an opportunity to explore the Finnish infrastructure contributing to the overall happiness of the country. The focus will be on key strengths, including education and knowhow, nature and sustainable development, and functionality and well-being.

The Foundation’s existing collaboration with the U.S. Department of Education includes the Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad (DDRA) program, designed to contribute to the development of the study of modern foreign languages and area studies in the U.S. The DDRA fellowships are awarded primarily for candidates planning a U.S. teaching career upon doctoral degree completion. The next DDRA fellow to Finland will be arriving in the summer 2024.

Fulbright-Hays Seminar
Apply by January 4, 2024:
www.fulbright.fi/fulbright-hays-seminars-abroad

Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad (DDRA)
www2.ed.gov/programs/iegpsddrap

Bringing Finnish Play to Philadelphia

After her grant term in Finland, **Julia Miller** took her findings and best practices in Finnish early childhood education and created a play program called Just Play, to provide a stimulating, social-emotional, sensory-oriented, and academic environment for students from kindergarten through second grade in Philadelphia.

“While playful learning may look different in Finland due to a myriad of social, economic, and educational frameworks, I was able to bring back best practices through my many observational experiences. Without my Fulbright project, I would have never had the confidence to start Just Play, adapt, and shift to a pandemic online classroom, and then reach new heights by bringing playful learning to neighborhoods all throughout Philly,” Julia says.

“I am incredibly thankful for my time in Finland because it acted as my catalyst to continue to bring playful learning and high-quality learning opportunities for children and families in Philadelphia. But most of all, I am forever thankful to be a part of the Fulbright Finland Family who always believes in the Power of Play,” she concludes.



Read Julia’s article about the impact her Fulbright project has had in her community in Northern Philadelphia: www.fulbright.fi/news-magazine/bringing-finnish-play-to-philadelphia

Julia Miller
2018-19 U.S. Fulbright Fellow
University of Helsinki

Reimagining Schools and Support for Refugee and Immigrant Students



Tuija Niemi, Kirsi Peräjärvi, and Pasi Rangell are the 2023 Fulbright Leaders for Global Schools Travel Grantees. In November, the school leaders traveled to the International School Leaders Association's (ISLA) annual meeting in Minneapolis to learn about supporting refugee and immigrant students in schools.

"If we were asked to distill the essence of our trip into one core message, it would undoubtedly revolve around the significance of human connection. Our experiences in Minneapolis emphasized that age, gender, and ethnic backgrounds are secondary to our shared humanity. In our pursuit to make the world, and our education systems, more equitable and inclusive, the three pillars of Edison High School resonated with us: we belong together, we believe in our capacity to effect change, and we

become a positive force in the world," Tuija, Kirsi, and Pasi write in their blog post.

"Our journey to Minneapolis was an awakening, but it was also a reminder that the lessons learned there are equally applicable in our daily lives as educators back home. As we continue to advocate for a brighter and more inclusive future for our students, we carry the spirit of ISLA with us, knowing that our commitment to change begins with the way we encounter each other and the world. This experience underscored the transformative potential of even a brief exchange program," they conclude.

Read more about the Fulbright Leaders for Global Schools Travel Grantees' experiences and takeaways

www.fulbright.fi/about-us/blog/reimagining-schools-and-support-refugee-and-immigrant-students

www.fulbright.fi/fin-flgs-travel-grant

The FLGS Travel Grant Program for Finnish educators was organized by the Fulbright Finland Foundation with funding provided by the U.S. Department of State.

Join Fulbright Finland at the 2024 EDUCA Conference

The Fulbright Finland Foundation is partnering with the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture in sharing lessons from the Fulbright Leaders for Global Schools Travel Grantees' topical transatlantic collaboration with wider audiences at the 2024 EDUCA, the largest annual event for the education and training sector in Finland.

A discussion on *How Schools Support Immigrant and Refugee Students – Inspiration from Transatlantic Collaboration* at EDUCA on Saturday, January 27, will be facilitated by Fulbright Finland alumna **Tuija Niemi** and feature several 2024 U.S. Ful-

bright Leaders for Global Schools fellows. The conversation focuses on how the U.S. and Finnish K-12 school leaders are developing schools and support to better help their immigrant and refugee students to thrive.

The conference program also includes a panel discussion titled *Why is Finland in the Top of Teacher Education?* This session on Friday, January 26 features 2022-23 Fulbright-University of Turku Scholar **Samuel E. Abrams**.

Register to join us in person at EDUCA or follow the program virtually:

<https://educa.messukeskus.com>.

MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION AND CULTURE
FINLAND

www.fulbright.fi/us-flgs

www.fulbright.fi/utu-scholar



MP **Jani Kokko** (center) discussed the Finnish political system with the grantees during a private lunch at the Parliament House.

Gaining Insights into the Finnish Political System

The Parliament of Finland hosted the U.S. Fulbrighters for a private lunch and an engaging discussion on the Finnish political system, Finnish-U.S. relations, and the current themes on the Finnish Parliament's agenda. The grantees met with **Jani Kokko**, Member of Parliament, who gave an overview of current topics, followed by a candid and insightful discussion between the grantees and the MP. The discussion also focused on Finland's recent accession to NATO and the further strengthening of Finnish-U.S. relations.

Since science diplomacy and knowledge diplomacy are core dimensions of the Foundation's programs, the grantees were interested in hearing an MP perspective on effective ways of communicating the grantees' research to policymakers. MP Kokko emphasized the importance of always tailoring the communication to the specific person one is talking to by finding out in advance what their interests are, as well as being clear and providing concrete examples of the impact of the research.

After the lunch, the group observed the Parliament's Plenary Session, followed by an informative tour of the building. The visit was a part of the Foundation's annual, two-day Thanksgiving program for U.S. grantees.

Connecting with Key Partners and Leaders

Throughout their stay in Finland, the Foundation organizes events to introduce the grantees to a broad range of institutions to help them make connections instrumental for their time in Finland, their research and study, and their role as citizen diplomats.

The event series begins with the Arrival Orientation Seminar that plugs the grantees into key local

networks and gives them an opportunity to meet face-to-face with each other and with the Foundation's key partners and leaders in education and society.

During the four-day seminar for this year's cohort in August, the grantees met representatives from the Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finnish universities, as well as Finnish research and cultural institutions through interactive orientation sessions and special networking receptions. Finnish Minister for Foreign Affairs **Elina Valtonen** delivered remarks on behalf of the Finnish government at the reception hosted by the U.S. Ambassador to Finland, **Douglas T. Hickey**.

Text and photos: Maija Kettunen





Iveta Silova, Bethany McGowan, Sydney Erlikh, and Casey O'Donnell presented on desert life in the U.S. at the 30th American Voices seminar.

Fulbright Seminar Feeds into University Curriculum

Every October for the past 30 years, U.S. grantees have put their own academic research aside, picked a different topic of their choice, and offered the Finnish audience a window to help them understand the vast kaleidoscope of American cultures through their eyes.

The American Voices seminar at the University of Turku demonstrates the value of collaboration between the university and the Fulbright Finland Foundation. The seminar feeds into the North American Studies program's curriculum, and each year the participating students accumulate study credits by attending the seminar and writing a report on the way the speakers challenged or confirmed their ideas about American culture and society.

This year the themes varied from the U.S. education system, different regional accents, and the American desert, to women in sports and American football. The engaging presentations always spark a lively discussion among participants.

"The American Accents presentation got the crowd to practice their best Southern "y'all," Fulbright-University of Turku Graduate grantee **Chase Friel** adds. She was in a group with fellow graduate students **Claudia Partridge** and **Skye Pham** presenting on Reality TV in America. "We shared images and shows from the American reality TV landscape, compared media offerings between the U.S. and Finland, and discussed the impact of reality TV both within and beyond the American context," Chase describes their presentation.

From the Seminar to Classrooms

The engaging American Voices presentations form a collection of talks that are also ready to be presented in classrooms or at events elsewhere. Every year

local teachers join the seminar, seeking opportunities to connect with U.S. Fulbright grantees whom they can invite to their schools to give talks to their students.

For example, Fulbright-Saastamoinen Foundation Distinguished Chair **Anthony Hackney** visited Kallavesi Upper Secondary School in Kuopio and talked about Appalachian mountain culture and Fulbright-University of Turku Scholar **James Hawdon** traveled to Nousiainen Upper Secondary School to talk about crime in the U.S.

In addition to the seminar in Turku, over 150 students have had the opportunity to hear talks by U.S. Fulbrighters around Finland.

Building the Fulbright Finland Community

The American Voices weekend also serves as an important mid-semester meeting, bringing together the Foundation team and the U.S. Fulbrighters to discuss current topics. "Over meals and coffee and *pulla*, we were able to share stories, talk about what we have experienced thus far, and provide support to one another as we continue to adjust to life in Finland," Chase says.

The seminar is also a mandatory part of the training for the recently selected Finnish graduate grantees. After being selected in September, the grantees start researching universities they will apply to, and in Turku they discuss with the U.S. grantees and hear their advice and tips for the admission process, all while concretely joining the Fulbright Finland community.

Text and photos: Maija Kettunen



www.fulbright.fi/about-us/events/american-voices-seminar

Read a blog post about the American Voices seminar by Chase Friel
www.fulbright.fi/about-us/blog/fulbright-finland-events-and-engagement-american-voices-seminar

Invite a U.S. Fulbrighter to give a talk at your institution
www.fulbright.fi/speaker-program

Complex Issue of Parental Incarceration – Finding Solutions to Support Prisoners’ Families

Currently, prisons worldwide hold more than 10 million people. Disproportionately affected are those who are poor or marginalized. The incarceration of a person reaches well beyond their individual experience. Frequently, their families and children must contend with such issues as family disruption, financial insecurity, and stigma. Despite a growing body of research pointing to the complex problems children of incarcerated parents may face, including adverse behaviors and delinquency, we still know too little about how to best support these vulnerable children and families.

Parental incarceration is a complex issue, one that countries – and researchers – have approached in various ways. Not only do penal and social policies vary significantly between countries, but also crime levels and incarceration rates. The criminal-legal and social welfare systems within the U.S. and Finland specifically are noticeably different.

To begin with, the U.S. has amongst the highest rate of incarceration in the world, while Finland has one of the lowest. Secondly, a main role of U.S. prisons is to punish offenders and protect the public, while prisons in Finland focus more on rehabilitation of the offender. In terms of social welfare, the U.S. tends to emphasize individual responsibility with limited governmental involvement in family life and focuses predominantly on protecting children from immediate harm, while Finland tends to emphasize collective well-being with a government run social welfare system that promotes the overall welfare of all.

These different factors can lead to noticeably different outcomes for children and families – and, as such, offer an invaluable opportunity to study those outcomes, their causes, and possible solutions.

Our fruitful collaboration began in the winter of 2023, when Dr. **Jean Kjellstrand**, from the University of Oregon, through the Fulbright U.S. Scholar program, had an opportunity to travel to Tampere University and immerse herself in Finland, visit Finnish prisons and non-profit organizations, and study policies and practices relevant to prisoners and their families. Her contributions extended beyond research as she shared her expertise through lectures and presentations within the community and university.

Joint Insights

To continue and deepen our work, Dr. **Rosi Enroos** from Tampere University took advantage of a Ful-

bright Finland Travel Grant for Research Collaboration, which led to her first visit to the U.S. and the University of Oregon in October 2023.

This one-month exchange focused primarily on visits to prisons and re-entry centers within Washington and Oregon. However, she also delivered lectures and had numerous conversations with students, faculty, and community members about the Finnish welfare state and issues related to criminal-legal systems within both countries.

These exchanges have significantly strengthened our joint knowledge of the different policies and practices related to incarcerated parents and their children within each country. We not only have had many in-depth conversations about the norms, lifestyles, cultures, and governmental policies within each of our countries, but our visits have helped us think more concretely about more effective ways to support families with an incarcerated parent.

Future Directions

The relationships that we have nurtured and developed with community partners in each country have laid the foundation for additional research. As part of her flex grant, Dr. Kjellstrand will return to Tampere this coming winter.

During this time, we plan to work with community partners to secure funding to develop, implement, and examine new ways to support children and families with an incarcerated parent in both

We hope to build more bridges between Finland and the U.S. by working with our home institutions to develop exchange programs for students and faculty alike.

countries. Additionally, we hope to build more bridges between Finland and the U.S. by working with our home institutions to develop exchange programs for students and faculty alike.

In line with the Fulbright Finland Foundation’s slogan, we hope that together we can shape the future, specifically for families with an incarcerated parent, but for other citizens as well.



Rosi Enroos

PhD, Docent
University Lecturer
Tampere University
2023-24 Fulbright Finland
Travel Grant for Research
Collaboration



Jean Kjellstrand

PhD, Associate
Professor
University of Oregon
2022-24 Fulbright U.S.
Scholar Program



Casey O'Donnell

PhD, Associate Professor
Michigan State University
2023-24 Fulbright-Tampere
University Scholar

[www.fulbright.fi/
tuni-scholar](http://www.fulbright.fi/tuni-scholar)

I get odd looks when I tell people that I am an Associate Professor of games, or that I am a game maker and a game researcher. The study of games is not a new academic endeavor. Anthropology and sociology have long included games and sport as one of many aspects of culture. Economics has long used the language of “game” when referring to models/simulations and mathematics has long claimed the sub-field of game theory.

However, it has only been in the last two decades that Game Studies has defined itself as a field of academic inquiry. Though I have yet to confirm it, I suspect that I am one of the first Game Studies Fulbright scholars and I could not imagine a more important place to spend this time than in Finland and at Tampere University in particular.

The Centre of Excellence in Game Culture Studies and the Game Research Lab at Tampere University has been the home to many premier scholars in the field of Game Studies over the years. This community of researchers has served as an international example of what an exceptional community of game researchers can accomplish when well supported. This is one of the reasons I came to do games research as a Fulbright Finland scholar.

The other reason I chose to pursue a Fulbright-Tampere University Scholar Award is because of Finland itself. The Finnish game industry is an interesting context for understanding how

many game developers have come to structure their work in a “post” COVID time. My first book, *Developer’s Dilemma: The Secret World of Videogame Creators* was published in 2014. In that book I posed several challenges that I believed game developers throughout the world needed to face to cultivate more sustainable workplace practices. Amongst the mainstream game industries those challenges have gone unheeded in the last decade.

My Fulbright project, “Making Games Differently,” is about finding and talking with game makers that have attempted to face some of these challenges. Turns out that Finland is an exceptional context to begin this research. Many Finnish game developers have already worked to unionize to a greater extent than game makers throughout the world. Many have embraced more sustainable work-life balances and most significantly, Finnish game makers have done more to combat the long history of sexism in the workplace that has plagued game developer communities throughout the world.

While moving a third of the way across the world is never a simple undertaking, I have found the experience to be an exceptional one. Too often I hear people ask me, “Why come to Finland?” as if I was lost. However, the reality is that this has long been an exceptional place when it comes to studying games and I am honored to have the opportunity to work with my Finnish colleagues.

Making Games Differently



In the photo (l-r): 2022-23 Fulbright-VTT Scholar **Jie Zhang**, CEO of VTT **Antti Vasara**, 2022-23 Fulbright-VTT Scholar **William Collins**, former Senior Advisor at VTT and Fulbright Finland alum **Matti Kokkala**, and Senior Scientist at VTT **Sebastian Lindqvist** at the Fulbright Finland Foundation Award Ceremony in May 2023.

Connecting Researchers in Science and Technology

After their grant terms, Foundation grantees play a key role as alumni, continuing their research collaboration, sharing their networks, and forging further connections between Finnish and U.S. researchers and their institutions.

After returning to the U.S. from his grant term in Finland, **William Collins** (2022-23 Fulbright-VTT Award in Science, Technology, and Innovation) organized a joint seminar between his home and host institutions, the University of Kansas and VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland.

During the two-day seminar, over 70 scholars and faculty from the two institutions got together virtually to present their research, and discuss joint research interests and possible future collaboration.

“After spending time with other Fulbrighters during my time in Finland, I was inspired by the amazing work they were doing and I saw the benefits

of international collaboration. Reaping these benefits myself while working at VTT and recognizing the many synergies that exist between research being done at KU and at VTT, it seemed only natural to help make more of these connections. Hopefully the seminar will be the start of many conversations that will lead to collaborations and partnerships moving forward,” William says.

The seminar was a concrete example of the many ways in which Fulbrighters build on their individual grant experience with the goal of broadening the linkages and collaboration between the home and host institutions. The Foundation also offers grant programs that are specifically designed to support the development of cooperation between Finnish and U.S. institutions, for instance the Fulbright Finland Travel Grant for Institutional Partnership Building.

www.fulbright.fi/travel-grant-research

www.fulbright.fi/travel-grant-partnerships



COMPETITION FOR THE 2025-26 FULBRIGHT-VTT AWARD IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND INNOVATION OPENS SOON
fulbright.fi/vtt-scholar

Innovation vs. Happiness Podcast

If you're interested in learning more about life and working as a researcher in Finland, listen to a recent podcast episode with **Erika Holt**. Erika came to Finland from the U.S. on a Fulbright U.S. Student grant in 1998. After completing her PhD, she has worked at VTT in Finland and is currently VTT's Customer Account Lead in the Nuclear Energy Sector.

Erika is a Board Member of the Fulbright Finland Foundation and pictured (right) giving a tour of the VTT Centre for Nuclear Safety for the Board.

www.espool.fi/en/articles/innovation-vs-happiness-how-unleash-creativity-through-self-care



Valmennusta työnhakuun Suomessa

Osana yhdysvaltalaisille stipendiaateille tarjottavaa Suomeen perehdyttävää ja integroivaa koulutusta, Fulbright Suomi -säätiö järjestää vuosittain myös työnhakuun ja suomalaisiin työmarkkinoihin keskittyvän tapahtuman amerikkalaisille opiskelijoille. Tämän vuoden amerikkalaiset opiskelijastipendiaatit tapasivat valmennusta varten säätiön tiloissa marraskuussa.

Suurin osa Fulbright-opiskelijoista saapuu Suomeen suorittamaan kokonaisen maisterin tutkinnon ja heillä on usein myös tavoitteena löytää itselleen Suomesta opintojen aikainen harjoittelupaikka tai lopputyöpaikka sekä työllistyä Suomeen valmistumisensa jälkeen.

Työnhakutapahtumassa oli mukana aiempien vuosien amerikkalaisia stipendiaatteja, jotka nykyisin työskentelevät Suomessa asiantuntijatehtävissä: kestävän kehityksen konsulttina, markkinoinnin ja viestinnän asiantuntijana sekä väitöskirjatutkijana. Alumnit kertoivat tapahtumassa uusille stipendiaateille omista poluistaan harjoittelupaikan ja pysyvän työsuhteen hankkimisessa sekä antoivat vinkkejä toimivista

työnhakukanavista, työhaastatteluun valmistautumisesta sekä ammatillisesta verkostoitumisesta Suomessa.

Opiskelujen aikainen aktiivisuus opiskelijajärjestöissä, Suomessa jo työskentelevien kansainvälisten työntekijöiden haastatteluun heidän työllistymispoluistaan, suomalaiset suosittelijat sekä proaktiivinen ja sisukas asenne olivat alumniin mukaan keskeisiä valtteja suomalaisen työpaikan saamisessa. Myös Fulbright-status ja -yhteydet olivat olleet alumneille hyödyksi. Alumnit kehottivat stipendiaatteja suhtautumaan avoimesti erilaisiin työmahdollisuuksiin ja olla rajoittamatta itseään työhaussa.

Tilaisuudessa keskusteltiin myös suomalaisten ja amerikkalaisten työkuultuurien eroista. Harjoittelujaksojen ja määräaikaisten tehtävien jälkeen pysyvän työsuhteen Suomessa solminut **Erica Martin** totesi lopuksi, että kaikkein merkityksellisintä hänelle suomalaisessa työelämässä on ollut hyvän tasapainon löytäminen työn ja yksityiselämänsä välillä.

Teksti: Karoliina Kokko

Abraham Kipnis (vas.), **Erica Martin** ja **Jordan Banks** valottivat uusille stipendiaateille yhdysvaltalaisen ja suomalaisten työmarkkinoiden ja työnhakukäytäntöjen eroja ja antoivat vinkkejä työpaikan löytämiseen.

Discovering the Importance of Environmental Diplomacy

Being selected as Fulbright Finland Foundation's representative for the Study of the U.S. Institutes for Student Leaders from Europe (SUSI) program, I embarked on a journey that surpassed all expectations.

This amazing opportunity examined the crucial intersections of environmental issues and leadership. I didn't expect this experience to shape my perspective and open doors to incredible projects for my future like it did.

As a Fulbright Finland alumna, I've come to understand that my role extends beyond personal growth—it's about assuming leadership, awakening inspiration, and leaving an effect on the global stage. I am now driven by the fact that together, we can create a sustainable future.

Salima Alaoui is a soon-to-be BBA graduate with international business experience in the UAE, Morocco, and the U.S. She aims to enhance diplomatic cooperation in Environmental Diplomacy between Finland and other nations.



Salima Alaoui
2023 Study of the U.S. Institutes for Student Leaders from Europe Grant

Read Salima's blog post www.fulbright.fi/about-us/blog/discovering-importance-environmental-diplomacy



During their recent visit in Finland and the Foundation office, Carol Tenopir and Jerry Lundeen were presented with the Foundation's unique glass *Kuksa*, created by 2018-19 U.S. Fulbright Fellow and glass artist Jonathan Capps.

Paying it Forward

Carol Tenopir and Gerald (Jerry) Lundeen share their life long connection with Finland and Fulbright, and their motivation to give back.

Text LOUISA GAIRN Photo MIRKA MCINTIRE

Carol Tenopir
2016-17 Fulbright-Nokia Distinguished Chair in Information and Communications Technologies
Hanken School of Economics

2015 Fulbright Specialist Program
Tampere University

2005 Fulbright Specialist Program
University of Oulu

While Jerry counts close family ties with Finland, for Carol the relationship has professional roots - but Fulbright opportunities enabled the couple to forge lifelong bonds with the country.

Jerry Lundeen grew up with Finland in his bones. The descendent of a full set of Finnish grandparents, Jerry was surrounded by Finnish conversations and stories throughout his Minnesota and Wisconsin childhood.

"My grandparents all came from Finland - according to DNA studies, I am 98% Finnish and 2% Swedish. The 2% Swedish is where my surname Lundeen comes from," he smiles. "And although my parents learned English when they went to school, they spoke Finnish at home. So I've had this

interest in and connection with Finland since I was a child."

The Fulbright Finland grantee in this story, however, is Jerry's spouse Professor **Carol Tenopir**, a native of California. A well-respected academic expert in scientific communication, Carol also wrote the monthly "Online Databases" column for *Library Journal* for 27 years.

After studying library science at California State University, Fullerton, Carol worked as a librarian at the University of Hawaii, before gaining her doctorate from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She then worked as a professor of Library and Information Studies at the University of Hawaii. Next stop was the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, where she was a professor in the School of

Information Sciences, as well as Director of the College of Communication and Information Research Center. Carol continued to teach at the School and was its interim director until she retired in 2021.

Personal and Professional Connections Piqued Interest in Fulbright Finland

“I got involved with Fulbright because Jerry was always interested in Finland, he’s Finnish American, and has lots of relatives there. But there are also a number of Finns who are deeply involved in the same kind of research that I am in,” Carol explains.

“I hadn’t done any study abroad as a student or any Fulbrights as a young career person. But I met quite a number of Finns at conferences and through research collaborations.”

Carol first visited Finland in 1992 when she was invited to keynote a conference in Espoo. The family were living in Hawaii at the time with their six-year old son, and came to Finland during March. “It was the first time our son had been on a sled,” she smiles. In subsequent visits we’ve gotten around, we’ve visited Karelia, western Finland, down to Turku and castles everywhere,” Carol says. “Our son is probably the only kid in America who’s been to every castle in Finland.”

The personal and professional connections piqued Carol’s interest in Finland – but it was a Finnish colleague, **Mirja Iivonen**, who first suggested Fulbright as a possibility.

“I met Mirja at meetings of the Association for Information Science and Technology. She was involved with research in the same field, and so we got to know each other professionally. And she was intimately involved in bringing me to Finland and helping me get my first two Fulbrights.”

Carol has visited Finland through Fulbright on three occasions. Her first taste of the country was as a short-term Fulbright Specialist in 2005 at the University of Oulu. Carol then came back with Fulbright ten years later, again on a short specialist visit, this time to Tampere University in 2015.

It was through conferences that Carol made her second pivotal Fulbright connection, meeting **Bo-Christer Björk**, a professor at Hanken School of Economics and a pioneer in the field of open-access journals. In spring 2006 Carol spent 3 months in Helsinki doing research with Björk funded by the Research Council of Finland. “We continued doing research together, and that’s how I came to do the third Fulbright, which was at Hanken.”

Carol returned to Finland with her third Fulbright, and this time for a full year during 2016–17, which allowed her – and Jerry – to more fully immerse themselves in the Finnish experience, as Fulbright-Nokia Distinguished Chair in Information and Communications Technologies at Hanken School of Economics.

A Fulbright Scholar’s Spouse in Finland

A fellow information science specialist, Jerry also has plenty of research experience under his belt.

But Jerry’s Fulbright Finland journey had a different focus: language, culture, and family.

Jerry explains that on his mother’s side, his grandparents emigrated from Finland to America in the late 1870–1880s, while his father’s family came to the U.S. around the turn of the twentieth century.

“My first actual contact or visit to Finland was in the summer of 1960,” Jerry recalls. “I toured Europe with two friends of mine, which included about a week and a half in Finland.”

We’ve benefited so much from the Fulbright experiences that we owe it to them to help keep this going.

In the U.S., Jerry’s parents had kept in touch with their cousins and other relatives back in Finland, who sent packages and correspondence back and forth. At home, Finnish culture and traditions remained very much alive.

“I heard a lot of Finnish growing up. My parents spoke Finnish to their siblings pretty much because it was their more comfortable language. They never spoke Finnish to me, so I missed out on learning Finnish as a child. However, I probably learned a few hundred words just from exposure.”

“But I didn’t really have any opportunity to spend much time in Finland until Carol got an invitation to be a keynote speaker in 1992,” he says.

From then on, Jerry and his family rekindled their Finnish connections, he explains. “We made more of an effort to get in touch with relatives and have kept that up since then. My sister and I brought my father back to see his cousins and other relatives, when he was 92, back in 2000. Since then, we’ve been going almost every year for trips of three or four weeks.”

“Finland in 1960 reminded me of where I grew up in the 40s, in northern Wisconsin. So it looked very familiar. It had pretty much the kind of community and stores and everything that I was expecting to see,” he recalls.

“And then when I came back, 30 years later, I was impressed with how much more modern everything was. They were really leading in a lot of ways, setting examples for things like education and innovation.”

Fulbright Finland for “Late Bloomers”

“I was already a professor before I did my first study abroad – I guess you could call me a late bloomer in that case,” Carol smiles.

“But that’s the nice thing about Fulbright, that it gives an opportunity for a short visit, because I couldn’t be gone more than the six weeks that the Senior Specialist awards were for. At that point in my career, I was a full professor who had other obligations. But I had the connections, I had the desire to go,

and Fulbright made it work out really well,” she explains.

Having the full year during 2016–17 gave plenty of time and opportunity for Carol to participate in more complex research and teaching projects on the one hand, and for Jerry to connect with family and deepen his knowledge of Finnish language and culture on the other.

“I was really pleased to get there for the full year experience for lots of reasons, but one is that I got to for the first time participate in the Fulbright orientation, which was marvelous,” says Carol.

“The Foundation staff spend so much effort and time and kindness in the orientation – I missed out on that with the shorter visits. Getting to participate in that really cemented for me how important it was.”

“The Foundation helped in other ways for the short visits but this was the first time to really get to spend a lot of time with them, and see all they do for the scholars,” she says.

From Fulbright Grantee to Fulbright Donor

“For me, Fulbright has allowed me to make connections with colleagues and researchers who share an interest and expand my thinking,” Carol says.

“It’s been really great to make that connection with other researchers, and

also the personal connections with family and friends. The fact that there is this shared love of the country coming from Jerry makes it really special. We keep going back, not just to see relatives, but to visit art galleries and historical museums, and to go to the ballet, opera and concerts... The personal life and the research just come together.”

“So, beyond just writing a paper, it’s getting involved with the graduate students, getting involved with the faculty, but also getting involved with the culture of the country. To me, it’s that whole package. It would still have been really important even if we didn’t have any relatives in Finland.”

Carol and Jerry have also chosen to personally support the Fulbright Finland Foundation as donors. What motivated them to contribute in this way?

“I just felt like we should pay it forward a little bit. We’ve benefited so much from the Fulbright experiences that we just kind of owe it to them to help keep this going.”

Carol and Jerry also participate in the Friends of Fulbright Finland alumni network, and Carol has served on selection panels with the Foundation to choose Finnish scholars to the U.S.

“I got to see both sides of that, and realize what an important role the Foundation plays and how much effort they put in, to see their enthusiasm and that they really care.”

“We just wanted to be able to contribute in whatever way they need to make that continue because it’s really valuable for the visiting scholars.”

Carol notes that there are different ways to participate, even from a distance. “The last two years, I have volunteered to do the virtual orientation with the people that just found out they’ve gotten their grants to Finland. So it’s nice that you can get involved even if you’re not real close to an institution.”

“We do try to go back to Finland every year. We had a two-year break like everybody did during the pandemic, but we want to come back, and we always like to visit Terhi and the Fulbright Finland office, because we feel a lot of gratitude for what they do, and a lot of connection there.

“We want to maintain that connection, which I think is really important, and even if we couldn’t travel back to Finland, giving the donations allows us to still keep that connection alive.”

But Carol and Jerry aren’t quite ready to hang up their travelling shoes just yet.

“We’ve already planned a visit with one of Jerry’s cousins, who is an opera singer,” Carol says. “He keeps inviting us to see the summer opera festival at Savonlinna, so that’s where we’ll be going next year.”

Read the whole interview online
www.fulbright.fi/news-magazine/paying-it-forward



Donate to Support Fulbright Finland

Annually, approximately 100 individuals become Fulbright Finland Foundation grantees. At the same time, dozens of highly talented applicants and future change-makers from both Finland and the United States do not receive an award due to lack of funds.

Do you want to create a direct and lasting impact? Donate to the Fulbright Finland Foundation to sustain the exchanges and enable additional scholarships.

Now is the time to invest in the future.

www.fulbright.fi/work-with-us/donate



Rahankeräyslupa RA/2022/61

Donors

Make a Difference

Thank you

Donors' role is critical. They help the Fulbright Finland Foundation sustain and expand exchanges between Finland and the U.S. and bring together the best scientists, academics, artists, educators, and future leaders and change-makers.

Whether donating via dedicated endowments or directly to scholarships, establishing a scholarship, providing a real estate gift, or making a legacy gift by adding the Foundation to one's will, all gifts send a clear message that the Fulbright Finland experience is transformational and like no other. Every gift, big or small, makes a difference.

We are deeply grateful to all donors for their generosity, and for taking an active role in advancing the Foundation's vision of empowering the minds that will find global solutions to tomorrow's challenges. A special thank you to all those who donate annually, leaving a permanent imprint in Finnish-U.S. exchanges.

The Fulbright Finland Centennial Fund was launched in 2016 to honor the 100th anniversary of Finland's independence. As an endowment meant to last into perpetuity, it supports awards for Finnish and U.S. students, scholars, and professionals through its annual yield.

The Friends of Fulbright Finland Alumni Enrichment Fund is a special endowment supporting grants for U.S. alumni to return to Finland to continue and expand their original Fulbright projects and collaboration. Like the Centennial Fund, the Alumni Enrichment Fund uses its annual yield to fund grants. A major share of this endowment came from the legacy gift by the Foundation's alumna and volunteer team member, **Suzanne Louis**, who passed away in 2020.

Most recently the Funds have received contributions from **Michael Loovis**, **Gerald Lundeen**, **Carol Tenopir**, **Andy Levy**, **Leasa Weimer**, **Marlene Broemer**, and **Terhi Mölsä**.

Read more on different ways to support and make a difference in Finnish-U.S. exchanges here:

www.fulbright.fi/work-with-us/donate



I am confident that my Fulbright Scholar Award was both the most authentic and transformative social and cultural experience of my entire academic career. My wish was for others to have a comparable experience. As such I wanted to pay it forward and the surest way to do that was to donate to Fulbright Finland Foundation.

More specifically, I established a Scholastic Award intended to support students, researchers, and scholars desiring to come to the United States to study or pursue academic and research interests.”

Mike Loovis

2010–11 Fulbright U.S. Scholar



I donate to the Fulbright Finland Foundation because I believe in the power of intercultural experiences to develop leaders and build a more peaceful world. My Fulbright grant to Finland was a life-changing experience. A nine-month grant unexpectedly turned into an eleven-year international adventure, and the Fulbright Finland experience launched me on a journey of intercultural learning, personal growth, and global collaboration.

In today's polarized world, we need intercultural exchanges more than ever. The Fulbright Finland Foundation is helping to develop leaders who value intercultural perspectives and who are equipped to break down barriers and build bridges. I am proud to support this important work.”

Leasa Weimer

2011–12 Fulbright-EDUFI Fellow



Discussing Journalism in Finland and the U.S.

Finnish alumni and current U.S. grantees were hosted by Helsingin Sanomat, the largest newspaper in the Nordic countries, for a timely discussion on the evolving media landscape, differences between being a journalist in Finland and the U.S., and the process of producing investigative news stories.

Laura Saarikoski, Editor-in-Chief and former U.S. correspondent for Helsingin Sanomat, provided insights into the newspaper's history and shed light on the differences between U.S. and Finnish media. She also discussed paradigm shifts from traditional to digital journalism and the current transition from text to audio and video formats. Saarikoski highlighted the challenge of ensuring that the news reaches younger audiences, who might not read traditional or online media outlets anymore.

Investigative Journalism

Pauliina Siniauer, a Fulbright Finland alumna and investigative reporter at Helsingin Sanomat, shared her experiences in creating investigative news stories. Siniauer talked about the important and sometimes challenging task of building trust with interviewees, particularly those who have faced wrongdoing.

Specializing in food journalism, during her studies at CUNY on a Fulbright grant, Pauliina examined

tainted food and unsanitary conditions in New York City's public school cafeterias. Her group's report won the 2018 award for "best student investigation" from the Investigative Reporters and Editors, the leading non-profit organization for investigative reporting in the U.S.

In Finland, her articles have exposed misleading information about the origins of certain fish products, and she has conducted tests to prove the authenticity of Finnish strawberries.

Contributing to Broader Public Conversation

The Foundation alumni and grantees have an important role in contributing to the broader public conversation on current themes. The visit was organized by the ASLA-Fulbright Alumni Association, in collaboration with the Fulbright Finland Foundation, and it is an example of the opportunities that the Alumni Association in Finland provides for its members to join in the current and important discussions in society.

Founded 70 years ago, the ASLA-Fulbright Alumni Association is among the oldest Fulbright alumni associations in the world.

The event was hosted by Fulbright Finland alumna **Pauliina Siniauer** (small photo) who works as a Reporter and a Producer in the Investigative Team, and Editor-in-Chief **Laura Saarikoski** who is a former U.S. correspondent for Helsingin Sanomat.

ASLA-Fulbright Alumni Association

www.fulbright.fi/asla-fulbright-alumni-association/join-association

Text and photos: Maija Kettunen



Training Outreach Ambassadors

Outreach Ambassadors are alumni volunteers who engage in active outreach in support of prospective Finnish applicants as well as current U.S. grantees.

Through the Outreach Ambassadors program, Finnish Fulbright alumni returning from the U.S. are engaged in the Foundation's advising efforts in a systematic way. The network of outreach volunteers reaches across Finnish university campuses all around the country. An important part of the volunteers' role is to share their own paths to a grantee and their experiences studying or conducting research in the U.S. The Foundation provides materials for the volunteers to support the

sharing of information in different types of events.

To inspire and equip the Outreach Ambassadors for their important role, the Foundation recently organized a hybrid training session and discussion for the current cohort of ambassadors. During the event, the participants brainstormed ideas to reach diverse applicant pools from across the country and promote the Foundation's programs and discussed effective ways to advise and mentor Finnish applicants. They also discussed ways to provide support for U.S. grantees as they integrate into their new home city and university community.

Text and photos: Maija Kettunen

Connect with the Fulbright Finland Outreach Ambassadors
www.fulbright.fi/fulbright-finland-outreach-ambassadors

Sports Scholarship Opportunities in the U.S.

Over 100 high school counselors, coaches, and student-athletes from 14 different sports such as basketball, ice hockey, cheerleading, and wrestling came to hear about the recruiting and eligibility process at a webinar on Student-Athlete and Sports Scholarship Opportunities in the U.S. organized by the Foundation.

The guest speakers included **Elizabeth Thompson**, Associate Director of International Outreach and Strategic Partnerships of the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) and Fulbright Finland Foundation alum **Hameed Ahmed**, currently working as the Associate Head Squash Coach at Harvard University.

Hameed shared his journey from a student-athlete to a coach at Harvard, providing valuable

insights and tips for navigating the recruiting process. Additionally, he emphasized the value of support from the Fulbright Finland Foundation: "The most benefit I got in addition to financial aid was the educational and cultural side of things. So, when I arrived, I already had a better understanding of what the educational system in the U.S. is and what kind of a place the U.S. is in general," Hameed says.

"Lastly, it offered a network that I'm obviously still part of by attending events like this, and in two weeks' time I'm hosting six Fulbrighters who are in Boston this year and getting them together and getting to know them," he concludes.

Text: Emilia Holopainen



Hameed Ahmed
 Associate Head Squash Coach
 Harvard University
 Fulbright Finland Undergraduate Grant 2007-08
 Fulbright Finland Renewal Grant 2009-11



Watch the webinar recording on our YouTube
www.youtube.com/@fulbrightfinland



Gabriela Arias Villela



Sten Olsson

Welcomes and Transitions

The Foundation is pleased to welcome two new Board Members: **Sten Olsson** and **Gabriela Arias Villela**. Attorney and Partner at Hannes Snellman Attorneys Ltd., Sten Olsson is dual-qualified as a Finnish and New York attorney. He has an LL.M. also from New York University where he studied on an ASLA-Fulbright Scholarship. Gabriela (Gabi) R. Arias Villela is Deputy Public Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy Helsinki. She comes to Helsinki from Washington, D.C., where she served as Public Diplomacy Officer for Nordic, Baltic, and Arctic at the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs.

On the Board, Sten and Gabi succeed **Piia Björn**, who concluded her two full Board terms totaling eight years, and **Nazanin Berarpour**, who has returned to the U.S. from her post in Helsinki. The Foundation conveys a sincere thank you to both Piia and Nazanin for their dedicated service

and is pleased to announce that Piia Björn continues to work with the Foundation in the role of a Senior Advisor.

The Foundation staff team welcomes **Tarja Mykrä** who has started as a part-time Education Consultant working on the Fulbright Leaders for Global Schools Program, and the Fulbright-Hays Seminar. She is a two-time alumna of the Foundation, and after her own grants has also worked as a member of the Foundation team: in 2022 she facilitated the first Fulbright Teachers for Global Classrooms program in Finland.

A warm welcome back to Program Coordinator **Saara Martikainen** who has returned from her parental leave to coordinate the ASLA-Fulbright Graduate Grants and the Fulbright Finland Renewal Grant programs, and a sincere thank you and all best wishes to Program Coordinator **Ling Choi** who has become a valued staff alumna.



Windows Into Fulbright Finland

2024 marks the 75th anniversary of the Fulbright Finland Foundation. Throughout the anniversary year, we'll be sharing stories from past and present, photos, videos, and grantee statements on LinkedIn and Instagram.

Follow us on social media for the "75 windows into Fulbright Finland."



www.instagram.com/fulbrightfinland
www.linkedin.com/company/fulbright-finland

FULBRIGHT FINLAND FOUNDATION 2023

www.fulbright.fi/about-us/year-focus

114

grantees, 43 Finnish and 71 U.S. grantees

1,9 million

euros awarded as grants

84

events throughout Finland and online

4 900

client contacts and event participants

FULBRIGHT FINLAND NEWS

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Calendar

December

8.12.
Trust Fund Board Meeting

13.12.
Fulbright Finland Foundation
Board Meeting

25.-31.12.
Foundation Office Closed

January

Fulbright Finland Foundation
Board of Directors Annual General
Meeting

22.1.-1.2.
Fulbright Leaders for Global
Schools Study Tour to Finland

23.-25.1.
Arrival Orientation for U.S.
Fulbright Grantees

24.1.
Reception in Honor of the Spring
2024 U.S. Fulbright Scholars and
Educators

29.1.
*2024-25 Application
Deadline*
Fulbright Finland
Travel Grants

February

Trust Fund Annual General
Meeting

1.2.
2024-25 Application Deadline
Fulbright Specialist Program

2.2.
North American Studies
Roundtable

March

1.3.
2024-26 Application Deadline
Fulbright Arctic Initiative IV

21.-22.3.
Mid-Term Meeting for the U.S.
Fulbrighters

Multiple days in March and April
Virtual Fulbright Forum 2024:
Education, Innovation,
Science, and Art

24.6.-20.7.
**Fulbright-Hays
Seminar: Demystifying
the Infrastructure of
Happiness in Finnish
Society**



HARRI TARVAINEN / NORTH KARELIA

April

3.4.
2024-25 Application Deadline
Fulbright Finland Undergraduate
Grant

6.4.
Alumni Get-together in
Columbus, OH

May

13.5.
Pre-Departure Orientation for
Fulbright Finland Foundation
Awardees to the U.S. and
Fulbright Finland Award
Ceremony

19.5.
2025-26 Application Deadline
ASLA-Fulbright Graduate Grants

24.5.
Friends of Fulbright Finland
Alumni Event, Mystic Seaport, CT