

**Legal Education and Development (LEAD)
Fellowship Program for Tajikistan
APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The Legal Education and Development (LEAD) Fellowship Program for Tajikistan is a program of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) of the United States Department of State and is implemented by ABA ROLI and IREX. The program provides for master's level study of law in the United States to current resident citizens of **Tajikistan**.

The LEAD Program was established to provide an opportunity for legal professionals from Tajikistan to expand their understanding of the judicial system and legal culture in the United States as well as gain exposure to core values of the American legal profession through intensive legal educational and cultural exchange.

Program participants will pursue a one-year master of laws (LL.M.) degree program at an ABA accredited law school. **Fellows may not choose their own host university.** Up to six fellowships may be awarded.

Under the terms of this grant and the laws governing the J-1 visa required for participation in the LEAD Program, fellows must return to Tajikistan immediately upon completion of the program for a period of at least two years. Fellows are not eligible for visa extensions or transfers (for example J1 to F1) under any circumstances. No exceptions will be made.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Mentorship: Fellows will be paired with a mentor from among the ABA ROLI legal specialist alumni or ABA general membership. The mentors will be located in the cities where fellows will attend law school and will meet with the fellow upon arrival and throughout the US academic program to provide guidance and support.

Community Involvement: To further build fellows' professional skills and expose them to the principles of community service and social responsibility in the United States, fellows will also be required to participate in a volunteer community service project related to their professional interests during the academic year.

Internship Component: Internships provide an essential opportunity for fellows to gain professional experience and skills which they can directly apply to their future careers in Tajikistan. Fellows will conduct a full-time internship during the summer following their academic year.

Deadline: 5:00 PM, Tuesday, February 23, 2010

TECHNICAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Candidates will be considered without respect to race, color, religion, national origin, disability, or gender. Competition for the LEAD Program is merit-based and open to anyone who:

- Is a citizen, national, or permanent resident qualified to hold a valid passport issued by Tajikistan;
- Is the recipient of an undergraduate degree in law (four- or five-year study) by the time of the application;
- Is able to begin the academic exchange program in the United States in the summer of 2010;
- Is able to receive and maintain a United States J-1 visa.

Individuals in the following circumstances are NOT eligible for the LEAD Program:

- US citizens and permanent residents of the United States;
- Spouses of US citizens and permanent residents of the United States;
- Individuals currently participating in academic, training, or research programs in the United States;
- Individuals who have already been recipients of and participated in the LEAD Fellowship;
- Individuals currently residing or working outside Tajikistan;
- Individuals who have participated in an exchange visitor program sponsored or funded by the US government (e.g., Public Affairs Sections at US embassies or other US government agency) for a period of more than six weeks **and** who have not fulfilled their two-year home residency requirement by the time of application;
- Individuals who have applied for US permanent residency in the past three years;
- Local employees of US missions abroad who work for the US Department of State including USAID are ineligible for grants during the period of their employment and for one year following the termination of employment;
- Immediate family members (i.e., spouses and dependent children) of US Department of State employees for a period of one year following the termination of such employment. This provision does not disqualify self-supporting members of families who live apart from their parents;
- Persons arrested for, charged with, or convicted of a crime as further detailed by INL;
- Current IREX and ABA ROLI employees and consultants and their immediate family members (spouses, parents, children, and siblings) are not eligible to apply for any IREX or ABA ROLI-administered grant programs.

The US Department of State, ABA ROLI and IREX reserve the right to verify all of the information included in the application. In the event that there is a discrepancy, or information is found to be false, the application will immediately be declared invalid and the applicant ineligible.

Applications not meeting the above technical eligibility requirements will not be forwarded to the selection committee.

FINANCIAL PROVISIONS OF THE GRANT

- J-1 visa support;
- Roundtrip travel from fellow's home city to their host university in the United States;
- Tuition and additional mandatory university fees;
- Accident and sickness coverage;
- Monthly allowance for living expenses;
- Limited allowance for textbooks;
- An orientation program;
- Pre-academic English-language training (if necessary); and
- Alumni networking and training opportunities through the LEAD Alumni Club.

The LEAD Program provides no financial support for dependents.

Deadline: 5:00 PM, Tuesday, February 23, 2010

SELECTION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

The LEAD Program is conducted as a merit-based open competition. After the deadline, all eligible applications will be reviewed by a bi-national panel of academics, and regional and professional experts. Chosen semi-finalists will be interviewed in Tajikistan by a bi-national committee of US specialists, alumni of US LLM programs, and US embassy representatives. Selected semi-finalists will take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), in Spring 2010. Program finalists and alternates will be chosen based on results of the initial application review, interview committee, and test scores.

IREX and ABA ROLI staff provides administrative support only and does not vote in the final selections. All applicants will be notified of their status in late spring 2010. Fellowships will begin in late July to early August 2010. Due to the volume of applications received, IREX will not be able to forward explanations to applicants that were not chosen as program finalists.

Selection panels will use the following criteria to evaluate applications (not in order of importance):

- Academic excellence (as demonstrated in undergraduate law degree, or equivalent; and any other academic experience.);
- Relevant professional experience;
- English proficiency (with competencies in written, reading, speaking and listening comprehension);
- Demonstrated legal knowledge;
- Demonstrated leadership potential;
- Suitability for US graduate school;
- Flexibility to be an exchange program participant;
- Commitment to return to Tajikistan immediately upon LEAD Program completion;
- Commitment to contribute to the development of Tajikistan's justice system, and to share the program benefits with their community, including active participation in the LEAD Alumni Club;
- A demonstrated relationship between earning an LL.M. and the candidate's ability to achieve his/her career goals;

PLACEMENT: Please note that finalists will be placed in one-year LL.M. programs. IREX attempts to make the best placements possible, taking into consideration the applicant's professional interests, academic credentials and test scores.

The LEAD program works with over 30 host universities that apply to host LEAD fellows in law. If you are selected for a LEAD fellowship, you will be placed at a LEAD host university that has applied to host a fellow in law. *You cannot be placed at an institution that did not officially apply to host a LEAD fellow.*

All attempts are made to place fellows in programs that correspond to their academic and professional interests as described in the application.

FIELD DESCRIPTION

A general description of law is provided below. This information is offered as a reference guide only.

Law (LL.M.)

The study of one particular field or specialization of law. The Masters of Law (LL.M.) program is designed to provide lawyers with a specific in-depth concentration. Candidates for an LL.M. must already have an undergraduate law degree. ***Subspecialties include: intellectual property law, human rights law, international comparative law, environmental law, and tax law, among others.***

Deadline: 5:00 PM, Tuesday, February 23, 2010

Applicants should note the following:

- Individual academic host institution programs of study may differ in course offerings, subspecialties, and academic requirements.
- In some cases, **the degree title may differ as well**. For example, fellows applying for International Law may be placed in a program offering a general LL.M. degree with a concentration and/or coursework options in International Law, if that corresponds with their interests.
- It may not be possible to make an exact match between a fellow's field of interest and a graduate program, as many factors, including the strengths of a candidate's application, affect the final placement.

Applicants are encouraged to carefully research potential concentrations and coursework within their fields of interest, either through the Internet, printed material, or other sources. The selection committees will consider very carefully the chosen field of study and the applicant's interest and ability to succeed in that field.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

- Please answer **ALL** questions on the application in English (except where specified).
- Write your full name in the top right corner of each page of your application and supplemental documents.
- **Include your full legal name. Write your family name (surname) first, exactly as it is spelled on your international passport (if available).** Do not translate name spellings (for example, write Mariya and not Mary).
- Include complete contact information (including index codes for all addresses and city/country codes for all phone and fax numbers). Do not translate street or city names into English, only into the English alphabet (for example, write Prospekt Mira instead of Peace Avenue).
- DO NOT leave a space blank. If a question does not apply to you, enter N/A (Not Applicable).

NOTES:

- Any documents submitted in addition to those specifically mentioned in the supplemental application will be discarded and not considered.
- Semi-finalists will be required to bring certified copies of university transcript and diploma in the language of instruction and English translation at the time of the interview.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The deadline for applications for the Legal Education and Development (LEAD) Fellowship Program is **5:00pm, Tuesday, February 23, 2010**. To be considered for the 2010 Legal Education and Development (LEAD) Fellowship Program, you must complete the application *and* submit all required documents listed on the application Supplemental Documents page. Please follow all instructions carefully.

Each application packet must include the following:

- Application
- Signed Privacy Policy Statement
- Statement of Purpose Essay
- Legal Knowledge Essay
- Program of Study Essay
- Two completed Reference Forms
- List of Courses and Grades
- Resume/CV
- Copy of International Passport (if available)
- Copies of TOEFL score reports (if applicant has previously taken the exams)

Deadline: 5:00 PM, Tuesday, February 23, 2010

Applicants must submit one original copy and two photocopies of all application materials (for a total of **three** copies). The original completed application and two photocopies must be submitted to the IREX office by the deadline:

IREX
40 Pushkin Street
Dushanbe, Tajikistan 734002

DO NOT send applications to Washington, DC. No application will be returned to the applicant after the end of the competition. For questions or additional program information, please call or email:

Tel: (+992 37) 224-58-65/20, 224-79-51

Email: lead@irex.tj

LEAD PROGRAM TIMELINE

February 23, 2010	Application deadline
February/March	Initial application review to select semi-finalists
Early March	Semi-finalists notified; TOEFL testing scheduled
March	Interviews and TOEFL testing in Tajikistan
May	Finalists and alternates announced
June	Pre-Departure Orientations in Dushanbe
July	English Language Training (if necessary)
Late July/Early August	Arrival at host university

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