



Announcement

VEF Fellowship Program for 2010

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

- 1. Please register by January 09, 2009 (regular registration) or January 16, 2009 (late registration fee: US\$25) for the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) General Test on February 21, 2009. The GRE General Test is required for the VEF 2010 Fellowship application.***
- 2. You can register at the Educational Testing Service (ETS) website: www.ets.org***
- 3. List the Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF) code of 8559 on the GRE registration form as one of the entities to receive your official score report.***

The Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF) is pleased to announce its 2010 VEF Fellowship program. The Fellowship application and selection process is open, competitive, and transparent. Applicants do not need to pay any fees to anyone in order to apply or be considered for a VEF Fellowship. Winners are chosen based on individual merits, including academic performance, intellectual capabilities, English capability, and the potential for scientific contribution to education and research.

For the 2010 cohort, VEF expects to award up to 40 Fellowships to Vietnamese to begin graduate studies in the United States in the fall 2010. Please note that **VEF only accepts online applications**.

1. Qualified Fields of Study

VEF seeks highly qualified applicants interested in **pursuing a Ph.D. or Master's degree at leading universities in the United States in the major disciplines of sciences** (natural, physical, and environmental), mathematics, medicine (such as, public health), and technology (including information technology). Fields include the basic sciences, such as, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, as well as Agricultural Science, Computer Science, and Engineering.

2. Eligibility of VEF Employees and VEF Contracted Agency Employees

PLEASE NOTE the following information regarding *Eligibility of VEF employees and VEF contracted agency employees in Vietnam and in the U.S.*

- Employees of the Vietnam Education Foundation, including contract employees, and their immediate families, are **ineligible** for VEF Fellowships, Visiting Scholar Grants,

and U.S. Faculty Scholar Grants for a period ending one year following termination of such employment.

- If a former employee or other contract employee of VEF is otherwise eligible and chooses to apply for a VEF Fellowship, Visiting Scholar Grant, or U.S. Faculty Scholar Grant after the one year period, the VEF Board of Directors must be informed and approve the submission of their application.
- Employees of private and public agencies (excluding educational institutions) under contract to VEF to perform administrative or screening services on behalf of VEF's Fellowship, Visiting Scholar, and/or U.S. Faculty Scholar Grant programs are **ineligible** for VEF Fellowships, Visiting Scholar Grants, and U.S. Faculty Scholar Grants for a period ending one year following the termination of their services for VEF.

3. Application and Selection Process of VEF Fellows

VEF Fellowship applicants **may apply by one of two means, Process A or Process B**. The former is for applicants, who have not yet been admitted to a U.S. university graduate program, while the latter is for applicants, who have already received admission to a U.S. university graduate program. Both Process A and B are described below.

4. Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO)

In June 2010, before the Fellows depart for the United States, VEF will organize a PDO of 5 days to inform Fellows about the cultural and legal issues they may encounter in the U.S. Included in the PDO is an outdoor Team Building event, which usually involves one day of camping. During the PDO, official Fellowship documents and immigration documents will be given to the Fellows. It is **mandatory that all VEF Fellows participate** in the PDO.

PROCESS A

APPLICATION PERIOD- Process A

Applications will be available ONLY online ([online applications](#))

ONLY from 8:00 a.m., February 10, 2009,

to 8:00 a.m., April 10, 2009 (Vietnam time zone).

I. Eligibility

Please note that new conditions are in force compared to the application process for VEF Fellowships awarded in previous years. These changes are marked **UPDATED!/NEW!**

In order to apply, an applicant must meet the following minimum requirements:

- A. **VIETNAMESE** by citizenship and not a permanent resident in, or citizen of, any country other than Vietnam.
- B. **College graduate** with at least a Bachelor's degree in a field of science or technology among the fields acceptable to VEF (See Item #1, "Qualified Fields of Study," above) **or college juniors** (3rd or 4th year) **or seniors** (final year students), who will graduate with such a degree by July 2010.
- C. **GPA. Overall Grade Point Average (GPA)** from college of **at least 7.0/10.0**. Grades on other scales must be converted into a 10-point scale according to VEF guidelines. A grade conversion scale is available on the VEF website (http://www.vef.gov/download/conversion_table.htm).
- D. **English Language Proficiency**. The applicant must demonstrate sufficient command of the English language. Any one of the following means is acceptable to demonstrate sufficiency:
 1. **TOEFL** **[UPDATED!]**. A TOEFL score no older than one year from the date of the opening of the online application form, specifically nothing earlier than February 10, 2008 (either the International or Institutional exam is acceptable) of **at least 500 on the Paper-based Test (PBT)** [equivalent to 173 on the Computer-based Test (CBT) and 61 on Internet-based Test (iBT)].

Applicants are encouraged to take the International TOEFL instead of the Institutional TOEFL in order to have a valid score in hand when applying to U.S. universities, which do not accept an Institutional TOEFL score. Also, please be aware that most U.S. university graduate schools require an International TOEFL score of 550 or higher. Hence, candidates are encouraged to retake the TOEFL exam even after passing the VEF interview to increase their chances of getting university admissions.

The official ETS website (www.ets.org/toefl) provides information about the TOEFL test including format, scores, registration, practice materials, and locations of testing centers, including availability in Vietnam. Please contact IIG Vietnam at (04) 773 2603 for more information.

2. **IELTS** **(NEW!)**. An acceptable alternative to the TOEFL exam is the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) exam. A **minimum score of 6.5** on an IELTS exam no older than one year from the date of the opening of the online application form, specifically nothing earlier than February

10, 2008 is necessary to apply for a VEF Fellowship. For more information, please visit the IELTS website: <http://www.ielts.org/>

3. **Degree from an English-speaking country (NEW!).** If the applicant is studying for a bachelor's or master's degree in, or has a recent university bachelor's or master's degree (not more than two years old at the time of applying for the VEF Fellowship) from, a university, which conducts all courses in English, in any of the following English-speaking countries: Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom (England, Ireland, Scotland) or the United States, the evidence of degree completion from such a university is sufficient evidence of English language proficiency for VEF. Please be aware that U.S. universities may still require an official International TOEFL or IELTS score to apply to graduate schools.

- E. **GRE (Graduate Record Examination) (NEW!).** The applicant must achieve a **combined score (quantitative plus verbal) of at least 1000** on the GRE General Test (either Paper-based Test or Computer-based Test). The following provides specific details about the GRE requirement.

1. **Award:** VEF will reimburse the General Test fee to all VEF Fellows who achieve a combined score (quantitative plus verbal) of at least 1150. The award will be given after the applicants obtain the VEF Fellowships.
2. From now until April 10, 2009, two **Paper-based GRE tests** will be held in Vietnam as follows:

| GRE Test (US\$170) | Test Date mm/dd/yyyy | Regular Registration mm/dd/yyyy | Late Registration Web Only (Late Registration Fee US\$25) mm/dd/yyyy |
|---|---------------------------------|--|---|
| GRE General Test (Paper-Based) | 10/25/2008 | 09/12/2008 | 09/19/2008 |
| | 02/21/2009 | 01/09/2009 | 01/16/2009 |

3. The **official ETS website** (www.ets.org/gre) provides information about the GRE test, including format, scores, registration, practice materials, and locations of testing centers, including availability in Vietnam.
4. In addition to the Paper-based GRE tests offered in Vietnam, the **Computer-based GRE Test** is also available. ETS has recently opened one GRE Computer-based Test Center in Ho Chi Minh City. VSIC Informatics Center is authorized to administer this test, which is given year-round, and appointments are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. Please visit www.gre.org for more information, and contact the VSIC Informatics Center at 207 Tran Binh Trong Street, Ward 3, District 5, Ho Chi Minh City, or by phone, (08) 923 2644. Please also visit the website of the Institute of International Education (IIE) in Vietnam (www.iievn.org) for more detailed information.

II. Online Applications

To prepare for the [online applications](#), applicants **must** have the following information and documents ready:

- A. **TRANSCRIPTS**. Applicants are required to prepare transcripts from undergraduate studies, as well as graduate studies if applicable, translated into English with an official notarization or with an official school stamp (see also under item **I. Eligibility** above).
- B. **EVIDENCE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY**. (see under item **I. Eligibility** above)
- C. **GRE SCORE**. (see under item **I. Eligibility** above)
- D. **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**. Each applicant must prepare a Statement of Purpose essay, giving three significant reasons for wanting to pursue a graduate degree program in the United States on a VEF Fellowship. Objectives must be stated clearly with explanations about how a VEF Fellowship would help the applicant achieve his or her stated objectives. The essay must be well-organized and composed in excellent English and must not be more than two A4 pages single-spaced, using the Times New Roman font of size 12. The quality and content of this essay are extremely important factors in determining the applicant's candidacy for a VEF Fellowship. Below are some suggestions of information to include:

Work and Research Experience

- Narrative of work and research experience
- Description of a scientific challenge that the applicant faced and how s/he managed and solved that challenge, including the lessons learned. This can be a success or a failure, but it must be memorable.

Future Plans

- Desired fields of study (several specific subjects and general research interests) ranked according to priority
 - Objectives and impact of one's proposed research or project(s)
 - Contribution of the proposed research or project(s) to the development of science and technology in Vietnam.
- E. **U.S. UNIVERSITIES**. Candidates must indicate three U.S. universities and the relative departments in which they wish to study, providing the reasons why each university is a preferred choice. In addition, the candidate must supply the name and title of a research advisor with whom they wish to study at each university and must provide the reason why the particular advisor is preferred. Therefore, VEF advises applicants well in advance of the Application Period to **research U.S. universities**, the relevant departments, **and potential research advisors**. As one source of

information, the VEF Alliance schools, listed at the VEF website, are top-level U.S. universities that recognize VEF financial terms and conditions.

VERY IMPORTANT: *Please check carefully to fulfill all the requirements listed above and to complete the online application form, submitting all required documents, before the application deadline. After that date, any missing information or documents will result in an automatic rejection of the application. VEF cannot accept incomplete applications.*

III. Selection Process

To obtain a VEF Fellowship award, a candidate must **succeed in all three rounds** of the selection process, as described below:

ROUND ONE – Qualification Screening

During the Application Period as indicated above, applicants submit [online applications](#). After a screening process by VEF to assure eligibility, a technical review is conducted by the U.S. National Academies to determine the significance of the candidate's achievements and to determine the candidate's potential to make a contribution to science as shown by his/her past academic performance, test results, prior research and work experience, honors and recognition, and statement of purpose. Qualified applicants, recommended by the National Academies, will be invited to Round Two.

ROUND TWO – Oral Exam/Interview

In August 2009, U.S. scientists, invited by the U.S. National Academies, will carry out Oral Exams/Interviews in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. The Oral Exam/Interview is conducted in English and lasts up to 45 minutes. The U.S. scientists will recommend to VEF the candidates, judged to be qualified for a VEF Fellowship, and will confirm the universities they deem appropriate for the candidates. At this point, the recommended candidates are classified as VEF "nominees." Contact information for all nominees is sent to all VEF Alliance universities so that the universities may solicit the nominees to apply. The universities may offer their own full funding, if they wish. Only VEF nominees are invited to Round Three.

ROUND THREE – Admission to a U.S. University

In November 2009, VEF helps the nominees to apply to 5 leading U.S. universities recommended by the U.S. scientists, as described above, and chosen by the nominees. These universities must belong to the VEF Alliance (see the list at the VEF website) or must be a leading U.S. graduate program, which accepts the VEF financial terms. Financial support terms are available under "VEF Fellowship Program" at the VEF website (www.vef.gov). VEF supports applications to the five (5) recommended universities by paying for the following: (1) GRE and TOEFL score reports; (2) GRE Subject Tests, if required by any of the five (5) recommended universities; and (3) application fees for non-Alliance universities.

Nominees must inform VEF as soon as they get accepted by a university. By April 1, 2010, all nominees must submit to VEF their university admittance letters that also acknowledge the acceptance of the VEF financial support terms, whether the university is a member of the VEF Alliance or not. Nominees should indicate their priorities by listing which universities they wish to attend as #1, as # 2, etc. With input from the National Academies, VEF will then decide the best university to attend. At this point, the qualified nominees are eligible for VEF Fellowship awards.

FELLOWSHIP AWARDS

The final decisions about the VEF Fellowship awards will be made by the VEF Board of Directors in April 2010. At this point, the nominees are designated as VEF Fellows.

PROCESS B

APPLICATION PERIOD- Process B

Applications will be available ONLY online ([online applications](#))

ONLY from 8:00 a.m., **February 10, 2010,**

to 8:00 a.m., **March 10, 2010** (Vietnam time zone).

I. Eligibility

In order to apply, an applicant must meet the following minimum requirements:

- A. **Vietnamese** by citizenship and not a permanent resident in, or citizen of, any country other than Vietnam.
- B. **College graduate** with at least a Bachelor's degree in a field of science or technology among the fields acceptable to VEF (See Item #1, "Qualified Fields of Study," above) or **college seniors** (final year students), who will graduate with such a degree by July 2010.
- C. **Overall Grade Point Average (GPA)**. GPA from college of **at least 7.0/10.0**. Grades on other scales must be converted into a 10-point scale according to VEF guidelines. A grade conversion scale is available on the VEF website (http://www.vef.gov/download/conversion_table.htm).
- D. **Gained official graduate admission** to a VEF Alliance school or to a leading U.S. graduate school that accepts VEF's financial support terms.

II. Online Applications

To prepare for the [online applications](#), applicants **must** have the following documents ready:

- A. **TRANSCRIPTS**. Applicants are required to prepare transcripts from undergraduate studies, as well as graduate studies if applicable, translated into English with a notarization or with an official school stamp (see also under item **I. Eligibility** above).
- B. **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**. Each applicant must prepare a Statement of Purpose essay, giving three significant reasons for wanting to pursue a graduate degree program in the United States on a VEF Fellowship. Objectives must be stated clearly with explanations about how a VEF Fellowship would help the applicant achieve his or her stated objectives. The essay must be well-organized and composed in excellent English and must not be more than two A4 pages single-spaced, using the Times New Roman font of size 12. The quality and content of this essay are extremely important factors in determining the applicant's candidacy for a VEF Fellowship. Below are some suggestions of information to include:

Work and Research Experience

- Narrative of work and research experience
- Description of a scientific challenge that the applicant faced and how s/he managed and solved that challenge, including the lessons learned. This can be a success or a failure, but it must be memorable.

Future Plans

- Desired fields of study (several specific subjects and general research interests) ranked according to priority
- Objectives and impact of one's proposed research or project(s)
- Contribution of the proposed research or project(s) to the development of science and technology in Vietnam.

VERY IMPORTANT: *Please check carefully to fulfill all the requirements listed above and to complete the online application form, submitting all required documents, **before** the application deadline. After that date, any missing information or documents will result in an automatic rejection of the application. VEF cannot accept incomplete applications.*

III. Selection Process

To obtain a VEF Fellowship award, a candidate must **succeed in both rounds** of the selection process described below:

ROUND ONE - Qualification Screening

From February to mid-March 2010, the VEF online application will be available. VEF will review applications from applicants, who have been admitted for the Fall 2010 term to at least one leading graduate program in the U.S. in a field in science or technology, which is supported by VEF. Furthermore, whether the school is a member of the VEF Alliance or not, the school must acknowledge in writing the acceptance of the VEF financial support terms. Financial support terms are available under “VEF Fellowship Program” at the VEF website (www.vef.gov).

After a screening process by VEF to assure eligibility, a technical review is conducted by the U.S. National Academies to determine the significance of the candidate’s achievements and to determine the candidate’s potential to make a contribution to science as shown by his/her past academic performance, test results, prior research and work experience, honors and recognition, and statement of purpose. Qualified applicants, recommended by the National Academies, will be invited to the next and final round.

ROUND TWO - Interview

In late March 2010, candidates receiving a recommendation from the U.S. National Academies will be invited to an interview by phone. The most highly qualified applicants will be recommended to the VEF Board for approval.

FELLOWSHIP AWARDS

The final decision on VEF Fellowship awards will be made by the VEF Board of Directors in April 2010. At this point, the candidates will become VEF Fellows.

*Note: The above information is provided as a guideline and is the intended VEF time-line of activities for the selection process for 2010. VEF reserves the right to make changes as circumstances require. Any changes will be posted **ONLY** on VEF’s official website at www.vef.gov and, therefore, VEF advises applicants to check the VEF website regularly.*

After obtaining the VEF Fellowship, all Fellows must strictly observe VEF rules and requirements or they may lose the Fellowship.

If you have any questions regarding the VEF 2010 Fellowship application and selection process, please e-mail vef2010@vef.gov, or phone VEF at (04) 936 3670 in Hanoi, Vietnam.
For more information on VEF and the VEF Fellowship Program, please visit the VEF website: www.vef.gov