



Open Call: Fulbright Specialist Program Agriculture Open Project

The Fulbright Specialist Program (FSP) is seeking a highly qualified professional to serve as a Specialist for a 42-day project, "Technology Transfer for Vertical Farming to 4 universities" to take place in El Salvador.

The Fulbright Specialist Program (FSP), part of the larger Fulbright Program, was established in 2001 by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA). The program pairs highly qualified U.S. academics and professionals with host institutions abroad to share their expertise, strengthen institutional linkages, hone their skills, gain international experience, and learn about other cultures while building capacity at their overseas host institutions. Grant benefits include international round-trip economy class airfare, transit allowance, all applicable visa fees, a daily honorarium, enrollment in a limited health benefits program, lodging, meals, and in-country transportation.

Host Institution: Catholic University of El Salvador

Project Title: "Technology Transfer for Vertical Farming to 4 Universities" (P009482)

Proposed Timeframe: 3 visits between April 7 and October 19, 2024, with flexibility pending the selected applicant's availability.

Location of Project: Santa Ana, El Salvador

Project Description:

The project of "Technology Transfer for Vertical Farming aimed at teachers and students at the university consortium partner institutions: Universidad Católica de El Salvador (UNICAES), Universidad Luterana Salvadoreña (ULS), Universidad Gerardo Barrios (UGB), and Universidad de Oriente (UNIVO)", aims to break the paradigm of traditional agriculture towards technified production systems in controlled environments and the promotion of sustainable urban agriculture. This will be achieved by strengthening the areas of practice, research, and innovation in the field of hydroponic vertical farming in controlled environments within the agricultural development-related programs offered by the universities that make up the consortium. This will involve the establishment of an experimental center that will enhance the technical competencies of both faculty and students through training and diploma programs. This center will facilitate the transfer of technology to the productive sector in the areas influenced by the universities, either through the graduates themselves or through their direct training.

Project Activities:

Phase I: Expert Visit. To assess general aspects and provide training.

Prior to the first visit of the specialist, virtual meetings will be held between the specialist and the technical teaching staff of the universities. This will allow for an initial contact between both parties to exchange impressions, expectations, and experiences, including logistical aspects of the trip.

During the first visit of the specialist, in coordination with the consortium of universities, technical aspects (diagnosis for the selection of the appropriate area for the installation of the innovation center) and economic aspects of the project will be evaluated. Additionally, a technical training process in the field of hydroponic vertical farming in controlled environments will be conducted. This training is aimed at full-time and part-time faculty members working in the fields of agriculture and food at the universities, as well as students in related degree programs.

Phase II: Construction of the Hydroponic Vertical Farming Experimental Center.



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Prior to the second visit of the specialist, virtual meetings will be held in which the specialist will present a proposal for the design and construction of the required infrastructure. This proposal will be evaluated by the technical counterpart of the consortium (multidisciplinary working teams) and approved by the institution's authorities for financing.

The specialist will execute, in a technical assistance capacity and in coordination with multidisciplinary teams, the commencement of the construction of the defined infrastructure. He will also provide online support upon returning to his home country. The multidisciplinary teams will consist of professionals from the fields of Agronomic Engineering, Architecture, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, and Computer Systems.

Phase III: Monitoring and Training in Various Crops.

A training program for the production of economically valuable vegetable crops will be developed. This program is aimed at faculty and students in the fields of agriculture and agribusiness. Additionally, the infrastructure and the development of the hydroponic system will be monitored by multidisciplinary teams and the specialist.

The consortium's team of professionals, in coordination with the specialist, will systematize the experience and document it for future reference. The project will serve as a valuable source of information and will be useful for the development of internship processes for agriculture students, as well as for thesis work and the writing of scientific articles.

Preferred Qualifications

This project will have a significant impact on the education of new professionals in the field of agriculture and food, which, in turn, will generate an impact on the productive sector through the transfer of this technology. At the institutional level, there will be a change in the dynamics of education and teaching, transitioning from traditional agriculture to a more technologically advanced one. From the beginning of the project, the university consortium will establish a multidisciplinary team as a counterpart to the Fulbright Specialist, with the expectation of fostering friendship and academic cooperation links during and after the project's execution for students and faculty in the field.

How to Apply

Applicants must meet all program eligibility criteria, including U.S. citizenship. A complete list of U.S. applicant eligibility criteria can be found at <https://fulbrightspecialist.worldlearning.org/eligibility-specialists>.

Applicants must submit a CV and a completed "Submission of Interest Form" via email to fulbrightspecialist@worldlearning.org no later than Monday, December 11, 2023 to be considered as a candidate.

Please note that if you are selected as a potential candidate for this project, **you will be required to submit an official application to join the Fulbright Specialist Roster** in order to serve as the Specialist for this project. If you are interested in applying to the Roster in the meantime, please let out team know and we would be happy to help you with setting up your Roster account. For more information regarding this process and the program, visit <https://fulbrightspecialist.worldlearning.org/application-specialists/>.



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