

Fulbright Scholar Program 2004-2005



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After announcing its 2004-2005 Fulbright Grant Competition the Fulbright office in Ukraine launched an information and promotion campaign encouraging potential candidates to apply for Fulbright programs. In addition to annual press releases, TV commercials and presentations at learning centers and institutions of higher education, this year we also organized press clubs in regional centers, which I believe proved to be very effective.

As of October 31, 2003 a total 77 Ukrainian scholars and researchers had submitted applications for a Fulbright Scholar Grant. Forty-four semi-finalists were invited to interview of whom 23 were selected as grantees. The year before (in 2002) the number of applications was higher ... a total 94 applications were submitted. There were 17 fewer applications in 2003 although regions where we conducted an aggressive recruitment program had the most applicants. In 2003 Fulbright also made presentations at the National University of Kyiv Mohyla Academy and Kyiv International University. Statistics for the last two years indicate that 50% of program applicants are from Kyiv (Figures 1 and 2).

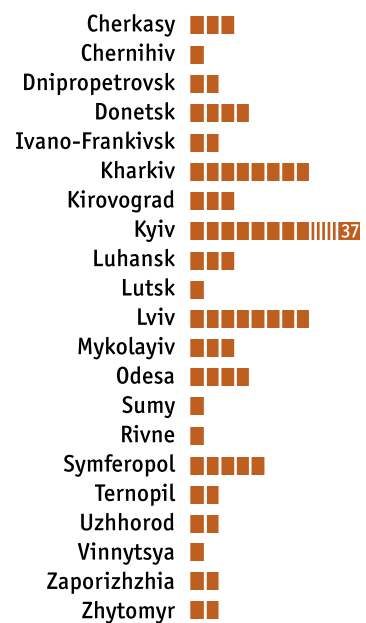
By increasing the number of program presentations in Kyiv we can increase the overall number of Ukrainian applicants. However, in this case more Kyiv candidates will be represented in the competition and applicants from other regions will have lower chances of winning.

In my opinion, there were several reasons for this year's drop in the number of applications: Thanks to improved economic conditions in Ukraine, scholars who are experts in their fields have better employment opportunities compared with previous years and are reluctant to leave the domestic job market for even the minimum 4-month period; There are now more European exchange programs as alternatives (including German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), British Council, etc.);

Some candidates from the previous year whose project proposals did not qualify have not re-applied (they may have lost confidence in their abilities and feel they can't improve their proposals); Not all Ukrainian scholars have sufficient English language skills to complete the application and take part in the competi-



Applications by Region (2002) figure 1

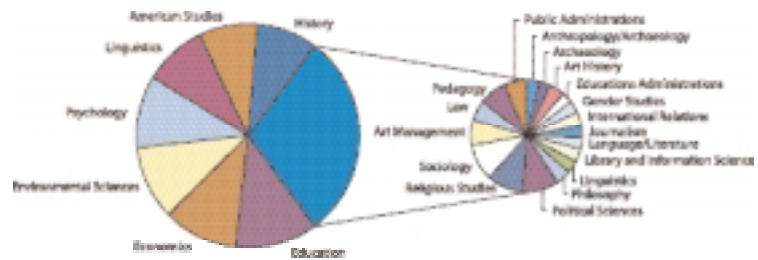


Applications by Region (2003) figure 2

tion. Comparing areas of specialization for the past two years, in 2003 there were applicants for the first time in Agriculture and Public Health and no applicants in Religious Studies and Art Management. The number of applications increased in areas like Anthropology, Journalism, Economics, Law and Political Sciences. The most popular areas were Economics, Environmental Sciences, American Studies and Political Sciences (Figures 3 and 4). In my opinion to increase the number of candidates for the Fulbright Scholar Program we should do the following: Begin recruitment in the Spring in order to give applicants more time to prepare better application materials; Engage program alumni in the regions to be more active in recruiting new candidates and to attend presentations in their regions; Increase the number of research areas for potential scholars; Encourage the previous year's semi-finalists to polish their projects and apply again; Increase Program promotion in traditional scholarly journals, electronic publications, through e-mails and periodicals of higher educational institutions; Increase contacts with university deans and departments when planning presentations for universities and send Program materials directly to them as well as to International Departments.



Applications by Area of Specialization (2003) (Figure 3)



Applications by Area of Specialization (2002) (Figure 4)

Taras Shevchenko University in Kyiv

