



Information for Participants Who Are Pregnant

The Mandela Washington Fellowship is committed to supporting positive learning and networking environments for all Alumni Enrichment Institute participants, including those who are pregnant. Applicants who are pregnant or who may become pregnant are encouraged to apply. If selected, pregnant participants will be provided with pre-natal support and can expect to be able to fully participate in the program if they are at less than 23 weeks by the start of the Alumni Enrichment Institutes in mid-July 2022. The Alumni Enrichment Institutes will include long days and extended periods of time sitting in a classroom or walking on excursions and site visits. After participants are selected in March 2022, all pregnancies should be disclosed to IREX as soon as possible by contacting MWFAumni@irex.org so that arrangements can be made.

More information about the support services available to pregnant participants is outlined below.

Eligibility and Application Process

Q: Should I apply for the Alumni Enrichment Institutes if I currently am or may be pregnant?

A: Applicants who are pregnant are encouraged to apply. The Mandela Washington Fellowship is committed to supporting positive learning and networking environments for all participants, including those who are pregnant. Notifying IREX of your pregnancy will not negatively affect your eligibility for the Alumni Enrichment Institutes; rather, doing so will help the U.S. Department of State and IREX provide you with the necessary care and support to ensure a healthy pregnancy and full participation in the program if you are selected.

Q: If I become pregnant after submitting my application, will I still be eligible to participate in the Alumni Enrichment Institutes?

A: Pregnancy does not make you ineligible for the Alumni Enrichment Institutes. If you become pregnant after being selected as a participant, please alert IREX as soon as possible by sending an email to MWFAumni@irex.org. Selected participants who are less than 23 weeks pregnant by the start of the Alumni Enrichment Institutes in mid-July 2022 can expect to be able to fully participate in the program.

Q: What if I will be more than 23 weeks pregnant by the start of the Alumni Enrichment Institutes in mid-July 2022?

A: The Mandela Washington Fellowship is committed to supporting a positive learning and networking environment for all participants. The Alumni Enrichment Institutes will include long days and extended periods of time sitting in a classroom or walking on excursions and site visits. Airlines also have different policies for flying while pregnant and may restrict travel for individuals who are pregnant after a certain period in their pregnancy. Thus, while selected participants who will be more than 23 weeks pregnant by mid-July 2022 will be unable to travel to the United States, we encourage them to explore other [opportunities for Fellowship Alumni](#), other exchange program opportunities



offered by the U.S. Department of State's [Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs](#), or other resources available through the [YALI Network](#).

During the Alumni Enrichment Institutes

Q: Will there be pre-natal care available for me during the Alumni Enrichment Institutes?

A: For the duration of their stay in the United States, all selected participants are entitled to a Health Benefit Plan provided by the Accident & Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE), sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and administered by Seven Corners, Inc. These benefits offset costs for treatment of medical emergencies during the program. Under ASPE, standard doctor visits related to pregnancy are covered under the benefit as “wellness check-ups.” Please note that participants will still be responsible for the co-pay each time they visit the doctor, which may cost \$25-\$75 per visit.

The pre-natal medical care participants experience in the United States may be different from what they are used to at home. For example, not all appointments will include an ultrasound or blood tests. These services may also have additional associated charges that will be at your own expense. For more information about what selected participants can expect, please refer to our Pregnancy Fact Sheet that is provided to selected participants.

Q: Can I fully participate in the Alumni Enrichment Institute if I am pregnant?

A: If you are selected and are less than 23 weeks pregnant by the start of the Alumni Enrichment Institutes, you should be able to fully participate in the program; however, since all pregnancies are different, please consult with your healthcare provider to confirm there are no health risks for you or your baby from your participation in the program. Note that the Alumni Enrichment Institutes will include long days and extended periods of time sitting in a classroom or walking on excursions and site visits. On the busiest days, activities during the weekdays can run from 9 am to 9 pm. Additionally, housing and meals provided during the program may be different from what you are accustomed to. While most pregnant participants should not have issues, some participants may find it challenging to adjust to these dietary changes. If you are selected and have concerns about adjusting to these changes during your pregnancy, or if you will be more than 23 weeks pregnant by the start of the program, please contact IREX at MWFAumni@irex.org.

Travel

Q: Can I fly while pregnant?

A: Airlines have different policies for flying while pregnant and may restrict travel for individuals who are pregnant after a certain period in their pregnancy. Generally, individuals who are pregnant and who have no complications can fly without issue during the first (0-13 weeks) and second (14-26 weeks) trimesters. During the third trimester of pregnancy, many airlines often prohibit travel due to health risks for you and your baby. If you are selected and will be in your third trimester at any point during the program, please contact IREX at MWFAumni@irex.org.