



# Cochran Fellowship Program 2024



The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) received an invitation to participate in the 2024 Cochran Fellowship Program. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Foreign Agricultural Services (FAS) is excited to offer Cochran Fellowship Program (CFP) exchange opportunity in fiscal year (FY) 2024. The programme will host four training opportunities, each focused regionally: Africa and the Middle East, Asia, Eastern Europe and Eurasia, and Latin America and the Caribbeans.

For the 2024 CFP, the main focus will be on urban agriculture, focusing specifically on the cultivation, processing, and distribution of agricultural products in urban and suburban areas. From community gardens to indoor vertical farms, urban agriculture provides critical access to healthy food for local communities, as well as jobs, increased green spaces, and closer community ties. It has been forecasted that half of the world's population will live in urban areas by the second half of the 21st century; therefore, it will be necessary to grow more food in non-traditional agricultural areas where the population resides. As urban agriculture is an important part of food security and sovereignty for many populations, sharing techniques with those who rely on this form of agriculture is vital to ensuring these needs are met. In response to the rising need to combat burgeoning climate crises and food insecurities, the CFP, in coordination with Tuskegee University, Florida International University, New Mexico State University, and the University of Maryland—Eastern Shore, will conduct two-week long trainings focused on urban agriculture.

## 1. Eligibility criteria

- Citizen of South Africa;
- Candidates can be individuals working in either the public or private sector who are interested in learning about developing urban agriculture;
- Excellent comprehension of the English language (reading, writing, and speaking);
- Fellows must be in good physical and mental health. A thorough physical exam is required by a licensed doctor prior to traveling to the United States; and
- Early/mid stage of professional career (2–10 years of experience preferred).

## 2. Programme available

- Community building, engagement, education, and extension service creation emphasising marginalised and underserved communities;
- Innovative growing techniques, such as vertical, hydroponic, aeroponic, raised beds, rooftop, permaculture, agroforests, indoor growing, green walls, and intensive growing;
- Nutrition of urban gardens; how to ensure output is balanced and how to teach nutrition to a diverse audience; and
- Climate resilient practices to increase growing potential and to create spaces within urban settings.

## 3. The Objectives of the programme:

The objective of this programme is to expose agricultural specialists to the need of adapting urban agricultural systems and techniques globally. The objective is to expose fellows to the pertinent need of urban agriculture adaptation. The goal is to continue the promotion of the US food security and climate initiatives.

## 4. Deadline:

Completed application forms and attachments should be submitted before or on **Monday, 25 March 2024.**

## 5. The fellowship will cover:

- J1 visa referral (No visa application fee required);
- Stipend/travel allowance for hotel accommodations, meals and incidental expenses during the duration of the programme;
- Domestic transportation within the U.S as required for the programme; and
- Emergency medical insurance.

## 6. If selected as a Cochran fellow, you will be responsible for:

- Submitting an online application (DS-160) for a US J1 visa;
- Transportation cost to and from the airport in home country; and
- Medical costs for physical examination before travel to the US.

## 7. Application requirements:

- Completed application form (attached). Please note: the application form should not be altered as it has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget;
- Signed approval on the application form from the applicant's institution/organisation;
- Two letters of recommendation (academic and professional preferred);
- Copies of diploma(s) for college/university degree(s) received; and
- A copy of passport identification page.

*\*\*The complete package should be sent to Ms Jacky Smit at [JackyS@dalrrd.gov.za](mailto:JackyS@dalrrd.gov.za) before or on the given deadline. Please note that no late application forms or supporting documents will be accepted after the given deadline.*



agriculture, land reform  
& rural development

Department:  
Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Enquiries and submission of application forms:**

Ms Jacky Smit  
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