2022-23 Fellowships
Application Guide
WHAT IS PRINCETON IN ASIA?

Princeton in Asia (PiA) is an independent non-profit organization affiliated with and located on-campus at Princeton University. Founded by Princeton students in 1898, the program is driven to foster mutual appreciation and cross-cultural understanding between the United States and Asia through immersive work fellowships in host organizations and communities. It is PiA’s vision that through extended engagement with Asian cultures and workplaces, Fellows will develop a life-long appreciation for this part of the world, as well as a commitment to contributing to the communities in which they live after PiA. We like to think of PiA as a change in perspective, a job that matters, a community for life.

In the 2019-20 cycle, PiA offered 140 full-year fellowships in the following locations: Cambodia, China, Hong Kong S.A.R., Macau S.A.R., Taiwan, India, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, including conditions in host countries, immigration restrictions, and quarantine requirements, there is much uncertainty as to the number of countries and regions in which we will be offering fellowships next year. The program will be significantly smaller in size and scope than in previous years as we start sending Fellows overseas again. We are working carefully with our host organizations in addition to international health and safety providers to adapt to these changing circumstances.

PiA applicants are generally college seniors or recent college graduates. The emphasis of a PiA fellowship is cultural immersion and contributing to your community. We are looking for Fellows who are flexible, open, and resilient, and who seek a transformative experience, want to contribute to their host organization, and want to facilitate cultural exchange through relationship building. Though a local living stipend will be provided by the host organization, a position with PiA is generally not a money-making venture. Working hours and vacation time vary greatly among the diverse PiA offerings. Some teaching fellowships require fewer teaching hours and provide longer vacations, offering Fellows the opportunity to pursue intensive language study or other community service. Workplace fellowships, however, provide less vacation time and generally require longer hours.
OUR FELLOW VALUES

Transformation. Our Fellows are open to being transformed by their work and their relationships with the people with whom they interact abroad.

Immersion. Our Fellows strive to be citizens of the communities in which they live and work, becoming fully immersed in the life of their host organization and communities.

Relationship building. Our Fellows build meaningful and long-lasting relationships with their peers, community members, and each other.

Humility. Our Fellows dedicate themselves to professional service in the organizations where they work and the communities where they live, and approach their daily interactions with respect and understanding.

Mutuality and interdependence. Our Fellows are both learning from the communities in which they work and teaching people in those communities about what life is like in the United States, fostering cross-cultural understanding and mutual understanding and respect.

Contributing to the community. Our Fellows endeavor to contribute to their host communities and broader global community by making a lasting difference.
PREREQUISITES

Princeton in Asia Fellows teach in kindergartens, secondary schools, polytechnics, and universities; they work with international and local non-profits as well as some of Asia’s most innovative business and social enterprises; they write for newspapers and create content for news platforms with an international reach. Considering the number and diversity of positions available, we encourage applicants of all disciplines and backgrounds to apply.

The primary prerequisite for placement is a bachelor’s degree. In addition:

- All positions require professional proficiency in English, and English teaching positions require native English-speaking ability. Host countries’ visa restrictions may limit our ability to place citizens of certain nationalities.
- Asian language ability is not a prerequisite for most positions. Non-teaching positions typically require some language skills or specific academic or work experience. For requirements for specific positions, please refer to the Our Fellowships section of our website.
- All applicants should have a valid passport by May 2022. For visa purposes, your passport should be valid for 18 months from your date of arrival in Asia. If you do not have a passport or your passport will expire soon, we encourage you to apply for or renew your passport now.
- Applicants selected for interviews will be asked to complete two interviews—one with a PiA alum and one with a staff member—in January or February via Zoom.
- All applicants who receive placement in a teaching position will be asked to complete our TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) certification course. This TEFL training will include completion of an online course in addition to virtual sessions with our TEFL instructors on topics such as culturally responsive pedagogy. You are not required to have any level of TEFL training or experience before applying to PiA.
- All applicants who accept offers from PiA must complete a virtual Orientation program. More information on Orientation, including timing, will be provided when it becomes available.
OUR PROCESS

After receiving applications, we ensure each one is complete and all materials have been submitted. We read each application, evaluate applications individually, and send interview invitations to a portion of applicants. Applicants not selected for an interview will be informed of their status.

PiA then coordinates virtual interviews between each applicant and a PiA alum, and then between each applicant and a staff member. At the same time, our team works closely with our host organizations in Asia, listening carefully to their needs and requests for the coming year, and creating an updated list of posts available for that fellowship cycle.

After we complete interviews, we begin the process of matching individual candidates to posts. We carefully consider each candidate's experience, interest, motivations and skills in order to make the most appropriate match for both the candidate and the host organization. We then contact each host organization and send them a shortlist of candidates for each position. Oftentimes, the host organization will want to directly interview the candidates, and we may assist with arranging these calls. The host organization will then select their Fellow(s), after which PiA will formally welcome the successful candidate into the program.

Please see the detailed timeline below for important dates in the application and selection process.
CALENDAR FOR THE 2022-23 FELLOWSHIP CYCLE*

*This proposed timeline is subject to change due to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic

**September 1, 2021:** Application for Princeton in Asia 2022-23 fellowship cycle opens.

**November 1:** Deadline for submission of all application materials. You must submit your online application by this date. Your online application form, including all attached application materials, and letter of recommendation must be submitted by **3:00 PM EDT**.

**Early December:** Applicants receive confirmation of completed application status. Please do not contact the PiA office before December 15 to check on the status of your application.

**Late December:** Selected applicants are notified of interview date and time. These applicants will be required to submit their official transcripts by Monday, January 24th, 2022.

**January - February 2022:** Interviews for selected applicants are held virtually. Each candidate will interview with both a PiA staff member and an alum of the program.

**March - May:** Finalization of positions. Upon receipt of an official fellowship offer, candidates must make a commitment within 4 calendar days to accept the position. Host organizations make final selections, not PiA. Fellows then begin the process of obtaining the appropriate visa. All fellowships are contingent on the receipt of a visa.

**April - June:** Virtual Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) training and Orientation. Attendance at Orientation is mandatory for all accepted Fellows. Attendance at TEFL is mandatory for all accepted teaching Fellows. Applicants will receive information on dates of trainings as it becomes available.

**June - September:** As border restrictions and other factors allow, new Fellows depart for Asia. Start dates depend on the country and host organization. Historical start dates for specific positions are available in the **Our Fellowships** section of our website. However, we anticipate timelines may change due to COVID-19. We will have more information on specific start dates at the interview stage.
COSTS

1. Fellow contribution to travel medical and emergency evacuation insurance: $550.
   ○ Paid via credit/debit card or check upon acceptance of a PiA fellowship.
   ○ This contribution represents a fraction of the total cost of an insurance premium for the duration of a fellowship.
   ○ Some full or partial contribution waivers are available upon request.
2. Vaccination and pre-departure health expenses.
3. Visa application fees and transportation fees to the nearest embassy for most positions.
4. Round-trip transportation to Asia for most positions.

PiA is dedicated to offering these experiences to as diverse and talented an applicant pool as possible. Though PiA has limited resources, financial assistance in the form of Fellow contribution waivers and travel grants is offered on a case-by-case basis. We will work with each applicant to ensure that financial considerations do not preclude anyone from applying for or participating in these opportunities.
GENERAL INFORMATION AND ADVICE

As recipients of PiA fellowships, PiA Fellows receive:

1. **An employment opportunity at a host organization in Asia.** Please note that PiA Fellows are employees of their host organizations, and not of PiA.
2. **A local stipend** paid directly by the host organization. The stipend is intended to cover the cost of safe housing, clean food and drinking water, basic telecommunications and local travel.
3. **A virtual orientation program** including travel, health, and visa information as well as cultural and current affairs background on fellowship locations. Teaching Fellows will also receive virtual Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) training.
4. **Travel medical and emergency evacuation insurance, pre-departure training and resources, 24-7 emergency assistance and medical support from external providers.**
5. **Language grants** (awarded selectively).
6. **Assistance in student loan deferments** in the form of letters issued to student loan agencies.
7. **Note: airfare and other travel expenses are generally the responsibility of the Fellow.** Financial assistance is awarded on a need basis through travel grants. A limited number of PiA host organizations provide reimbursement for airfare.

Please note that, due to ongoing, unpredictable, and long-lasting effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, many fellowship positions we have previously offered may not be available. Because of this, our application asks for your countries/regions and issues of interest, but will not ask for specific position preferences.

It is a good idea to do some research on your countries/regions of interest prior to submitting an application. We strongly encourage applicants to read past Fellows’ reports on our website, noting that positions may look different now than they did in the past, as well as to seek advice from fellowships advisors, professors, international students, or friends in your network. Unfortunately, PiA is not able to connect applicants with former Fellows during the application process. If selected, we will offer structured opportunities to meet with our alumni.
Fellow reports are available in the For Applicants section of our website. Fellow reports are comprehensive, written reflections from Fellows in the field that cover various aspects of the fellowship experience. Please email piaapps@princeton.edu to obtain the login information to access the Fellow reports.

Please do not contact any PiA host organizations directly; we will put finalist applicants in direct touch with their potential host organization at the placement stage of the process. Any applicant who circumvents PiA’s selection process by contacting a PiA host organization directly will be automatically disqualified from consideration for a PiA fellowship.

All applicants are invited to attend one of our online Information Sessions throughout the fall. For more information about these Information Sessions, including links to register, check the For Applicants section of our website.

Princeton University students may sign up for a group session or a 1:1 session at the HireTigers virtual career fair on Friday, September 17, 2021. HireTigers is hosted on Handshake.

PiA’s application, selection, and placement processes are rigorous and multifaceted. In normal circumstances, our placement process requires patience and flexibility on the part of all involved. Due to the extraordinary circumstances brought on by COVID-19 and the resulting uncertainties, we know this will require even more patience, flexibility and adaptability. We attempt to offer interviews only to those applicants who stand a reasonable chance of being placed; however, being granted an interview does not guarantee placement.
APPLICATION CHECKLIST

For your application to be considered, you must submit ALL application materials by the application deadline at 3:00 pm EDT on Monday, November 1.

Please review the checklist below and gather the corresponding files for their submission to our online application portal.

- One completed online application form. Within it, you will upload:
  - Two completed essays (see page 11 for essay prompts and submission information)
  - Two short answer responses (see page 12 for prompts)
  - One 60-second video (see page 12 for video prompts and submission information)
  - One resume (one page only)
    - Tailor your resume for PiA purposes, highlighting relevant teaching or work experience as well as any language proficiencies and cross-cultural experience
  - One unofficial college or university transcript (see page 13 for instructions)

And

- One letter of recommendation, submitted by your chosen recommender (see page 13 for instructions)
ESSAY PROMPTS

Applicants are required to complete two essays and submit them through our online application portal in PDF form. Please include your name and the essay prompt at the top of each document, and title the document in the following format: “LastName_FirstName_EssayNumber.PDF”.

For Essay #1, please respond to the prompt, “Why Princeton in Asia?”. For Essay #2, please choose either “A Change in Perspective” or “A Community for Life” and answer that single prompt in your submission. For each of the following essays, please keep the word count between 350 and 500 words.

ESSAY #1: Why Princeton in Asia?

Please discuss why you wish to embark on a Princeton in Asia fellowship next year and what you hope to contribute and gain, both personally and professionally, through the experience.

ESSAY #2, Option 1: A Change in Perspective

“One’s destination is never a place, but rather a new way of seeing.” -- Henry Miller

Drawing on your personal experiences, reflect on an event, situation, or a time in your life that fundamentally challenged one of your previously held views or understandings.

ESSAY #2, Option 2: A Community for Life

Out of the communities you have been a part of in your life, which have you found to be the most fulfilling? Why? How have you given back to that community?

SHORT ANSWER

Applicants are required to answer both of the following short answer questions. Please include your responses directly on the online application form. For each of the following questions, please keep the word count under 200 words.
SHORT ANSWER QUESTION #1
Describe a time when you built a relationship across cultural difference. What did you learn from this relationship?

SHORT ANSWER QUESTION #2
Describe a time when a specific experience, context, or environment made you aware of a privilege that you held.

VIDEO SUBMISSION

Applicants are required to complete one video submission. You may choose ONE of the following THREE prompts to address in your video. There is no right or wrong way to make your PiA video, but we do require that you are featured speaking at some point.

Please keep your video to a maximum of 60 seconds in length, and feel free to have fun and be creative! Please upload your video to either YouTube or a file sharing site (Dropbox, Google Drive), ensure the sharing settings are set to “anyone can edit”, and then enter the link on our online application form.

VIDEO PROMPT, Option #1: Show and Tell
Show or tell us something we should know about you that we wouldn't already know from your application.

VIDEO PROMPT, Option #2: Eye for Appreciation
What was the best thing that happened to you this year? What made it so special?

VIDEO PROMPT, Option #3: Say “Yes”
Show or tell us about a time when you said “yes” to something unexpected and what came of it.
UNOFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT

Princeton in Asia requires an unofficial copy of a recent transcript from your undergraduate institution (and graduate school, if applicable). Transcripts from study abroad programs are not required.

NOTE: All applicants selected for an interview will be required to submit an official transcript by Monday, January 24, 2022. This official transcript must be mailed or sent electronically directly from the educational institution and NOT the applicant.

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

Princeton in Asia requires one letter of recommendation from someone who has supervised you in a relevant professional or academic environment. The letter should be submitted as a signed PDF (digital signatures are allowed) and should include your full name and the contact information of the recommender.

Your recommender can submit their letter online via the following link: https://fs20.formsite.com/princetoninasia/LOR2022/index.html

Please send the link to your recommender well in advance of the application deadline, and write your recommender’s full name in the application. In certain cases where the recommender cannot submit the letter electronically, PiA may make an allowance for them to submit the letter via mail. Please write to us at piaapps@princeton.edu if that is the case.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I need to be a Princeton University graduate to apply to PiA?
No. PiA is based on campus at Princeton University, but our application is open to graduates of all colleges and universities. For any specific fellowship opening, we are looking for the best possible candidate regardless of one’s undergraduate institution.

Do I need to be an American citizen to apply to PiA?
No. PiA is open to anyone of any nationality who has earned a bachelor’s degree or will obtain a bachelor’s degree by summer 2022. It is important to note that a host country’s visa restrictions may limit the number of potential posts for citizens of certain nationalities. Moreover, applicants who are in the process of applying for permanent residency or citizenship in the U.S. are advised to consult a legal professional about the impact that a fellowship may have on their immigration status.

Do I need to be a native English speaker to apply to PiA?
No. However, all positions require professional proficiency in English, and English teaching positions require native English-speaking ability.

Can I apply to PiA if I graduated from college several years ago?
Yes. There is no age limit for positions with PiA.

Can I apply to PiA if I am currently studying or working outside of the U.S.?
Yes. We receive a number of applications from overseas candidates each year. If you are selected for an interview, we will ask you to interview virtually during our office’s working hours. Please note that applying for a visa for your fellowship posting while based outside of the US may be challenging.

What kind of degree do I need?
PiA considers applicants with a bachelor's degree in any field as well as those who plan to obtain their bachelor's degree by the summer of 2022. We do consider candidates with master’s degrees, but not those with professional degrees. Keep in mind that PiA fellowships are mostly entry-level positions and are geared toward recent college graduates.

What are my chances of receiving a fellowship offer?
Applicant numbers vary from year to year, but pre-COVID there were consistently four or more strong applicants per available position. Given the reduction in fellowship numbers
due to COVID, we anticipate that the number of strong applicants for each available position will be significantly higher.

Is it an advantage to have been to Asia before?
For most positions, no. While there are a handful of positions that require a background in Asian studies and/or Asian language skills, most positions can be filled by applicants with an interest in and a desire to learn about Asia, rather than in-depth knowledge. A key component of a PiA fellowship is to experience transformation. Because of this, we aim to place Fellows where they will be appropriately challenged and have the opportunity to learn something new. All applicants, regardless of Asia experience, should be ready to speak to their potential for growth through a PiA fellowship.

Should I specify a particular country, issue, or fellowship position on my application?
For the 2022-23 application, you will be asked to indicate a region and issue of interest. However, you will not be asked to list specific post preferences. This is due to various unpredictable impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the availability of specific fellowship opportunities. Your region and issues of interest are important information for us; however, they are used only as a guideline and a starting point for us. Applicants apply to the program in general, not for specific posts. We encourage applicants to keep an open mind to ideas outside of their initial preferences during the placement process. Keep in mind that a certain degree of flexibility may increase your chances of placement.

Is PiA only about English teaching?
No. Pre-COVID, more than half of our Fellows were employed as English teachers at universities, colleges, and high schools. However, we have long offered, and continue to develop, positions in a variety of issue areas, including public health, environmental sustainability, economic development, sports, STEM, arts and culture, and peace, justice, and access to information.

How do I learn more about specific positions?
All applicants should read reports filed by previous Fellows about their positions, which are available on our website. Please email piaapps@princeton.edu to obtain the login information to access the Fellow reports.

Can you put me in touch with current PiA Fellows or alumni? Can you put me in touch with any host organizations?
Not yet. Applicants who reach the finalist stage of the selection process may be put in touch with recent Fellows/alumni from the post for which they are being considered. Until that stage of the process, you may learn more about specific posts and countries by reading Fellow reports and conducting your own research. Please do not contact any PiA host organization directly until PiA has officially introduced you. Any applicant who circumvents PiA’s selection process by contacting a PiA host organization directly will be automatically disqualified from consideration for a PiA fellowship.

Will you be adding any new positions to the ones listed on your website?
Yes. Every year, PiA typically adds new positions and eliminates others, with details not finalized until January, and sometimes later.

How do I decide where I want to go and what I want to do?
Here are some questions we ask candidates to help guide their thinking about what post might best suit them: What is your college major/area of interest, and how might you apply that to working in Asia? What kind of climate do you like? Do you like living in big cities or small towns? What do you want to do in your free time? What kind of work environment do you want? Do you want to live in a more developed or less developed area? Do you want a group of PiA Fellows or would you rather venture on your own? Do you have a medical condition that may require access to specific care during your fellowship year? Do you like spicy food?

Can I accept a PiA fellowship and stay on the waiting list for other opportunities?
No. Once you have been offered a PiA fellowship and have accepted, you are required to withdraw all applications you have submitted for other jobs and fellowship programs.

What if my college graduation falls on the same weekend as PiA Orientation?
PiA Orientation will be virtual for the 2022-23 cycle. In the case that it does conflict with your graduation ceremony, we will be able to work with you on an individual basis to ensure you can complete all Orientation requirements, as our Orientation does not require your in-person attendance. Please note, however, that you will be expected to virtually attend all Orientation events live if your graduation does not pose a timing conflict.