

# **ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT**

**Prepared for:**



**THAILAND – UNITED STATES  
EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION**

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Middlebury Institute of  
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# **Fulbright Thailand**

## **Thailand - United States Educational Foundation (TUSEF)**

### **MISSION & VISION**

The goal of the Fulbright Program is to improve intercultural relations, cultural diplomacy, and intercultural competence between the people of the United States and other countries through the exchange of persons, knowledge, and skills.

The Fulbright ~~Program~~ aims to bring a little more knowledge, a little more reason, and a little more compassion into world affairs and thereby increase the chance that nations will learn at last to live in peace and friendship.

### **THEORY OF CHANGE**

Fulbright Thailand seeks to use education as a tool to promote peace and understanding. It does so by nurturing young leaders to be open-minded, cross-culturally sensitive, critical, adjustable, and develop their capacity to better contribute to society.

### **ORIGIN**

The Foundation was created to oversee the Fulbright Program in Thailand. TUSEF was established under a bilateral agreement between the U.S. and Thai governments for education cooperation.

### **STAKEHOLDERS**

The Foundation is administered by a bi-national Board of Directors comprising of 14 representatives, 7 from each country including a representative from the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the Board's Chair, a representative from the U.S. Embassy as the Vice-Chair, and the U.S. Ambassador to Thailand as the Honorary Chair

### **PROGRAMS**

The Foundation administers 11 different Fulbright awards that are given to Thai and U.S. grantees annually and two additional awards on behalf of the U.S Department of State and the U.S. Embassy Bangkok.

## **CORE VALUES**

- o International friendship and cross-cultural relations
- o Expanding the boundaries of human wisdom, empathy, and perception
- o Diplomacy
- o Educational Exchange
- o Leadership
- o Generosity & Sharing
- o Trust
- o "Learn to Care"
- o Trying to see the world as others do

## **KEY STRENGTHS**

The Foundation plans and implements educational exchanges, recruits and nominates candidates for awards; designate qualified local educational institutions to host Fulbrighters; fundraises; engages alumni; supports incoming U.S. Fulbrighters; and operates an information service for the public on a study in the United States. They developed their knowledge and expertise in grant administration, education internationalization, and cross-culture. In this digital age, they are expanding their usage of technology to maximize grant management capacity and knowledge management.

## **KEY RESOURCES & RELATIONSHIPS**

Founded under a bi-lateral agreement, its key actors are the U.S. Department of State as well as the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## **FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

The program is dually funded by the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

The Thai Government contributes 36% of the budget while the remainder is supported by the U.S. Government.

## **COMPETITORS, PARTNERS, COLLABORATORS**

### **Thailand**

U.S. Embassy, Bangkok

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand (MFA)

Ministry of Education of Thailand (MOE)

Office of the Higher Education Commission (OHEC)

Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC)

Thailand Research Fund (TRF)

National Science Technology and Innovation Policy Office

Institute of International Education, Southeast Asia (IIE Southeast Asia, Bangkok)

The American Chamber of Commerce in Thailand (AMCHAM)

Thai Fulbright Association

### **United-States**

U.S. Department of State

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State

U.S. Department of Education

Institute of International Education (IIE)

Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES)

World Learning

International Research & Exchange Board (IREX)

## **DESIRED STATE**

To become a premier bi-national scholarship brand in Thailand known for promoting education, internationalization, and cross-cultural understanding beyond and throughout its extensive network.

## **CONTEXT FOR MISSION, VISION, & VALUES**

Fulbright Thailand serves as one of many commissions belonging to the Fulbright Program. The Fulbright Thailand Commission's founding structure as a bi-lateral organization coincides with the Fulbright Program's commitment to international bilateral partnership and joint-priority setting between the U.S. and other nations. Meanwhile, the commission has focused efforts towards internationalization and creating mutual understanding between the peoples of the U.S. and Thailand.

### **Fulbright Program Mission Vision & Values:**

**Mission:** Foster mutual cross-cultural understanding through international partnerships, educational exchange, and the sharing of knowledge, skills, and ideas to promote peace, prosperity, and diplomacy around the world.

**Vision:** Citizens and governments of other countries work jointly with the U.S. to set joint priorities and shape programs to meet shared needs.

**Values:** collaboration, networking, cross-cultural understanding, exchange, knowledge sharing, relationship-building, innovation, creativity, knowledge, leadership, commitment

### **Fulbright Thailand - TUSEF Mission, Vision, and Values:**

**Mission:** Administer Fulbright award programs, retain prestige, promote knowledge sharing for cross-cultural awareness and Thai-U.S. mutual understanding

**Vision:** Promote further Thai-U.S. mutual understanding by widening the exchange of knowledge and professional talents through educational contacts.

**Extended Vision:** Fulbright Thailand is the premier bi-national scholarship scheme in Thailand, administered on the basis of transparency, strong networks, and caring services.

**Values:** Transparency, fairness, equal opportunities, and treatment.

Slogan: Inspiring Caring Leaders Across Cultures

## **ANALYSIS**

The goals of Fulbright Thailand align with the Fulbright Program; however, they may be better suited to clarify or identify goals that are more specific to the needs of both partners (the U.S. and Thai Governments). The Fulbright Program boasts that despite a changing world, international partnerships remain at the core of its mission. While admirable and consistent, it may be beneficial to elaborate more and evolve the mission, vision, and values to the present. The Commission oversees multiple different award programs that are distinct but share many overlapping values and goals as international exchange programs. The mission, vision, and values are not clearly communicated throughout the various programs administered by the organization

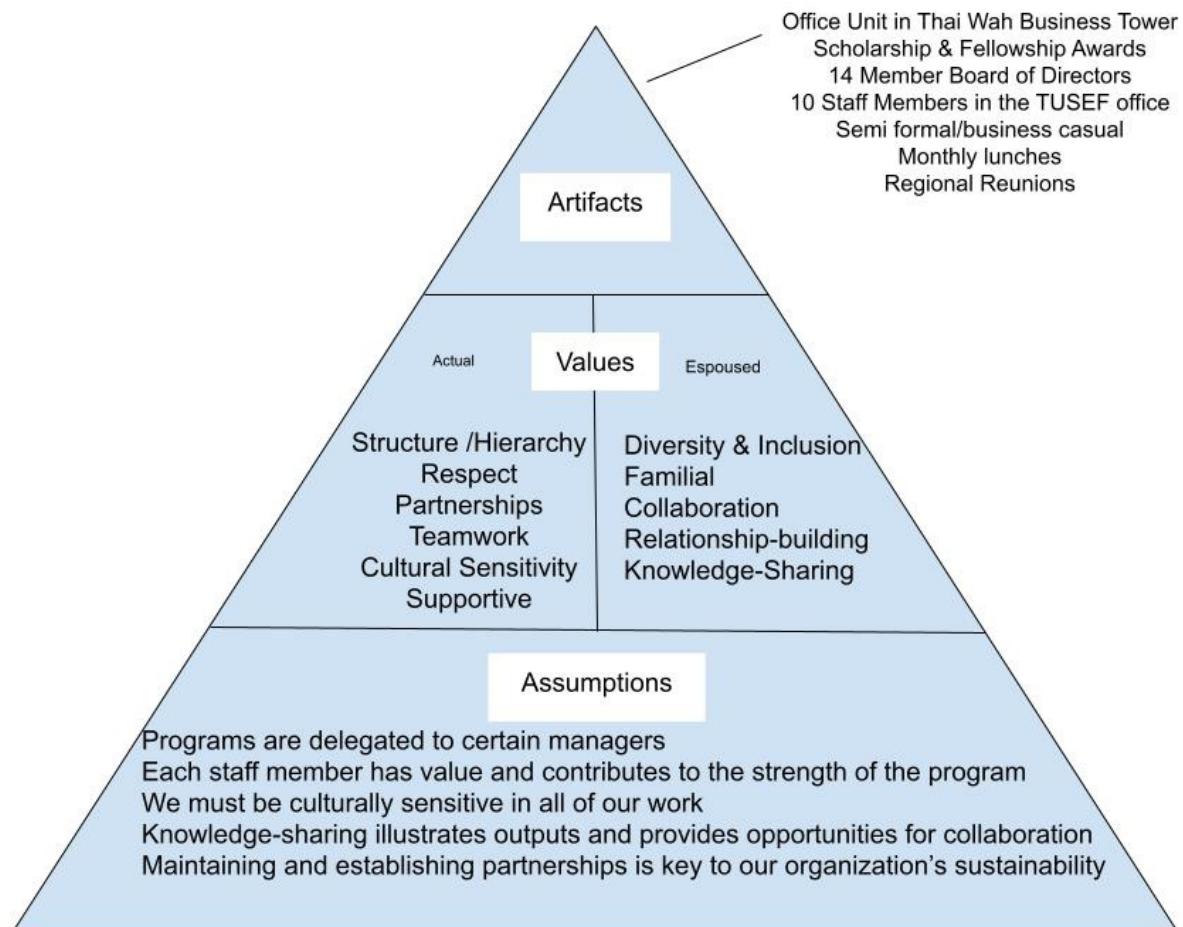
## **RECOMMENDATION**

Involve all stakeholders including TUSEF staff, the Board of Directors, partner organizations, host school institutions, grantees, donors, and sponsors in communicating the mission, vision, and values, to ensure they align with existing programs and functions. Generating and solidifying shared buy-in may strengthen stakeholder relationships and the collaborative support needed to implement organizational goals. Fulbright Thailand may also want to ensure that their plan of action directly relates to the mission, vision, and values by encompassing the interests and goals of all stakeholders to support mutual Thai-U.S. exchange.

Fulbright Thailand is the administrator for several award programs and as they expand their network outwards to grow and develop new educational contacts, it may also be beneficial to look inwards at the existing programs and search for ways that various current program participants may network and engage with one another. This may involve networking amongst grantees from multiple programs. This would strengthen the overall shared vision and allow stakeholders to gain insight into the broader range of Fulbright Thailand's programs and develop the relationship-building capacity and inter-organization networks.

## ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Fulbright Thailand aims to strengthen its network by developing and maintaining partnerships for their educational exchange programs.



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Fulbright Thailand is part of a larger network that was built to foster and develop partnerships between the U.S. and other countries. The Thai and U.S. governments inherently have developed this partnership in an agreement to collaboratively develop goals that promote exchange between the two countries and throughout the broader Fulbright Network. TUSEF maintains a small in-house staff as a not-for-profit organization. Its programs involve pairing Thai and U.S. academic institutions to facilitate academic exchanges for both U.S. and Thai participants.

The Department of State is an actor involved with the TUSEF office in multiple ways as it sponsors U.S. Fulbright grantees in Thailand and also partners with Fulbright Thailand to administer the Global Undergraduate Exchange Program (Global UGrad) for Thai students to study in the U.S.

## RECOMMENDATION

The organization needs to ensure the values are transparent throughout all levels and ensure the culture is consistent not just within the administration but modeled in a way that translates to all programs. Because collaboration and partnerships are strong values in place, these areas can receive further investment to build upon the strengths of the organization. The espoused value of familial relationships can also be further implemented and modeled outside the administration and with the other programs to develop relationships that support the overarching mission, vision, and values. This can be done by the administration engaging in more efforts to develop social capital with program participants. Key times to put this into practice would be furthering administrative involvement at program orientations, regional meetings, mid-term meetings, and other program events attended by program cohorts.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

Fulbright Thailand's organizational structure is hierarchical. While the foundation of the organization is built on a bi-lateral partnership, it includes a 14-member Board of Directors that serves as the governing body. Operations are headed by the Executive Director, who serves as the COO and oversees 9 other staff members who are divided into three different groups: Administration & Finance, Program Officers, and Outreach. Responsibilities for the various programs are delegated to the program officers and supported by Administration & Finance group as well as the Outreach Officer.

The TUSEF office staff members work closely together in the support of the programs Fulbright Thailand administers. They are regulated by the bi-lateral agreement between the Thai and U.S. governments, bylaws, the Bangkok Ministry of Culture, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, Thai labor laws, and Revenue codes.

Key customers include the program grantees. Stakeholders include the Board of Directors, Institute of International Education (IIE), the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES), higher education institutions, alumni, and partners. The Ministry of Education is a key collaborator.

Suppliers include TRUE telecommunications (telephone, fax, and internet), Richy Richy Company Limited (internet/server provider), Siam Travel (local travel agency), Angel Tour (International Travel agency). No suppliers/partners are labeled as key distributors. The most important supply chain requirement is the qualified applicants from partner universities and the market segment.

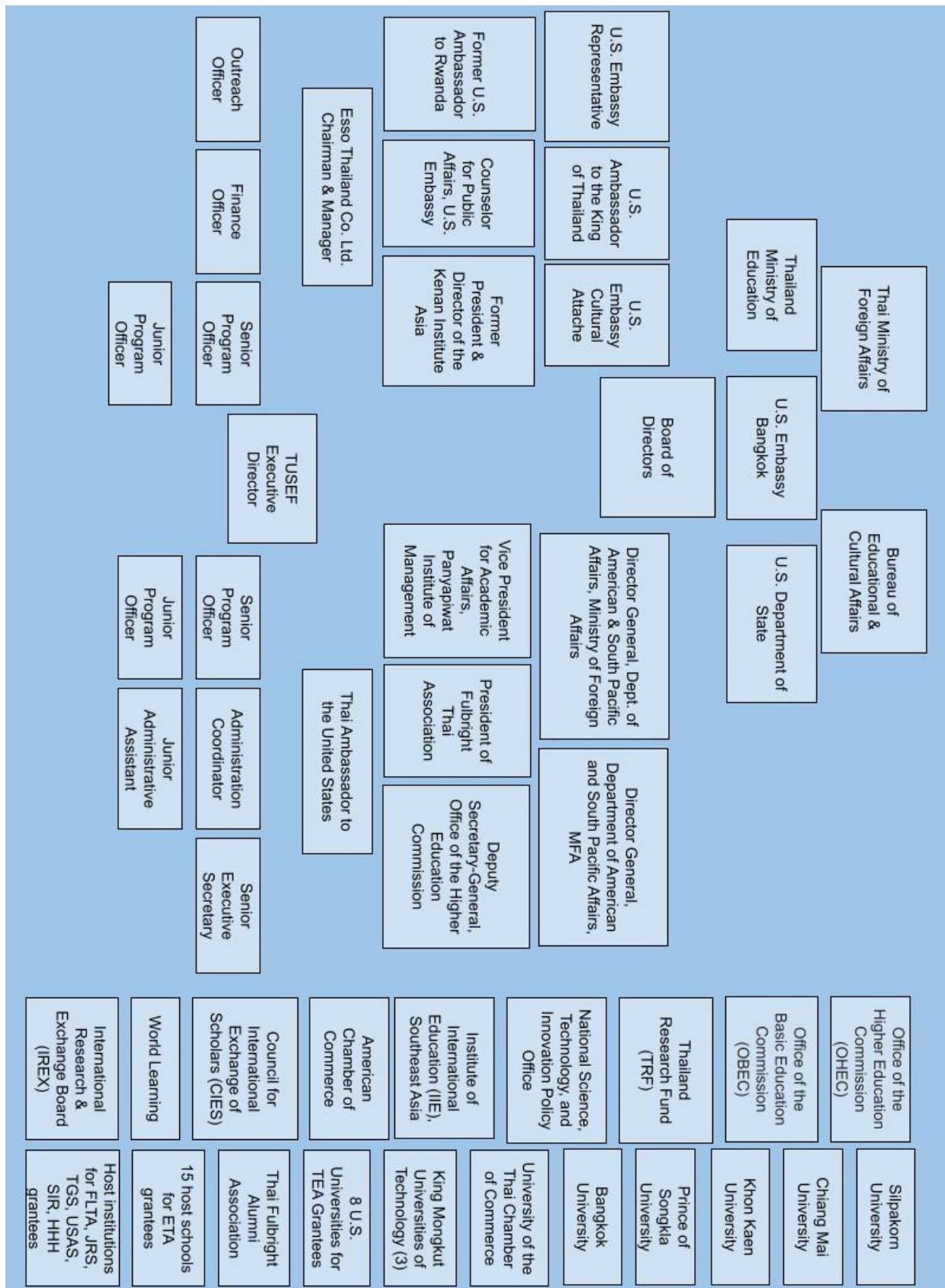
Stakeholder engagement relies heavily on telecommunications as the main methods for communication are technology-based, dependent on emails, phone calls, Facebook, and Skype. Grantees are spread out widely throughout numerous provinces in Thailand and the multiple U.S. States. The administration relies heavily on two host individuals per grantee in their respective placements as partners responsible for bridging communication between grantee performance and the administration.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

While the organization faces challenges in communication limits with grantees due to the widespread geographical placements, it would be wise for the administration to include more frequently scheduled meetings even if they must be done remotely to build upon their values of support and relationship building. This would further develop the relationships between grantees and the administration and result in a higher likelihood for more long-term engagement and collaboration. This would also support the organization's espoused value of maintaining a familial culture.

Developing a platform to connect all grantees across all programs, both U.S. and Thai, may also increase communication and further integrate support and dialogue to strengthen the mission, vision, and values of the organization, as well as further, develop opportunities for comparative dialogue and international exchange. Communication can increase horizontal integration and strengthen the gaps between each of the hierarchical levels. Furthermore, the board of directors' role could be more interactive to expand engagement with grantees. The hierarchical divide, while providing structure and appropriate for Thai culture, leave some gaps in the communication and integration between levels and programs within the organization.

# ECOSYSTEM MAP



## **OVERVIEW**

Fulbright Thailand has a wide network that is a great strength for the organization. It relies heavily on its partnerships and values collaboration and relationship building with them. The mission is to further develop the network and increase partnerships.

## **ANALYSIS**

The organization aims to improve knowledge sharing and this goal can be paired with its vast network of partners by developing collaborative goals to increase publications and networking opportunities with universities (both Thai and U.S.). They can also further cross-collaboration between programs in place and host institutions. This has already been done in some cases where the FLTA and ETA programs partnered with English Fellows from the U.S. Embassy. Furthermore, since 2017, they have begun to increase their partnerships with other Fulbright commissions and Fulbright programs in other nearby countries, particularly Taiwan, Laos, and Malaysia.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Craft mission and vision statements that more specifically align with Thai-U.S. relations for each of the administered programs, highlighting shared needs from both countries' educational development goals and priorities for international relations and exchange. Evaluate to what extent the mission, vision, and values, apply to each existing program. Determine how powerful/tangible are they within the program objectives and activities. Partner with IREX which has expertise in using technology for data collection and management. There is currently no central agency collecting overall scholarship data and statistics. IREX already has the tools in place for this and the organization can collaborate further with IREX and the National Statistics Office to enhance data analysis for program evaluation.

Increase cross-collaborative partnerships between programs, host institutions, and other Fulbright commissions to strengthen partnerships and relationship-building. The Thai Fulbright Association (TFA) is being underutilized and is widely unknown to many of the program participants. TUSEF can work with TFA to increase alumni engagement and collaborate on activities that contribute to Fulbright Thailand's goals of improving knowledge sharing. This will also contribute to stronger networking, collaboration, and give alumni a clearer sense of the cohesion of the organization as well as the shared mission, vision, and values.

# **HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

## **OVERVIEW**

The Administration Coordinator and the Junior Administrative Assistant are largely responsible for technical human resource practices but there is not any clear designation of a role or duties assigned to any staff member to oversee all staff members beyond the Executive Director's role.

The small staff in the TUSEF office allows for a familial culture. The office itself is rather small with staff cubicles close and side by side. There is one central meeting office that is used by the TUSEF office staff. Aside from that the only office with a door in the office belongs to the Executive Director. While this makes for a transparent environment amongst employees, there also leaves little room for privacy or confidentiality in discussing individual performance evaluations within the office. Often, meetings between two staff members will take place outside of the office environment during the lunch hour. On a monthly basis, the entire TUSEF staff typically goes out to eat together. All of the employees are 40+ years of age.

## **ANALYSIS**

The office is highly collaborative, and communication is very open. Currently, there is a Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) system in place that is meant to evaluate grantee assessments and reports at the staff's evaluation meetings. While there is evaluation in place for the programs and for grantees, there is no clear evaluation in place for the TUSEF staff. Everyone is clearly valued as a person and the staff members respect one another as friends and family. There is a great amount of trust within the office as the workload is delegated to the different groups/individuals according to their expertise. I observed some criticism on the workload assigned to each person. The staff population is aging. Internationalization and cross-cultural exchange are continually developing across programs and in the Bangkok Metropolitan area.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

With such a small staff, it is challenging to further disseminate work and try and balance the workload unless the office hires another employee. However, the structure in the office offers very little room to do so as well as the funding required to add an additional team member. TUSEF should implement more performance evaluation within the office which may be best to be conducted in a 360-method. This could reinforce the assumption of support within the office. Furthermore, as some programs may share some overlap, there could be room for various program officers to collaborate and better support one another in their work. The organization should consider bringing in younger staff members or interns.

The only interns to work in the office have requested to work in the office themselves and were not sought by the organizations. This could bring in new perspectives and diversify the demographic. Additionally, the office should engage in professional development specifically for internationalization and cross-cultural exchange. As trends in internationalization evolve, so must the organization and its staff to better support the administered programs.

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

While strategic issues have been identified at TUSEF, there is not yet a clear strategic plan in place. It is important that the organization collectively identify these issues so that they are known and there is a shared understanding regarding each issue. They should each be approached one at a time.

Some key challenges include a decrease in funding. The Department of State and the ECA both experienced budget cuts that affect Fulbright-related activities. Increased tuition fees at American universities are another challenge for the Thai grantee programs.

There is limited office space for group activities at TUSEF. There is minimal participation of alumni in the Thai Fulbright Association. In 2014, there was a change in leadership as the organization received a new Executive Director upon leave of the preceding director and with this, there have been some challenges in sustaining networks and extending formerly in place networks.

Due to the cuts in funding, the organization has had to make cuts but minimizing the number of grantees in some of its programs. The organization relies solely on funding from the U.S. and Thai Governments. Furthermore, with regard to program evaluation, evaluation responses from some host institutions may lack honesty and transparency as they might be fearful of losing their contracts with Fulbright Thailand amid budget cuts.

### **STRENGTHS**

- International prestige of Fulbright Program
- No strings attached policy
- Network creation & retention
- Top competitor under bi-national scholarship providers
- Strong support of the Thai and U.S. Governments
- Cost sharing willingness of governing partner agencies
- Pro bono assistance of alumni in TUSEF related activities
- Longstanding reputation of the Fulbright Program worldwide
- Program Evaluation plan in place

### **WEAKNESSES**

- Budget cuts
- Funding dependent on governing partner agencies
- No central agency collecting scholarship data and statistics
- Weak monitoring in place for current programs
- Uncertain longevity of newer programs
- Limited office space, small structure

- Low participation of alumni in Thai Fulbright Association
- Aging staff
- Communication

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Fulbright Thailand should first develop a strategic plan to clarify and reinforce its goals and vision. They may want to consider non-governmental funding opportunities in its strategic plan. By defining their purpose, and advocating for a course of action clearly, there is a higher likelihood that they may secure alternative funding. While funding plays such a large role in the direction of their programs it is crucial that Fulbright Thailand maintain its organizational priorities at the core and at the forefront of any strategic planning that is done as a result to budget cuts.

The organization needs to involve all stakeholders in order to best engage multiple perspectives and increase all-system understanding of the issues at stake, and the strategy to move forward with the organization's goals and vision apparent and clear throughout.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT & TOOL**

### **Organizational Assessment**

The purpose of the organizational assessment is to measure key strengths and weaknesses and clarify the mission, vision, and values to facilitate organizational learning. The assessment will focus on evaluating to what extent the mission, vision, and values are applied to existing programs. The scope will be to examine how evident the stated values of collaboration, partnership, and are within the current programs to consider the effective implementation of the mission, vision, and values, and measure cohesion within the organization.

#### ***The following meta-questions will be asked:***

- To what extent does Fulbright Thailand meet its stated mission, vision, and values?
- What opportunities for collaboration and networking does Fulbright Thailand have for existing programs?
- To what extent are TUSEF staff modeling the mission, vision, and values?
- To what extent do the mission, vision, and values align between the administration and grantees?
- To what extent do Fulbright Thailand's mission, vision, and values align with its partners and how are they implemented?

## **METHODOLOGY**

The data will be collected using surveys and through facilitated focus-group discussions during key multi-day meetings such as orientation, regional meetings, and wrap-up meetings which each occur annually. Four surveys will be given periodically pre, during, and post-grant to inquire about the perceived mission, vision, and values, and to assess the extent to which they are being implemented into the programs. Four surveys will be administered at the beginning, mid-term, end of the grant, and post-grant. Facilitation will occur by enlisting the help of roles, responsibilities, and participants – surveys will be administered to grantees, TUSEF staff, board members, and key managers at partnering host institutions.

Facilitation assistance will involve partnering with English Language Fellows from the U.S. Embassy Bangkok to lead/facilitate discussions at meetings held in Thailand.

Because of the large geographical distances for grantees placed in the U.S. facilitation will be conducted remotely using video conferencing tools.

**Timeline** – The assessment will be in-depth and occur beyond the course of one grant year. Specific implementation dates/times may vary according to grant year start/end dates as well the tentative scheduling of meetings. Ample time will be given post-grant to give participants enough time for reflection.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT TOOL**

### **Questions and Guidelines for Facilitating World Café:**

#### ***Introduction:***

The facilitator will explain the purpose of the discussion activity

The purpose of this discussion is to gather feedback on the nature and efficiency of Fulbright Thailand's mission, vision, and values within its existing programs. The organization seeks your input and we hope that today's session will prove to be both a reflective and informative process for everyone. The information gathered from today's session will be used to learn about Fulbright Thailand and evaluate how we can continue to collectively improve and engage in impactful international and cultural exchange.

Any comments from today's session will remain confidential in any follow-up reports. We ask that you take the time to respond to the questions reflectively as they apply to your experiences. Your responses are valued and will contribute to Fulbright Thailand's strategies for improvement and progress.

**Ground Rules:**

Begin by asking the group to establish some ground rules collectively as specific agreements in order to maintain a respectful and productive environment for the discussions. (This is meant to provide participants with collective ownership and begin building social capital). After group has established some ground rules, also suggest the following:

*We ask that in your discussions today, you refrain from advising others, judging others and any ideas or comments shared, and avoid interpreting people's comments. In other words, all ideas are welcomed and accepted and if another person's comments are not understood, then feel free to ask and clarify with the speaker.*

**Instructions given by facilitator:**

You will have 15 minutes at each table today where you will respond the given question at the table. I encourage you to take the first five minutes for writing down your own ideas and then the remaining ten for sharing your responses with the group and building a collective list. You may come up with as many answers for every question as you'd like within the given time. I will keep time and remind you of the five- and ten-minute marks. Then you will rotate to the next table. We will continue to do this until everyone has spent time at each table. We will then take a break and regroup to share the results.

**Questions:**

What does it mean to you to be part of the “Fulbright Family”?

What are the strengths of the Fulbright Program?

What areas would you like to see Fulbright Thailand improve?

How have you experienced or observed partnerships and collaboration within Fulbright Thailand?

What do you perceive to be Fulbright Thailand's goals and values?

## **ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE**

The most important organizational change that Fulbright Thailand needs to undertake is the integration and strengthening of its programs and ensuring that their mission, vision, and values are clear to all program participants and throughout the administration. As part of a long-standing prestigious program, Fulbright Thailand has an advantage within the Fulbright Program of having its own in-country commission for its programs. This already provides structural capacity but could be further strengthened to ensure not only the sustainability of the organization but also growth.

While Fulbright Thailand already has some assessment measures in place, it would be wise to undergo further organizational assessment and conduct a more in-depth evaluation to unlock underutilized potential, strengthen its existing programs and partnerships, and further develop its network.

## **EVALUATION CONSIDERATIONS**

### ***Reevaluate Funding Support***

Because Fulbright Thailand heavily relies on government funding to keep its existing programs in place, it may be worthwhile to consider how it might seek funding through partnerships. However, before doing so, Fulbright Thailand needs to build upon the existing strengths

### ***Expand Opportunities for Collaboration***

The commission has already begun to develop and organize more collaborative opportunities for engagement between its programs and other partners within its network. If Fulbright Thailand wishes to adhere to its stated values of partnership, collaboration, and networking, then it needs to increasingly develop innovative opportunities that allow for program participants to engage.

### ***Increase Administrative Involvement***

While Fulbright Thailand's administration works extensively to administer its programs, increasing the presence and engagement of administrative staff alongside program participants at meetings would increase cohesion and relationship building within the Fulbright Thailand network. This would further increase trust and build upon the capacity for shared trust members of the Fulbright Network. Ultimately this would translate to a higher likelihood of increased alumni participation which could strengthen program support, commitment, and development.

## **ASSESSMENT REFLECTION - STRENGTHS & LIMITATIONS**

Conducting this organizational assessment (OA) was a learning process that was both informative and insightful. It forced me to be self-critical, take my biases into account, and was also a good reflection for me on my previous experience working with this organization. I believe the overall report has some good structural points but could use improvement. One way to strengthen the analysis and recommendations for each section would be to gather more feedback and information from other stakeholders within Fulbright Thailand, not just the TUSEF staff. While some considerations were made from previous comments and observations made in previous meetings and events, it would be pertinent to conduct a more holistic approach to gathering feedback.

Because the organizational assessment is being done for an international organization abroad, the process involved some logistical limitations in my ability to engage more stakeholders and communicate with the organization while in the U.S. Furthermore, as a time-constraint, the organizational assessment is more of a preview of what a potential organizational assessment could be if it were further developed and built upon more research and evidence that would require several months and more facilitation and engagement than what I am able to currently provide.

The flexibility of completing the OA and the nature of the course in which I learned how to do it was very helpful. It's critical to consider how deadlines keep us on track but knowing that there is flexibility reminds me of the culture of working for this organization and how it's also important to be flexible through such an iterative process. Overall, I would have liked to take a slower more long-term approach to this OA and still may consider doing so. It has been a valuable learning process for which I am grateful as it challenged me and encouraged me to engage in deep learning. I hope to take what I have learned from developing this report and apply it towards further improvement of this case as well as others.