

FULBRIGHT FORUM FREEDOM 250

March 20, 2026, 10 am-5.00 pm (WEST- Lisbon Time)

Teatro Thalia

July 4, 2026, marks the 250th anniversary of the United States and Declaration of Independence of July 4, 1776. The Fulbright Commission in Portugal joins the commemoration by partnering with the U.S. Embassy in Lisbon and offering the Fulbright Forum Freedom 250, where Fulbrighters gather to share perspectives and experiences resulting from projects developed under the aegis of the Fulbright Program.

The Forum will celebrate *“Our American Story”* by highlighting the personal stories of U.S. Fulbrighters from across the country, as well as those of Portuguese grantees who developed their Fulbright projects throughout the United States, and by honoring the role of public diplomacy in advancing mutual understanding around the world.

In 2026, the Forum will also serve as the closing event of the celebration of the 65th Anniversary of the Fulbright Commission in Portugal, established on March 19, 1960.

OUR AMERICAN STORY - PROGRAM

9:30 AM – REGISTRATION AND WELCOME COFFEE

10:00 AM – OPENING REMARKS

OTÍLIA MACEDO REIS – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FULBRIGHT PORTUGAL

DOUGLAS KONEFF – DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION, US EMBASSY IN LISBON

10:15 AM – FULBRIGHT SPECIALIST

KHARY HORNSBY: UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE – UNIVERSIDADE NOVA DE LISBOA

Centering the Art of Presence and The Science of Mindfulness in Legal Education

10:30 AM – FULBRIGHT PT/US RESEARCH STUDENTS 1

ALYSSA BOTELHO: UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND - CÂMARA MUNICIPAL DE PONTA DELGADA / MUSEU CARLOS MACHADO

The Last Frontier: An American Story Shaped by the Azorean Diaspora

PEDRO TEIXEIRA: UNIVERSIDADE DE COIMBRA – BROWN UNIVERSITY

Two Countries, One Ocean: Living and Researching in the Ocean State

ZAHRA TYEBJEE: RHODE ISLAND INSTITUTE OF DESIGN – ANDA&FALA ASSOCIAÇÃO CULTURAL / CADA-CENTRO DE ARTESANATO E DESIGN DOS AÇORES

State of Becoming

PIA HERNANDEZ: ROLLINS COLLEGE – INSTITUTO POLITÉCNICO DE LISBOA

The Resonance of Choirs Across Borders

CHAMP TURNER: BROWN UNIVERSITY – MUSEU CARLOS MACHADO

Out of the Ashes': A Museum Exhibition Interpreting Disaster Events of the Azores in their Global Contexts

Panel Moderator Dora Arenga, US Program Manager

11:15 AM – FULBRIGHT LANGUAGE TEACHING ASSISTANTS

JULIA LININGER-WHITE: MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE – EGAS MONIZ-SCHOOL OF HEALTH & SCIENCE

Understanding National Identity through Language

JOCELINE RODRIGUES: UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND – ISG|BUSINESS & ECONOMICS SCHOOL

Service Across Oceans and Communities

MATTHEW HERNANDEZ: DENISON UNIVERSITY – UNIVERSIDADE DE AVEIRO

Mobility, Language, and Belonging: Bridging Communities Across Difference

AMY INESTROZA: COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS – UNIVERSIDADE DA MADEIRA

Local Governance, Dialogue, and Community: Lessons from the Municipality of Funchal

JAMIE NICOLAS: YALE UNIVERSITY – INSTITUTO POLITÉCNICO DE LEIRIA

Contemplating Rest, Reckoning & Resistance from Leiria, Portugal

MARIANA RODRIGUES: UNIVERSIDADE DO PORTO – UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

My Georgia Story

Panel Moderator: Inês Silva de Almeida, Fulbright-FLTA Alumna, 2024/2025

12:00 PM – LUNCH

1:15 PM – FULBRIGHT SCHOLARS

RICARDO LOURO: UNIVERSIDADE NOVA DE LISBOA – CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

My Beautiful America

SARAH BRADEN: UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY – UNIVERSIDADE DE LISBOA

Curiosity and Connection as Fuel for an Unpredictable Path as a STEM Education Researcher

TAYYABA HASAN: MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL – UNIVERSIDADE DE COIMBRA

My four months' sabbatical at the University of Coimbra

Panel Moderator: Otília Macedo Reis, Fulbright Portugal Executive Director

1:45 PM – FULBRIGHT PT/US RESEARCH STUDENTS 2

PRIYA TALREJA: UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS – UNIVERSIDADE DOS AÇORES

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure to Support Community Mobility Needs in the Azores

PEDRO COSTA: UNIVERSIDADE DE COIMBRA – MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Beaver Kingdom Chronicles: Engineering, Culture, and Bananas

NUNO TAVARES: UNIVERSIDADE DO PORTO – CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Fulbright@Cornell: My Big Red Experience

CLÁUDIA SILVA: UNIVERSIDADE DO MINHO – HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Life in New England as a Research Student

Panel Moderator: Sofia Wahnnon, PT Program Manager

2:30 PM – FULBRIGHT PT/US RESEARCH STUDENTS 3

NÁDIA SEIDI: UNIVERSIDADE DE AVEIRO – UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA

Florida-Woman: An Intense 6-month Journey

HELENE DUEBEL: BOSTON UNIVERSITY – CHAMPALIMAUD CENTRE FOR THE UNKNOWN

Connecting Minds: A Fulbright on Psychedelics

DORA D'ORSI DUARTE: ISPA – UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND-COLLEGE PARK

My Fulbright Experience at UMD: Rethinking Leadership and Collaboration in Psychological Research

Panel Moderator: Cláudia Costa, Fulbright Alumna, 2020/2021

3:15 PM – COFFEE BREAK

4:00 PM – FULBRIGHT PT RESEARCH + GRADUATE STUDENTS

MARTA BARROS: UNIVERSIDADE DE LISBOA – UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

Living in a Mountain State

FILIFE CRUZ: UNIVERSIDADE DE LISBOA – UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-LOS ANGELES

Crossing Borders in Pursuit of Clean, Limitless Energy

LUÍS AFONSO: UNIVERSIDADE DO PORTO – UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

My American Story in the Pacific Northwest

JOÃO FRANCO: UNIVERSIDADE NOVA DE LISBOA – UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

Computational Approaches to Study Society in the Green Mountain State

ANA SOFIA GRAÇA: UNIVERSIDADE DO PORTO – ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

From a Green Island to the Desert: A Journey Across Scales

5:00 PM - CLOSING