

Vietnam Education Foundation
Strategic Planning and Assessment
CY 2011-2016

Mission Statement

Per Public Law 106-554, which is based on legislation passed by the United States Congress on December 20, 2000, it is the mission of the Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF) to:

- (1) Establish an international fellowship program under which Vietnamese nationals can undertake graduate and post-graduate level studies in the sciences (natural, physical, and environmental), mathematics, medicine, and technology (including information technology) in the United States; and United States citizens can teach in the fields specified above in academic institutions in Vietnam.
- (2) Further the process of reconciliation between the United States and Vietnam and the building of a bilateral relationship serving the interests of both countries.

For the purposes of planning VEF programs and assessing the success of those programs against the goals set forth in PL 106-554, the VEF Board of Directors and Staff has developed this 5-year Strategic Plan, which will be reviewed annually in April based on an Annual Assessment Report that will be conducted at the beginning of each calendar year starting in January 2012.

Strategic Plan for CY 2011 - 2016

Executive Summary

At its core, the purpose for the Vietnam Education Foundation is to help Vietnam to develop their science and technology capacity through the education of Vietnamese nationals at U.S. institutions of Higher Education and through teaching programs by U.S. faculty experts at Vietnamese universities and research institutes. By extension, this educational exchange also is expected to contribute to the continued reconciliation between the United States and Vietnam who, four decades ago, were still in the midst of a significant war. Since beginning its programs in 2003, the Vietnam Education Foundation has developed numerous programs that have achieved these goals. The key to VEF's success for the next five years is to maximize VEF resources in order to improve and expand VEF programs and activities and to continue promoting mutual reconciliation through VEF initiatives.

Context for Planning

In order to better plan for the next five years, it is essential to understand who and what VEF is:

- VEF is an Independent Federal Agency of the United States Government.

- VEF leadership is comprised of a Board of Directors that includes Cabinet Secretaries, Members of Congress, and Presidential appointees whose experiences are drawn from higher education institutions and businesses throughout the United States.
- VEF leadership, management, and administration is comprised of fourteen full-time staff with offices in Arlington, Virginia, and Hanoi, Vietnam.
- VEF receives \$5 million in annual funding that is the result of debt payments made from Vietnam to the United States.
- VEF has provided funding support for nearly 400 Vietnamese Student Fellows (342) and Vietnamese Visiting Scholars (29) studying in the United States as well as U.S. Faculty Scholars (12) teaching at Vietnamese academic institutions.
- VEF has developed excellent relationships in Vietnam with the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), and numerous Vietnamese institutions dedicated to science and technology research and education

Vision for VEF

VEF is a very successful federal agency that is directly contributing to Vietnam's Science and Technology development and capacity and is strengthening the friendship and bilateral relationship between Vietnam and the United States.

Strategic Priorities

Goal 1: Maximize and develop VEF financial resources in ways that will allow for the continuation and expansion of the VEF Fellowship, Visiting Scholars, and U.S. Faculty Scholars Programs and the development of new complementary programs. VEF will seek additional ways to streamline spending, decrease overhead and related expenses, and increase funding available that will allow VEF to maintain its core programs and increase the number of fellowships and other awards granted each year.

Objective 1.1: The VEF Board Finance Committee along with the Executive Director and Director of Finance, Accounting, and Administration, will further scrutinize VEF spending to determine ways to cut overhead and administrative costs. The goal is to find enough cost savings or funds from donations that will allow for the addition of one more award every year to be granted in each program category to include VEF Fellowships, Visiting Scholars, and U.S. Faculty Scholars.

Objective 1.2: Through fund raising, foundation grants, and other creative measures, VEF will seek funding to develop programs that expand upon, or are complimentary to, the VEF core while remaining consistent with the legislative mandate of VEF. The objective is to identify at least two potential programs and two funding sources to support them before the end of 2012.

Goal 2: Help to further develop and expand U.S.-Vietnamese Educational and Research Exchanges in Science and Technology: VEF will be more creative in developing VEF Programs that fulfill the VEF mandates and missions as set forth in Public Law 106-554 while, at

the same time, expanding the role of VEF in promoting joint U.S./Vietnamese academic research and exchanges.

Objective 2.1: The VEF Board and VEF staff will work together to develop ideas internally and will also solicit ideas from individuals outside of VEF that could help VEF to further expand research and academic exchanges between the United States and Vietnam. The objective is to leverage VEF relationships with U.S. institutions, universities and faculty; with Vietnamese institutions, universities, and faculty; and with VEF Fellows, Visiting Scholars, and U.S. Faculty Scholars as well as VEF Alumni who have returned to Vietnam. All of these constituents could work together to create a more dynamic set of long-term exchange programs and projects. This could include VEF sponsorship of a consortium of institutions and individuals that could, over time, become self-sustaining without ongoing VEF organizational input.

Objective 2.2: Develop at least three program ideas that can be presented at the April 2012 Board of Directors Meeting.

Goal 3: Engage Vietnamese and U.S. institutions: VEF will continue to develop programs that engage organizations and institutions in Vietnam and the United States that share VEF's missions, goals, and vision.

Objective 3.1: VEF will seek ways to expand its work with such organizations as the Vietnamese National Foundation for Science and Technology Development (NAFOSTED) and the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF). This will include promoting connections between NAFOSTED, NSF, and similar organizations at Vietnamese and U.S. universities. The objective is to create at least one program that builds on previously held meetings and discussions with NAFOSTED while introducing these ideas and concepts to U.S. organizations.

Objective 3.2: VEF will continue to work with Vietnam-based scholarship programs like the Vietnam International Education Development (VIED), Mekong 1000 Program, and others to seek possible collaboration that is to our mutual benefit.

Goal 4: Foster stronger relationships with U.S. and Vietnamese National Leaders: Continue to develop strong relationships with legislative and political leadership of Vietnam and the United States. This is especially important with regard to U.S. Members of Congress who have a vested interest in VEF and the success of VEF.

Goal 5: Promote reconciliation through education and exchange: VEF will continue to promote reconciliation between the United States and Vietnam through Fellowships, Visiting Scholars, and U.S. Faculty Scholars. VEF educational exchange visitors will be asked to serve as ambassadors of their countries by sharing cultural information of their own country with individuals and groups of the other country.

Goal 6: Ensure that VEF Programs and Accomplishments live beyond VEF: Given the legislated termination of VEF, the Board of Directors and Staff at VEF will create a Program Sustainment Strategy that will identify and promote ways that VEF initiatives might become self-sustaining and continue on without ongoing VEF sponsorship.

Objective 6.1: VEF will examine all current programs as well as any and all planned and future initiatives and, whenever possible, will develop strategies that will allow them to continue on after VEF is disbanded in approximately 2023.

Strategic Plan Annual Assessment:

The VEF Board of Directors and VEF Staff will assess the outcomes of this Strategic Plan in March of each year and will provide a report to the full board at the quarterly VEF Board of Directors meeting held in April. The Assessment Report will be based on performance indicators and appropriate benchmarks using current CY (2011) program data for comparison. In addition to the Assessment Report, the Board of Directors and Staff will also evaluate the goals and objectives as stated in the five-year Strategic Plan and make adjustments to the annual goals and objectives as appropriate.