

Education, Innovation, Science, and Art

Text MAIJA KETTUNEN



Throughout the spring 2022, over 300 participants joined the Fulbright Forum series to discuss themes varying from smart grid solutions and sustainable architecture to climate anxiety, Finnish folk music, and best practices in education. In the annual series, the Foundation's current U.S. grantees present on their research and projects. The sessions are moderated by the Foundation's alumni and Board members.

Smart Grid Solutions in Finland

Salena Bantz presented on smart grid reliability, the focus of her master's thesis: "The smart grid provides a path forward to a more efficient, reliable, secure, and greener electricity system. My passion for electrical engineering and environmental responsibility intersects in the topic of smart grid technology."

"Smart grid technology is considered one of the most important tools for mitigating climate change. Significant investments and research are needed to

realize these solutions globally, and I look forward to being a part of the generation that works to re-invent the largest and most important machine in the world," Salena concludes.

Implementing Competence-Based Learning

Kathryn Picardo is researching how Finland's competence-based national curriculum is actualized in the schools. "Finnish classrooms have shown me it is possible to connect business, non-profits, parents, social services, and government agencies to actualize the notion of lifelong learning," Kathryn says.

Presenting on her project helped Kathryn to reflect on the observations from her conversations with teachers and students. "In putting together my Fulbright Forum presentation, I gained some clarity – finally able to discern takeaways that I know will make me a better teacher, researcher, and advocate for change back home," Kathryn says.

Salena Bantz

2021-22 Fulbright-Tampere University Graduate Award

Kathryn Picardo

2021-22 Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Research Program, University of Helsinki

Read more about Salena's and Kathryn's projects and experiences in Finland:

www.fulbright.fi/about-us/blog/smart-grid-solutions-finland

www.fulbright.fi/about-us/blog/series-small-realizations



Internationalizing Learning Environments

Fulbright teachers **Abigail Harkey** and **Carolyn Streets** had impactful Fulbright Speaker Program visits to schools and universities in Rovaniemi and Vantaa.

During her visit to Rovaniemi, Abigail Harkey discussed ideation, material use, and how to visually communicate complex ideas about social issues with high school students. She also participated in a consortium called *Living in the Landscape*, exploring ways that place and culture impact arts practices.

"Since my inquiry project on ecosocial art relates to their work, they invited me to join, and I continued participating in this international group of artists and researchers from five countries," Abigail says.

Carolyn Streets was invited to a comprehensive school in Vantaa to facilitate a roundtable discussion with staff and engage in a cultural exchange with students. "65% of the school's student population are of multiethnic-cultural backgrounds and teachers were interested in my expertise as they were considering new ways to improve the curriculum," Carolyn says.

The discussions explored introducing more multicultural-ethnic content within the curriculum to help students to construct their cultural identities and confirm them as valued members of society.

Invite a U.S. Fulbrighter to your institution

Fulbright Speaker Program is an easy opportunity for Finnish schools and other institutions to internationalize their learning environment.

Read more about the program and funding opportunities: www.fulbright.fi/speaker-program

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