

Program overview & objectives

Zamala, an Arabic term that means “companionship,” “friendship,” or “togetherness,” is the name chosen for the unique university fellowship program that was first initiated by Bank of Palestine, in collaboration with the Welfare Association in 2012. The *Zamala* Fellowship Program was made possible by an initial endowment of \$2 million by the Bank of Palestine.

Today, the Fellowship Program is enabled by the *Zamala* Fund, which accumulates annual donations from Bank of Palestine, the Welfare Association and other sources of funding, including the “CCC” Consolidated Contractors Company, Arab Monetary Fund and a number of individual philanthropists and donors.

The core mission of the *Zamala* Fellowship Program is the development of human resources at the faculties of Palestinian universities. Thus far, 13 Palestinian universities have partnered up with the *Zamala* Fellowship Program, including Birzeit University, Al-Najah University, Bethlehem University and the Arab American University. Through *Zamala* funds, Palestinian faculty from partner universities are granted the opportunity to participate in technical development visits and professional training programs offered at renowned international universities, healthcare institutions, telecommunication companies, manufacturing and engineering firms, and financial institutions.

The first year of the *Zamala* Fellowship Program resulted in the selection of 50 candidates who are scheduled to participate in programs at prestigious institutions such as Harvard University, Columbia University, University of California – Davis, University of Santiago de Compostela, Queen’s University, University of Glasgow, Indraprastha Apollo Hospital in India and many others. The participants will acquire education in medicine, information technology, finance and obtain in depth exposure to leading edge practices in all sectors,

As part of the spirit envisioned by *Zamala*, the Palestinian participants are not only expected to nurture their skills and aptitudes at selected esteemed institutions, but they are also expected to share their own knowledge and expertise, and bring their Palestine experience to host institutions. Additionally, the candidates are also expected to fulfill their tenure abroad and return to Palestine in order to share the acquired knowledge at their respective universities which will be delivered to the positive benefit of hundreds of thousands of students.

Scaling up Zamala

With the current endowments at hand, it is expected that the program will support upto 50 fellowship recipients each year. However, Bank of Palestine, CCC and the Welfare Association aspire to raise an additional \$2 million to the *Zamala* Fund in order to allow for the granting of 100 fellowships annually thus doubling the capacity in order to make the greatest widespread impact on university students and their workplace success.

Key interventions of the program:

Academic or professional visits, technical training and scientific research for a period ranging from one to two semesters in the following sectors: Information and Communications Technology, Finance and Banking, Healthcare and Medicine, Agriculture and Environment, Engineering, Law, Life Sciences and Humanities.

Target group and eligibility:

- Full-time Palestinian university teachers, teaching assistants, technicians and engineers working at officially registered Palestinian universities in Palestine. (currently the *Zamala* program has signed agreements with 13 partner universities in both West Bank and Gaza)
- Preferably less than 45 years of age, gender balanced. Demonstrates a commitment to return to Palestine.

Key deliverables:

- 5-10 annual technical models of educational / vocational / technical specialist in the field of training.
- 5-10 annual high quality scientific research papers.
- A rich global network of relationships and partnerships between Palestinian and host organizations or universities and their faculty members.

Value of a Zamala Fellowship:

The average value for each fellowship ranges from \$8,000 to \$30,000, depending on the time and place of the fellowship.

- Short grants less than 4 months are not to exceed \$8,000.
- 4 to 6 months grants between \$15,000 to \$18,000.
- Grants for a period of 6 months or more are not to exceed \$30,000.

Zamala covers expenses such as accommodation, travel, health insurance and other living costs related to the visit.