



Applying for Study Abroad Scholarships

The most challenging part of the scholarship application process can be figuring out where to start, but Study Abroad is here to help! Use this guide to brainstorm, organize your thoughts, and begin applying! This resource can be utilized to prepare for and apply to various types of scholarships and can also help you update your resume, cover letter, LinkedIn profile or even prepare job or grad school interviews.

Begin your scholarship search

Think study abroad has to be expensive? Think again! Study Abroad scholarships are offered by a variety of resources - on your campus and beyond! Begin your research on our [Scholarship Tracker](#), the University of Arizona's [Scholarship Universe](#), and check your eligibility for these great study abroad specific scholarships: the [Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship](#) and the [Fund for Education Abroad](#). We recommend making a list of awards you may be eligible for and organizing the opportunities by due date. Remember to apply early, if possible – sometimes the early bird gets the...scholarship!

Gather your application materials

Here is some general information you should be prepared to answer in your application.

1. Be prepared to submit transcripts. Depending on the scholarship, they may need to be official although some accepts unofficial transcripts. You can find instructions on how to access both types of transcripts on the UArizona Office of the Registrar's website: registrar.arizona.edu/transcripts.
2. What is your cumulative & major Grade Point Average (GPA)? You can find this in your UAccess account.
3. How many credits have you completed or what academic level are you?
4. What degree are you seeking & when do you plan to graduate?
5. Which study abroad program are you applying to?





6. What term & duration (Spring, Fall, Summer or Academic Year) do you plan to study abroad?

7. Who is your Study Abroad Coordinator/Advisor? (Include Name and Email)

8. How much will your study abroad program cost & how much financial aid do you anticipate receiving to help cover the cost? If you are unsure how to answer this, reach out to your Study Abroad Coordinator.

9. You may need to have your Financial Aid verified by a staff member at the [Office of Student Financial Aid & Scholarships](#).
 - I. For Gilman applicants only- contact your Study Abroad Coordinator to find out who to list as your Financial Aid Advisor.
 - II. You may [contact Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid via email](#) if completion of a verification form is required as part of your application.

10. What are the names, emails and phone numbers of people who would be willing to write a letter of recommendation for you? Ideally select individuals who know you in an academic or professional setting, unless your application requests otherwise. (See last page for tips regarding recommendation letters.)
 - I.

 - II.

 - III.

Gather your thoughts

Although every scholarship has different requirements, most will ask you to submit a personal statement. Think of this as a chance for you to create a commercial or interview on paper about yourself. What would you highlight? You should share your goals, skills, obstacles you have overcome or are working to overcome, and why you want to study abroad. Below are some questions and statements to help you get started. Answering these prompts will serve as a guide you can use when writing your personal statement essay.





Identify your diversity factors

Identities to consider can include, but are not limited to: first generation college student, STEM majors, diverse ethnicity or cultural background, military service, immigrant status, nontraditional students, older students, students with children, LGBTQ+, students with disabilities, high-financial need students, high academic achieving students, students with chronic health conditions, students who faced personal tragedies, and more.

Describe any special challenges you have faced/are facing and how you are overcoming these challenges.

Do not leave out information that tells your story and makes you unique. You may choose to talk about or expand on your family demographics, diversity factors, extra-curricular activities, duties/responsibilities at home, as well as any other special circumstances that are relevant. Focus on your strengths and turn in any problems or weaknesses into a success story.

Describe your financial need

If the scholarship you are applying to is only open to high-financial need students (i.e. the Gilman Scholarship), think about how your financial need has directly affected your experience and ability to study abroad and how this sets you apart from other applicants.





Describe your Educational Goals:

Describe your Career Goals:

Explain your motivation to study abroad:

What do you hope to gain from this experience and what impact will this have? Why did you select your program/country and why is it significant to you? Show you know details about your program and host country to let the scholarship reviewers know you have completed your own independent research, beyond what can be found on the study abroad program page.





Activities, Awards, Leadership Roles

Are you employed or in an internship, involved in clubs, sports, Greek life, volunteer organizations, etc.? Have you received awards or honors you would like to highlight? This is also your chance to describe your responsibilities outside of school.

Honors & Awards

Name of Honor/Award	Briefly describe this award in 100 words or less.

Paid/Unpaid Work and Community Service

Dates of involvement	Total # of Hours	Name of Organization	Describe what you learned from this experience in 100 words or less.





Leadership Roles

Dates of involvement	Leadership Position Held	Name of Organization	Describe this role and what you learned from this experience in 100 words or less.

Outline your essay

This is a tentative outline to show how your personal statement may be organized. Use your answers from the prompts above to draft a cohesive essay.

- A. Short Introduction
- B. Capture your audience early on. Tell your story in your voice and be true to yourself. Discuss your personal history and why those experiences have led you to apply for the scholarship.
- C. Paragraph about your background
 - I. Discuss employment, internships, school activities, positions of leadership, and what has been learned.
 - II. Be sure to identify your diversity factors. This is incredibly important: never assume your reader knows anything about you that you do not explicitly state.
 - III. Discuss academic progress, any hardships along the way, particularly difficult or challenging situations you have encountered and how challenges have been or are being addressed.
- D. Discussion of study abroad program
- E. Describe the details of your study abroad program. Talk about location, length, housing, academics, language learning, service learning, internship etc. Be clear about the reasons you chose this program and what impact it will have on your academic, professional and personal goals and growth.
- F. Discussion of professional and career aspirations





- G. Discuss why your proposed careers were chosen. Detail areas of strength and interest. How does your study abroad program build on your previous experience? How does your study abroad program relate to and support these goals? Discuss any influential people if applicable.
- H. Summary and statement of future plans
- I. Bring your essay together with a concise summary. Be sure to discuss future plans and the impact of studying abroad on your subsequent goals.

Bring Your A-Game to your Essay

Use these steps to develop a strong essay that conveys your unique personal qualifications.

- ▶ DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO WRITE. Getting a head start is key to being a successful applicant.
- ▶ Write down the due date for the scholarship application, set reminders and establish a timeline with goals for yourself.
- ▶ Write a draft, making sure to clearly address the prompts and questions.
- ▶ Put the draft aside for 24 hours and read again. For each sentence, ask yourself: Is this information necessary? By adding or omitting this sentence or detail, what knowledge does the reader gain or lose?
- ▶ Make corrections in sentence construction, grammar, punctuation and spelling. Reading the essay aloud will help you determine areas that do not flow smoothly or make sense.
- ▶ Ask a trusted friend, teacher or mentor to read and evaluate the paper.
- ▶ Rewrite and revise. Seeking additional reviewers is important and a big reason why it is necessary to start early. Here are some options available to U of A Students:
 - [Study Abroad Coordinators](#): Many Study Abroad Coordinators have been scholarship reviewers. You can send your essay in advance & schedule a feedback appointment. Please allow 1-2 weeks for feedback.
 - [Think Tank Writing Center](#): Free daily in-person & online drop-in tutoring, workshops and feedback appointments (also offers fee-based services).
 - [Writing Skills Improvement Program](#): Free weekly workshops, drop-in online/in-person tutoring and individual tutoring appointments. One individual appointment every other week is free (also offers fee-based services).
 - [Office of Nationally Competitive Scholarships](#): Offers free assistance & support to all UArizona students applying to national scholarships (it is not required to be part of the Honors College). Contact their office to schedule an appointment and receive assistance when applying to national scholarships.
- ▶ Incorporate helpful feedback and suggestions. Proofread for any errors and make it look as perfect as possible. Make sure you are within the word or character limit.
- ▶ Be sure to follow instructions precisely for submitting the essay and application materials. Do not wait to submit your application at the very last minute! Allow yourself time in case something goes wrong when submitting.





Tips Regarding Letters of Recommendation

Many scholarship applications require you to submit letters of recommendation. Examples of individuals you may want to ask if they are able to write one for you includes teachers, mentors, academic advisors, employers, coaches, etc. Here are some general tips to consider when thinking about who you should ask to receive a STRONG letter of recommendation.

1. Always ask permission first, do not assume someone is willing or able to provide a recommendation letter.
2. Ask those who you are confident will provide you a positive recommendation. Usually scholarships will require recommendation letters from an individual who interacted with you on a more formal basis, such as an academic or professional environment. Avoid getting letters of recommendation from relatives unless an application requires it.
3. Request the letter at least 2 weeks in advance.
4. Do not ask to see the recommendation letter (this is known as “waiving your right”) unless your recommender provides you a copy.
5. Provide the recommender with all the relevant information they need to successfully write and submit your letter. This should include:
 - A link to the scholarship website that will provide them the basic information
 - A copy of your resume
 - Instructions on how to submit your letter of recommendation
 - Deadline to submit
6. Follow up with a thank you letter to your recommenders. You want to continue a positive relationship because you may ask them again in the near future.

Additional #WildcatsAbroad “Words of Wisdom”

- ▶ Did we mention getting an early start? 😊
- ▶ Keep persevering! Your tenacity is not only an attractive attribute as an applicant, but also the key to a successful scholarship search. Apply to as many scholarships as you are eligible for, as this increases your odds of success.
- ▶ Don't be afraid to ask questions or seek out help along the way! Requesting information about funding is not a taboo topic, and there is no such thing as a bad question. In addition to the [Study Abroad Coordinators](#), others on campus and in your department of study may be able to provide assistance.
- ▶ Report back: let us know about your experience! We want to celebrate any awards you receive AND hear about the amazing time you spend abroad.

