

Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program

www.iie.org/gilman (Apply Here)

1. About The Gilman:

- For students at 2 and 4 year academic institutions.
- Open to all academic majors.
- **Summer & Fall online applications are due March.**
- **Summer Early Cycle and Spring online applications are due in October**

2. Scholarship Encourages:

- Students from diverse backgrounds.
- Students going to non-traditional study abroad destinations, especially those outside of Western Europe, Australia and New Zealand.
- Students attending community colleges.
- Students with disabilities.
- Students in fields of study underrepresented in study abroad (such as STEM & Engineering).
- The program encourages students to study abroad for longer periods of time though short-term programs of at least four weeks in length are eligible. * 2 weeks in length (14 days) for CC students.

3. **Award Information:** On average out of 2500 applications, around 900 are awarded per cycle. On average 1 out of every 3 students are awarded, and 1 out of every 2 students applying to Asia are awarded!

○ Summer Awards:

- Early Summer award notifications in February. Summer award notifications in late April
- Limited number of summer scholarships. Early Summer applications are suggested!
- **Average summer award offered: \$3,000**

○ Semester/Year Awards:

- Fall and Academic Year award notifications in Mid-July.
- Spring award notifications in November
- **Average award: \$4,000.** Award amounts vary based on the length of study and student need.

- **Critical Need Language Supplement:** Up to \$3,000 additional funds for award of up to \$8,000.

Arabic (all dialects)

Bahasa Indonesia

Japanese

Turkic (Azerbaijani, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Turkish, Turkmen, Uzbek)

Persian (Farsi, Dari, Kurdish, Pashto, Tajiki);

Indic (Hindi, Urdu, Nepali, Sinhala, Bengali, Punjabi, Marathi, Gujarati, Sindhi);

Chinese (all dialects)

Russian

Korean

Swahili

Portuguese

4. Eligibility Requirements (Academic Year, Fall, Spring or Summer)

Must be:

- Enrolled as an undergraduate student at a two or four-year U.S. institution.
- Be a United States citizen.
- Receiving a Federal Pell Grant at the time of application or during the term of study abroad.
- Participating in a study abroad program that is no less than 4 weeks in one country and no more than an academic year. * Community College students only – programs at least 2 weeks long (14 days) in one country.
- Receiving academic credit.
- University approved program.
- Study in any country not currently under a U.S. State Department Travel Warning * Mexico where no advisory is in effect. (http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html).

5. WWU Requirements:

- Completed WWU Application
- Selected Program Application
- Meet with a WWU Education Abroad Advisor to discuss:
 - Follow On Project
 - Personal Statement Essay writing and revision
 - Nomination process

Choosing a Program

- Choose the program and location that offers what you need to accomplish your goals and helps you be successful
- Choose locations that offer the coursework you need
- Students that consider non-traditional locations and non-traditional language study, or majors can really stand out!
- **Flow of Logic is key:** When reviewing applications, often the panel will look at your transcript first to notice trends. Meaning, if they see you have a history on your transcript of language study in French and French culture. It makes logical sense that you would choose a French speaking location or program. The more your program aligns with your academic history, and the more your program fulfills academic requirements for your major and minor, the stronger your application will be!
- Make a clear connection between the program and location, and your goals ***It should be VERY CLEAR to the selection panelists why the applicant chose their particular country or how their program ties into their academic and career goals**

Application Tips

1. Personal Statement Essay Tips

- Answer the essay question/prompt (all parts!)
- Come up with a strategy - dedicate time- how much time is enough?
- Utilize your resources like other scholarship applications, campus resources – writing center, scholarship center resources, meeting with study abroad advisors
- **Emphasize ACADEMIC benefits of your program, not travel opportunities**

Essay Do's

- **Follow the Directions**
- **Make an outline for your essay: Ideally 4 paragraph essay**
- **Introduction** - about you, your program. Make it as personal as possible and go beyond “buzzwords”
- **Main point** - why you chose your program, list courses you are taking and how this impacts degree progress.
- **Supporting paragraphs to address questions/ prompts** – **Practice your Elevator Pitch * If you were in an elevator with Benjamin Gilman could you convince him in 2 minutes why you should get a scholarship!?**
 - How your program fulfills degree requirements, meets goals, fits budget
 - Will lead to career opportunities, assist with grad school, etc.
 - State why you need money, if you work part time, etc.
- **Closing** – Re-state your elevator pitch and thank the panel for consideration of your application
- **Go beneath the surface:** include research and statistics if possible on your location, program, and school
- **Explain your goals** for study abroad: relate it to your major & long-term goals.
- Address *academic & personal* goals, what you hope to gain/benefit
- Connect your goals with the location you are going to, especially mainstream destinations
- **Name drop** - list out the class titles you intend to take or additional language study, do you have a background in the language, or have you taken initiative to independently study the language.
- **Highlight what makes you diverse** and how you have overcome some of the struggles related to your diversity. Don't just state that you are the following, relay your experience in being an: Ethnic Minority, First Generation College Student, Disabilities, LGBTQ, Veteran, STEM major, older than 24, Married, Parent, Adopted, Religious Minority, Mix-Race Family, come from a small community, etc. * Panel readers cannot assume you fall into these categories, you must state and explain what makes you unique.
- **Explain why you need financial support** - financial challenges, learning disabilities, other special circumstances, etc.
- **Highlight work ethic**- if you work part time or if there are reasons why you cannot work
- Explain poor academic performance regarding GPA, but don't dwell on it.
- **Use an active voice** – write what you **WILL** do versus what you **COULD/MIGHT** do
- **PROOF YOUR ESSAY**, have someone else read it and gives feedback. Grammar matters.
- Use a thesaurus; don't over use the same words.

Essay Don'ts

- **Don't talk about being excited about travelling, feature your excursions, or feature additional travel during your study abroad. – Remember, this is an academic experience, not a travel opportunity.**
- Ignore your conclusion
- Ignore the questions/prompts or only partially answer them
- Over-explain things- stick to your point (better to have a short essay that is well-written than a long essay where the main points are lost)
- Disclose former travel opportunities extensively
- Disclose or feature other full ride scholarships you may have received. I caution students about featuring past grants, scholarships, or awards in their essay, as this may sway panel readers to want to “spread the wealth” and give money to students who haven't been as fortunate with funding.
- Avoid lengthy descriptions or flowery language- remember, the reviewers read hundreds of essays- **what will make them remember you in a positive way?**

Follow On Proposal

2. Follow-on Tips

- Share information about International Education and The Gilman Scholarship
- Choose a target audience – ideally clubs/organizations/students you have connections with, and ideally communities that could benefit from the Gilman.
- **Connect with the study abroad office** - they may have ideas or projects for a follow on that they feel would really help education abroad as a field. Why start from scratch. Collaborating with existing offices on projects could add strength to your proposal.
- **Use an active voice** – write what you WILL do versus what you COULD/MIGHT do
- Create a timeline for your project
- **Be creative** – Target community organizations and future outreach rather than college campus communities. Target ideal populations not just language classes on campus. How will you pay it forward?
- Make project realistic
- **Name drop** - List organizations or people that you have spoken to about getting involved with your projects
- **Upon completion** of your project you will be required to submit a two-page final report summarizing your experience abroad and the impact of your Follow-on project.

3. Examples of Follow on Proposals

- **Don't be afraid to get creative!** The review committee will read *hundreds* of proposals for speaking at fairs, presenting in classes, visiting high schools, etc. So if you can go beyond this, it will be refreshing and grab their attention; just make sure to still address your target audience.
- Use presentation types like CANVA, Digital Storytelling, Movies, Music Videos, etc.
- Check out examples of Digital Storytelling from abroad on [YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com)
- Collaborate with your Department or club to make a video or CANVA about study abroad

- Create Blogs, Articles for a School Newspaper, Journalism topic, interview students upon your return or be interviewed for a feature piece on a school broadcast via public or school radio
- Present at regional and national student club organization conferences
- Return to your former community college or high school and work with clubs/departments to present on your experience and the scholarship
- Communicate with your home campus study abroad office to work as a peer advisor, or identify projects within your department to better make study abroad and scholarships more accessible
- Organize scholarship ceremonies to highlight study abroad scholarship winners and to have students speak to their experience and approach to accessing funding
- Work with communities to put on Scholarship Workshops and feature the Gilman, how to apply, be successful, include writing center staff or scholarship office staff, study abroad office staff, etc. – put this on in your academic department as well
- Work with departments to conduct research and polls on interest for study abroad, and get feedback on how to make study abroad more accessible, or identify barriers, consider focus groups to gain feedback and ideas for future outreach
- Think about your on-campus job, how can you promote study abroad within clubs and on-campus settings. What would grab your attention?
- Host an open mic night, create a cookbook from abroad, or an art piece for public galleries