



## BENJAMIN A. GILMAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

The Gilman Scholarship Program aims to diversify the kinds of students who study and intern abroad and the countries and regions where they go by offering awards to U.S. undergraduates who might otherwise not participate due to financial constraints.

The Gilman Scholarship Program is sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs fosters mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries to promote friendly, sympathetic, and peaceful relations.

Gilman Scholarships range in amount from \$1000-\$5000, and can be as much as \$8000 if one receives a Critical Need Language Award (see below) in addition to the standard Gilman Scholarship.

### ELIGIBILITY

To be considered for nomination, a student:

- must be a U.S. citizen
- must be an undergraduate student in good standing at a U.S. institution
- must receive a Federal Pell Grant (federal financial aid) or provide proof that you will be receiving a Pell Grant at the time of application or during the study abroad period
- can apply to fund an accredited summer, semester, or year-long program in a country or area with an overall Travel Advisory Level 1 or 2 according to the [U.S. Department of State's Travel Advisory System](#)

**RE: COVID-19 TRAVEL ADVISORIES: If the country where you choose to study abroad in 2021 is at a Level 3 or 4 only due to COVID-19 at the time of application, the Gilman program will still consider that eligible. In the event that an applicant is selected for the Gilman Scholarship and if the destination country is still at a Level 3 or 4, even if only due to COVID-19, by the time the program starts, then the recipient will be required to change their program location.**

There is no GPA requirement for The Gilman Scholarship Program.

## SELECTION

As The Gilman Scholarship Program's central aim is to bring diversity to study abroad programs, the program is particularly interested in selecting:

- students from underrepresented ethnic and racial background
- students with disabilities
- first-generation college students and first-generation Americans
- student veterans
- students in underrepresented academic fields in study abroad (such as engineering or the sciences)
- students going to non-traditional destinations (Asia, Africa, Middle East, Latin America)
- students studying critical need languages (Chinese, Arabic, Turkic, Indic, Russian, etc.)

Many students win Gilman Scholarships to fund study abroad opportunities in Europe, but their applications generally emphasize some other non-traditional aspect of their study plan (personal diversity, underrepresented academic field, academic rationale, etc.)

## APPLICATION

Application components include:

- completed online application form
- official transcript(s)
- three essays

## BRIEF TIMELINE

**For abroad programs that start between January 2021 and December 31, 2021 (Spring 2021, Summer 2021, Fall 2021, and Academic Year 2021-2022 programs):**

Mid-August: Application Opens

**October 6, 2020:** Submission Deadline for Online Application. Must submit application by 11:59pm PT.

End of November 2020: Applicants notified of the status of their application via email

## HOW TO APPLY

- Log in and access the online application:  
<https://gilmanapplication.iie.org/Applicant/Default.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fApplicant%2f>
- Upload your official transcript. (If you have transferred to Syracuse University, you must also submit an official transcript from the other institutions you have attended.)
- Write responses to three required essay questions
- Provide accurate information on the cost of your study abroad program
- Indicate an SU advisor to certify your application from the drop-down menu. (Rick Cieri or Marie Kukikowsky)
- Indicate an SU financial aid advisor from the drop-down menu (Kristen Wagner).
- No letters of recommendation are required.

## PROMPTS AND TIPS FOR WRITING SUCCESSFUL GILMAN ESSAYS

There are three essays required as part of the Gilman Scholarship application: the Statement of Purpose Essay and two Community Impact Essays. The Statement of Purpose essay has a 7000 character limit – including spaces – and the Community Impact Essays each have a 3000 character limit, including spaces. While drafting your application, keep in mind that each essay is equally important to the application and, therefore, should both be written with care. Check out the Gilman website-- <https://www.gilmanscholarship.org/applicants/essays/> --for a detailed explanation of what each essay entails.

Please approach the following tips as suggestions for information you should consider including in your essays. They are not intended to serve as an outline for your essay, but rather as prompts to get you thinking and writing. Your essay must reflect your own goals, experiences, and ideas.

### **Statement of Purpose Essay (7,000-character limit, including spaces)**

Be specific in describing your individual reasons for studying abroad, keeping in mind that this is a scholarship for academic study abroad. Your essays should address the following questions:

- How will studying or interning abroad help you achieve your future academic or professional goals?
- Why did you select your specific program and host country?
- How are you academically prepared to be a successful scholar abroad? If you have faced significant academic difficulties, tell us about those and how you are overcoming them.
- What knowledge, skills, and experiences will you draw on to meet the challenges of going abroad?

If you are part of one of the Gilman Scholarship's target demographics, **be clear about that in your essay**. Reviewers won't know this information unless you include it in your essays.

Be specific and give concrete examples whenever possible. Show passion and excitement!

### **Community Impact Essay #1— Building Mutual Understanding (3,000-character limit, including spaces)**

The first Community Impact Essay is your chance to explain how you will represent the United States as a citizen diplomat abroad in your host community. Gilman Scholars are expected to contribute to the goal of building mutual understanding by sharing what it means to be an American, learning about the host culture, and building meaningful relationships. This essay should address the following questions:

- As a U.S. citizen, how will you represent and share what it means to be an American during your program?
- How will you seek opportunities to become more culturally engaged and have meaningful interactions with people and cultures different from your own during your abroad program?

Answering this question well will require that you be very familiar with the structure of the academic program to which you're applying and the country you'll be living in. That way you can discuss feasible and realistic opportunities for engaging with the host community. Things to mention:

- Living situation – if you will be in a home stay or in close living quarters with the country's citizens, specify this.
- If you'll be studying at a university, take a look at its clubs and organizations to see if there's any you could propose joining during your abroad program

- Consider how you might volunteer abroad—if your program doesn't specifically offer volunteer opportunities, look to see what opportunities are available in your host community
- Consider hobbies, interests, or skills you have that you can share abroad and how you might do so

**Community Impact Essay #2—Follow-on Service Project (3,000-character limit, including spaces)**

The second Community Impact Essay should explain your plans for a Follow-on Service project. Gilman Scholars are required to complete a Follow-on Service Project that aids in increasing awareness of study abroad and the Gilman Scholarship among their peers in their home or campus communities. This essay should clearly outline the details of your Follow-on Service plan by answering the following questions:

- What is your project and how will it increase awareness of study abroad and the Gilman Program among your peers in your home or campus community?
- Who is the specific community you will be reaching and why did you choose it?
- How will you integrate the impact of your experience abroad into your project?
- With which campus departments, student organizations, or community organizations will you collaborate?

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.

Remember, your project should be feasible and reasonable in its scope. Examples of follow-on service projects can be found on the Gilman website:

<https://www.gilmanscholarship.org/applicants/essays/#1550605464998-681fffba-590b>

## CRITICAL NEED LANGUAGE AWARD

Applicants who are studying a critical need language while abroad in a country in which the language is predominantly spoken can apply for a supplemental award of up to **\$ 3000**, for a combined total award of **\$ 8000**. This award is competitive and offered to a limited number of Gilman scholars each year. Not all students who are studying these languages will receive \$8,000. To be considered for the Critical Need Language Award, **a brief supplemental essay is required** and must be submitted in the same Gilman application.

Some key points to keep in mind:

- Be sure that the language you are studying while abroad is considered a Critical Need Language by the U.S. Department of State. Critical need languages include *Arabic, Azerbaijani, Bangla, Bahasa Indonesian, Chinese (Mandarin), Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Persian, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Swahili, Turkish* and *Urdu*. Any other language study is not eligible for the Critical Need Language Award.
- Be sure that you are studying the Critical Need Language in a country where it is predominately spoken.

### **Critical Need Language Award Essay (Only applicable to those who are studying a critical need language while abroad)**

In no more than **2,000 characters** (including spaces), please address the following questions:

- What are your motivations for improving your language proficiency academically, professionally, and personally? Why is learning this language important to you?
- How do you intend to improve your language skills while studying abroad? How will you increase your proficiency in the language inside and outside of the classroom setting?
- How do you intend to use the language after you study abroad, and how will the Critical Need Language Award prepare you for this?
- If you plan to study in a country where the language does not appear in the list above, what are the benefits of and resources for studying abroad in your proposed country?

## **MEET 1-1 WITH AN ADVISOR AND ATTEND THE GILMAN WRITING WORKSHOPS**

Staff at the Center for Fellowship and Scholarship Advising and SU Abroad are happy to arrange individual appointments to review your application essays. Please email [cfsa@syr.edu](mailto:cfsa@syr.edu) to arrange an individual advising appointment.

Our offices will also be hosting a series of virtual writing workshops via Zoom:

**Writing Workshop #1: Thursday, September 24 – 12:30 PM – 2:00 PM**

**Writing Workshop #2: Wednesday, September 30 – 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM**

**Writing Workshop #3: Friday, October 2 – 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM**

**Writing Workshop #4: Monday, October 5 – 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM**

Zoom information for each meeting is the same, and can be found below:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://syracuseuniversity.zoom.us/j/8051089780>

Meeting ID: 805 108 9780

One tap mobile

+16468769923,,8051089780# US (New York)

+13017158592,,8051089780# US (Germantown)

Dial by your location

+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 408 638 0968 US (San Jose)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 805 108 9780

Find your local number: <https://syracuseuniversity.zoom.us/j/8051089780>

**For each workshop, be prepared with a Word document version of your essays or a Google Doc so you can either email or link your document to an advisor.**

General questions about the Gilman Scholarship should be directed towards Rick Cieri: [fwcierii@syr.edu](mailto:fwcierii@syr.edu)

You may also email CFSA's advisors, Jolynn Parker and Melissa Welshans, for help with your essays: [cfsa@syr.edu](mailto:cfsa@syr.edu).