

**MSU Student
Gilman Scholarship Guidelines
Created by Amy Huff**

The Gilman Scholarship has recently opened up for the first 2023 cycle. You can start your application by going [here](#).

- **The application deadline is listed on the Gilman website.**
- **IMPORTANT: You must have your cost sheet/budget sheet approved and uploaded to your Education Abroad application a week prior to the deadline for me to certify your application. Please mark this on your calendar.**
- Please list me, Amy Huff, as your Study Abroad Advisor on the application.
- **You must complete the application through their online portal**, but I am attaching a PDF version of the application for you to work on and save as you go, if you choose to do it that way. Then when you are finished with your essays and the rest of the application, you can go into your saved PDF and copy and paste your responses to the portal application.

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for the Gilman Scholarship process, including the essay prompts. Please use this guide. Work through the essay prompts step by step at first, then work back through your essay to make it your own.

MISSION OF THE GILMAN PROGRAM

- Develop a generation of future American leaders who represent the rich diversity of the nation and have the international networks and skills to advance U.S. national security and economic prosperity.
- Expand the U.S. student population that studies and interns abroad, helping more young Americans to gain the professional skills, language abilities, and knowledge of the world needed for successful careers.
- Broaden the destinations where U.S. students study and intern abroad, in order to build relationships, foster mutual understanding, and represent American culture and values, including in developing countries and countries critical to U.S. national security.

Writing Tips

- Writing is hard! Go easy on yourself. Use the prompts to get the words on the page.
- First drafts are exactly that- first drafts. Don't submit a first draft if you can avoid it.
- It's helpful to write your essays in Microsoft Word and use the character counter, as there are maximum limits on all the essays.
- Write your first drafts, and sleep on it. Read them the next day. Make your own edits, then ask a trusted classmate, professor, or the [MSU Writing Center](#) to read your drafts and work through them with you.
- **After** someone else has helped you with your writing, you can send them to me for a special Gilman review. **If you want me to read your essays prior to submission, you must send them to me no later than March 1st. This way, I have enough time to read them and send feedback.**
- **Writing Center hours:**
 - **Mon-Thurs 10am-8pm**
 - **Friday 10am-3pm**

Gilman Scholarship Essay: Statement of Purpose

Max: 7,000 characters including spaces

1. How will studying or interning abroad help you achieve your future academic or professional goals?
 - a. Academic Goals
 - i. What are the names of the courses you're taking abroad?
 - ii. How does this course relate to your studies at X college?
 - iii. What themes, topics, or skills are learning in this course?
 - b. Professional Goals
 - i. What career are you interested in pursuing?
 - ii. What led you to pursue this career? For example, if you want to become a doctor, what kind of doctor and why?
 - iii. How is the knowledge and skills you are gaining in this course going to impact your work in the future?
 - iv. Why is it important that you take this course through this program? What makes this program/course special?
2. Why did you select your specific program and host country?
 - a. Program selection
 - i. What interests you about the specific school/center/program you will be attending?
 - ii. What activities will you be able to participate in? (Clubs, excursions, volunteering, etc.)
 - iii. Does the program offer a homestay?
 - b. Country selection
 - i. Did you do some research on the country? What interests you about the country? Language, culture, career, etc.?
 - ii. Is this a country you have connections with? (Ancestral home, parents home country)
3. How are you academically prepared to be a successful scholar abroad?
 - a. What are some of the ways you have been successful in your course work?
 - b. Do you work and attend school at the same time? How have you been able to manage both activities?
 - c. If you are studying a language abroad, how have you prepared yourself beforehand OR how are you preparing to study some basic language skills?
4. If you have faced significant academic difficulties, tell us about those and how you are overcoming them.
5. What examples of knowledge, skills, and experiences will you draw on to meet the challenges of going abroad?
 - a. What obstacles have you overcome and what have you learned from those experiences?

- b. What skills do you currently have that will help you make connections, build community, and succeed in the classroom while you're abroad?

You may discuss:

- Program selection
 - Academic goals
 - Career goals
- Career Goals
 - How
 - Why
- Diversity of background and experience
 - Family
 - Life experience
 - Representation in career field – gender, ethnicity, culture
 - First-gen student
 - LGBTQIA+
 - Immigrant household
 - English language learner
 - Person with disability

Gilman Scholarship Essay: Building Mutual Understanding

Max: 3,000 characters including spaces

- 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.
- 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 be culturally engaged?
- How/where will you seek opportunities to have meaningful interactions with people and cultures different from your own during your abroad program?
- Gilman Scholars represent the United States as citizen diplomats in their host communities; they reflect a diversity of values, beliefs, and opinions that is fundamental to providing a balanced representation of the United States abroad.

Do you articulate how you will represent the United States as a citizen diplomat while abroad?

Do you explain how you will contribute to the goal of building mutual understanding?

Do you discuss how you will look for opportunities to build meaningful relationships and become more culturally engaged?

Gilman Scholarship Essay: Follow-On Service Proposal

Max of 3000 characters including spaces

Gilman Scholars are expected to complete the Follow-on Service Project which is to increase awareness of study abroad and the Gilman Scholarship among their peers in their home or campus communities.

Some tips for brainstorming your project:

- Don't get intimidated
- No need to recreate the wheel
- Keep it realistic
- Think of it as an opportunity to spread awareness and knowledge about the Gilman Program and studying abroad, strategically leveraging a student's strengths and existing connections

Guiding 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?
- How will you integrate the impact of your experience abroad into your project?
- Identify and explain why you chose the specific community you will be reaching.
- With which campus departments, student organizations, or community organizations will you collaborate?
- 5 Questions to Ask Yourself: Follow-on Service Project Proposal
 - Does your FOSP increase awareness of the Gilman Scholarship and study abroad?
 - Is your project feasible?
 - Do you give a detailed plan for your project?
 - Do you include your study abroad experience into your project?
 - Do you have an intended audience?
 - Who will you collaborate with to reach this community?

Gilman Scholarship Essay: Critical Need Language Award

This is a supplemental essay ONLY for people applying for the Critical Need Language Award. See the application before you write this essay.

Max: 2,000 characters including spaces

- What are your motivations for improving your language proficiency academically, professional, and personally?
 - Do you need to learn this language to accomplish something for your academic goals? Do you plan to pursue a PhD or Graduate program in the future where you would like to use this language to conduct research?
 - Do you plan to use this language for your career? Will it help you build connections or serve a particular community?
 - Do you have connections to this language on a personal level?
- How do you intend to improve your language skills while studying abroad? How will you increase your proficiency in the language inside and outside the classroom setting?
 - What courses are you taking that will help you learn this language abroad?
 - How are you studying the language outside the classroom for example, volunteering, speaking with your host family, conducting research, visiting organization through the program, etc.?
 - Is there a language mentor pairing through the program?
- How do you intend to use the language after you study abroad, and how will the critical need language award prepare you for this?
 - How will you continue practicing the language once you return? Are there any language centers you can utilize? Language buddy programs?
 - Do you plan to use this language in your career field? How and why?
 - Can you volunteer somewhere where this language is spoken and connect to a community there?