



# Funding Your Study Abroad Experience

Finding Scholarships and Writing Strong Essays to Help You Win Them

# Internal Scholarships

- Most students who go abroad go with some funding from the university.
- Students apply online at [studyabroad.westga.edu](http://studyabroad.westga.edu) either as part of their campus-program application or from the page for their off-campus program.
- Awards vary based on program length and students' individual qualifications.

# Gilman Scholarship Program

- Are you Pell Grant eligible?
- What the scholarship is: awards range from \$1000 to \$5000 depending on length of program and qualifications.
- Two application essays – a statement of purpose and description of a follow-up project – and two letters of reference
- Gilman website: <http://www.iie.org/Programs/Gilman-Scholarship-Program>



# Specialized Opportunities for Language Study

- Are you interested in learning a language that is less frequently taught in the U.S. like Urdu, Hindi, Korean or Persian?
- Boren Awards: requires a post study commitment to the U.S. foreign service; length of study program varies
- Critical Language Scholarships: does not require a follow-up commitment; specific summer institutes
- Applications require a series of short essays and letters of reference



<http://www.borenawards.org/>

<http://www.clscholarship.org/>

# Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society

- 50 \$1000 scholarships available for study abroad each year
- Applicants do not need to be members of the society, but they do need to have a 3.75 GPA



[http://www.phikappaphi.org/Web/Awards/Study\\_Abroad.html](http://www.phikappaphi.org/Web/Awards/Study_Abroad.html)

# Using the Web

INSTITUTE OF  
INTERNATIONAL  
EDUCATION

- Institute of International Education:  
<http://www.studyabroadfunding.org>
- Study Abroad.com:  
<http://www.studyabroad.com/scholarships.aspx>

- Stick to the length guidelines they give you. More is NOT better.
- Answer the question that's been asked, not one you made up.
- Presentation counts: proofread and check your spelling.
- Present yourself in a way that catches and holds the reader's attention and that helps them understand your goals and motives.

# The Application Process

Committees read lots of applications. This means that you need to keep several things in mind.

# Presenting Yourself as a Candidate for Scholarships

- Questions to consider before you apply:
  - Conceptual:
    - Why do you want to go abroad?
    - Why do you want to study in the country or on the program you've chosen?
    - What do you hope to learn from the experience?



# Why Should They Fund YOU?

- What makes you or your story unique?
  - How has your family or cultural background shaped your interest in studying abroad?
  - How have previous travel experiences shaped your interest in taking on this experience?
  - What experiences have you had that have prepared you for study abroad?

*Help the committee see you as a real person rather than just another essay they have to read.*

# Catching the reader's attention:

- Bland openings (i.e. what NOT to do):
  - "I have always wanted to study abroad."
  - "I have always been interested in other cultures."
  - *These are important ideas that you should convey in your essay, but they're obvious as opening statements (after all, you're applying for a scholarship to study abroad, so clearly, it's something you WANT to do). Moreover, they don't tell the committee anything about you as a person.*

# Catching the reader's attention:

- A better approach:
  - “When my uncle used to come home from his time overseas, I was always fascinated to hear the stories he told about places most of the other people in my family had never even heard of.”
  - “When I was growing up, a trip into Atlanta, just 30 miles away, was a big deal. When I started to study history, however, it became clear to me that there was a much bigger world out there, and I want to explore it.”

These opening statements are *vivid* and *individual*, and each conveys a lot more information about the applicant than the general statements on the previous slide.

# Good organization helps!

- Plan out a structure for your essay.
- Introduction: catch the reader's attention so that they'll want to read more about your project. Don't do this with exclamation points – do it with details that help them see who you are.
- Body: Demonstrate that you've thought about what this particular program or research project abroad can do for you. Organize your thoughts so that each paragraph has a clear focus.
- Proofread: Check for spelling mistakes or grammatical errors. These may suggest carelessness or lack of skill to a reader, and you don't want to draw *that* kind of attention to your application.