

## APPLICATION ESSAYS

Three essays are required as part of the Gilman Scholarship application: the Statement of Purpose Essay and the two Community Impact Essays: Building Mutual Understanding Essay and the Follow-on Service Project Proposal. If applying for a Critical Need Language Award, an additional essay is required. If you are interested in applying for a Critical Need Language Award, visit [www.gilmanscholarship.org/program/critical-need-languages/](http://www.gilmanscholarship.org/program/critical-need-languages/)

Applications are reviewed holistically, with consideration of the following:

- Impact of Program & Destination on Academic and Career Trajectory
- Community Impact Abroad and Upon Student's Return Home
- Academic Preparedness
- Diversity of Background & Experience

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Gilman Statement of Purpose essay is your chance to personalize your application and make the judges want to meet you! Hook your reader with an interesting angle to tell your story. Develop a clean, well-paced, strong sense of narrative. Consider beginning with an anecdote that illustrates what is unusual or meaningful about you. Remember, the people reading your essay don't know anything about you!!

Gilman helps support students who have been historically underrepresented in study abroad (e.g. first-generation college students, students in STEM fields, racial & ethnic minority students, students with disabilities, students attending minority-serving institutions & community colleges).

Within your essay, refer to any of your affiliations with the underrepresented study abroad populations listed above (e.g. include that you are a community college student and/or that you are the first person in your family to graduate from college).

## ESSAY CONTENT

In your essay, be specific in describing your individual reasons for studying abroad, keeping in mind that this is a scholarship for academic study abroad or credit bearing international internships. Address ALL of the questions below, in no particular order: (max of 7,000 characters)

- 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, describe those and how you are overcoming them.
- What examples of knowledge, skills, and experiences will you draw on to meet the challenges of going abroad?

### **QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF: Statement of Purpose Essay**

• Do you make a connection between your program and goals? • Do you make a connection between your country and your goals? • Do you share how you will be academically successful on your program? • Do you give examples of your experiences, skills, and knowledge that you will use to meet program challenges? • Do you address how this abroad experience will impact your future?

## COMMUNITY IMPACT ESSAYS

The two community impact essays are equally important in the selection of Gilman Scholarship recipients.

### **1. BUILDING MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING ESSAY**

Gilman Scholars represent the U.S. 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 U.S. abroad. 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. (max of 3000 characters)

- 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?

### **QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF: Building Mutual Understanding Essay**

• 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?

## 2. FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT PROPOSAL

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 (max of 3000 characters). In no particular order, describe your Follow-on Service Project in more detail:

- 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?
- Identify and explain why you chose the specific community you will be reaching.
- 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?

### QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF: Follow-on

- 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?
- **For examples of Follow-on Service Projects, visit:**  
[www.gilmanscholarship.org/applicants/essays/](http://www.gilmanscholarship.org/applicants/essays/)

## TIPS FOR WRITING COMPETITIVE ESSAYS

- **Be creative!** Remember that this is a competitive scholarship program and the selection panelists' only chance to get to know you is through your essay. The essay is your chance to tell the selection panelists about yourself and your decision to study abroad. It is important to develop an original and creative Follow-on Service Project. The most competitive applications are those that have interesting and original essays.
- **Have your essay proofread** by multiple people! Allow plenty of time to write, edit, and proof your essay before the Gilman deadline. A proofreader can often make suggestions on ways to clarify a point that may not make sense to someone else.
- **Work with the Writing Center** to polish your diamond in the rough essay! Take the first draft of your essay to the Writing Center or to a composition professor. These individuals have invaluable expertise in writing essays and can be a great resource anytime you need to prepare an essay.
- **Check for proper spelling** (e.g. abroad not aboard), punctuation, and grammar. Before submitting your application, be sure to double check your essay. Did you spell the scholarship name or names of cities correctly? Be sure you have proper punctuation and do not type your essay in all lower case or all upper case letters. Most importantly, check for correct grammar with the support of a proofreader.

## RESOURCES

- [www.gilmanscholarship.org/applicants/essays/](http://www.gilmanscholarship.org/applicants/essays/)
- [www.gilmanscholarship.org/resources/videos/](http://www.gilmanscholarship.org/resources/videos/)
- [www.youtube.com/user/gilmanscholarship](http://www.youtube.com/user/gilmanscholarship)
- Visit the Writing Center to help polish your essay! Make an appointment early in the process and allow plenty of time to write, proofread, and edit!
- For info: [www.mesacc.edu/departments/english/writing-center](http://www.mesacc.edu/departments/english/writing-center)

## DEADLINES

- **October Deadline:** 1st Thursday of October
- **March Deadline:** 1st Thursday of March
  - You can redo your essay and resubmit during the next cycle if you are not selected the first time around!
- Try to submit your application at least one week prior to the deadline date, so that in case of technical difficulties, you don't miss the deadline.
- The deadline for submission is 11:59 pm Pacific Standard Time! No late applications are accepted!!

The Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD) is an EEO/AA institution and an equal opportunity employer of protected veterans and individuals with disabilities. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, or national origin. A lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in the career and technical education programs of the District.

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