



The Power
of International
Education

Coaching Students for Nationally Competitive Awards

Fulbright, Boren, and Gilman

Award Purpose & Application Cycles



Facilitates cultural exchange through direct interaction in the classroom, field, home, and daily life

For recent grads, master's & doctoral candidates, and young professionals

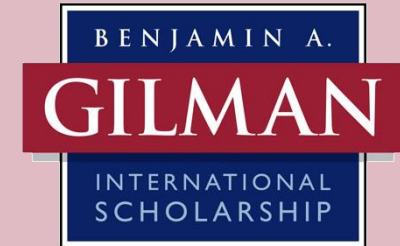
One application cycle per year, due in early October



Funds long-term immersion for the study of less-common languages and countries critical to U.S. nat'l security

Matriculated undergrad or grad (all levels) students

One application cycle per year, due in late January/early February



Enables students of limited financial means to study or intern abroad for three weeks or longer (two weeks for CCs)

Undergraduates receiving Federal Pell Grants

Two application cycles per year, due in early October and early March (depending on period of study)



Common Misconceptions

When speaking with students and advisors, we often hear a number of reasons for **not** pursuing these awards, including:

- Nationally competitive awards are only for “elite” institutions (e.g. the Ivy League, expensive private schools, or flagship state universities).
- Students must have perfect GPAs, major extracurriculars, crystal-clear career plans, and/or significant prior study of their desired destination, subject-matter, or language.
- It costs money to apply.

None of these are true! These programs are strengthened by the diversity of grantees -- home state, type of institution, major, race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic background, etc. -- and we are always looking for ways to increase that diversity.



Selection Criteria



Feasibility and motivation for activity funded by grant

Academic background and extracurricular accomplishments

Compatibility with Fulbright mission of promoting mutual understanding

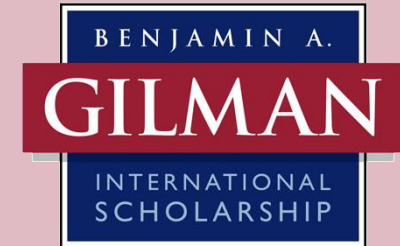


Relevance of proposed study to U.S. national security

Commitment to service in the federal government

Commitment to language study before, during, and after program

Program duration, destination, language, and field of study



Academic preparedness and impact of study abroad on academic and career trajectory

Diversity of background and experience

Choice of program and destination

Impact to community



Building a Pipeline of Applicants

Many of the strongest candidates for these awards aren't yet aware of them! Seek out students who are active in other areas of campus life:

Creative and performing arts

Minority student unions

Honors societies

Student government and activism

Foreign language clubs

Veteran student organizations

Don't forget STEM majors and nontraditional students!

You never know who students will ask about these opportunities! Brief faculty and advisors, and involve your study abroad, financial aid, and career advising offices.

Promote your rising stars! Students who have succeeded in these applications will likely succeed again. Their peers will see them as credible role models.



Making an Application Stand Out

Answer the questions the application asks! Every award has different priorities and is looking for different types of candidates. It's much easier to draft direct responses to the questions on a blank slate. (It's usually obvious when a student has recycled an essay.)

Passion and authenticity must come through! Students should reflect and be honest with themselves about their motivations. The programs they select should match their real academic and personal interests and professional goals (not what they think we want).

Recommenders can say things applicants can't! Students should meet with their recommenders early and often to share their motivation (and drafts of their essays). The best recommender is one who is clearly invested in the student's success.

Refine and clarify! Essays and personal statements should make effective use of the space provided. Root out redundancy and say something new instead.



Avoiding Common Pitfalls

Understand the program preferences! Even the best candidates will fail if they ignore the basic award criteria for country, subject matter, language proficiency, etc. (Fulbright has country-specific criteria; Boren and Gilman prefer certain countries and/or languages.)

Don't tell us what we already know! The detailed biographical, academic, and program design questions that the application asks aren't there to be redundant -- they free up students to focus on the *how* and *why* of their proposed programs.

Avoid the savior mentality! The strongest marker of maturity is understanding how little you understand about a foreign context. Students should show that they're ready to listen, learn, and grow from their experiences abroad.



IIE is Here to Help

Get to know your on-campus advisors:

- Fulbright - <https://us.fulbrightonline.org/fulbright-program-advisers>
- Boren - <https://borenawards.org/find-your-campus-representative>
- Gilman - <https://www.gilmanscholarship.org/advisors/>

Nominate professors and administrators to serve as selection panelists!

Contact us with questions:

Fulbright - FBstudent@iie.org | Boren - Boren@iie.org | Gilman - Gilman@iie.org

Jeff Cary - JCary@iie.org | Lee Rivers - LRivers@iie.org

