



Education Abroad  
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

## Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship

The [Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship](#) is a federally funded scholarship managed by the [U.S Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs](#) and awarded to Pell Grant recipients who study abroad. The goal of the scholarship is to broaden the diversity of undergraduate students who study abroad by providing financial support to higher need students. Scholarships are awarded four times throughout the year for programs in fall and academic year, spring and calendar year, and two summer cycles. Students must study abroad for a minimum of three weeks in one country and awards offered are up to \$5,000. The award rate is around 25% for semester program applicants and 20% for summer program applicants.

### Gilman Scholarship Deadlines

Typically, the deadlines are in **early October** for spring and the early summer cycle and **early March** for regular summer/fall/full-year. Visit the [Gilman Deadlines & Timeline](#). Plan ahead - don't wait until after you've applied to your program to begin the Gilman process - it may be too late.

### Starting Your Gilman Application

- To access the application and additional information visit the [Gilman](#) website.
  - Familiarize yourself with all aspects of the scholarship.
- When you are ready to begin your application go to the [Application Overview](#) page.
  - Select 'Apply here' and create an account.
- Complete the various tasks listed in your Gilman portal by clicking on each link.

### Tips for Completing Your Gilman Application

- Listing the required contacts. **It is not required to contact them or meet with the CU campus contacts, nor do you need to send them an email once you complete your application** – the Gilman system will notify them automatically once you submit your application and they will certify your application by the certification deadline. However, if you would like assistance with the application and/or your essays please reach out to the study abroad office contacts:
  - Your study abroad contact is Steven Rose ([Steven.Rose@colorado.edu](mailto:Steven.Rose@colorado.edu)). Choose Steven as your Study Abroad Advisor Certifier in the Gilman portal.
  - Your financial aid contact is Alexandra Masse ([Alexandra.Masse@colorado.edu](mailto:Alexandra.Masse@colorado.edu)). Choose Alexandra as your Financial Aid Advisor in the Gilman portal.
- Uploading your official transcript. Refer to the [Submission Tips](#) page. **You DO NOT need to mail your official transcript to Gilman.** To request your official transcript and for processing times, visit the [Registrar's](#) website.
  - If you plan ahead, you can order official transcripts from CU and have them delivered to you by postal mail or you may pick them up in person at the Registrar's Office in Regent Hall (west of C4C). Then, upload an image to your Gilman portal. (It's expensive to rush transcripts so plan ahead!)
- Entering your program costs: first look up your program costs [here](#). Find the total estimated cost amount (at the bottom) and subtract the amount that is listed under "personal expenses." The difference is what you should enter on the Gilman website.



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## Tips for a More Competitive Gilman Application

First, access tips from Gilman staff: [Tips](#). Next, general tips from the CU study abroad staff:

- **Your essay matters!** Don't write the essay online at the last minute. Take some time with the essay and revise it at least once. Have someone look over your essay to check spelling and grammar. Thoroughly address all questions asked.
- **Hook the reader from the beginning.** Scholarship reviewers read hundreds of essays from students who are all writing about study abroad. Catch their attention with an interesting, short anecdote or quote, or start with information about why you are unique.
- **Make yourself stand out.** What is unique about you as a person? Do you have a unique interest or hobby? Are you involved with something on campus or in your community? What are your goals for study abroad above and beyond the formal requirements of your program?
- **Make a clear case for how/why your program is relevant to your major, career goals, future plans or all of the above.** Gilman wants your study abroad location/program choice to be well-researched and that you have academic or career-related reasons for your choice. Make these connections and explain them in as much detail as possible. Including personal goals can be appropriate, but they should include other intellectual interests (i.e. visiting museums or other cultural/historical sites) or extra-curricular activities such as internships, volunteer options, etc. Mention of personal travel and social activities will not be viewed positively by the selection committee.
- **If you are a first-generation college student or belong to an under-represented population, identify this in your essay.** Ethnic diversity is important to the Gilman, as is supporting other under-represented populations in study abroad such as first generation students, Engineering, Math or Science majors, etc.
- **If you are studying in a traditional destination** (Western Europe, Australia, New Zealand), explain in detail why you selected your program (from an academic or career-planning perspective). If you selected your traditional destination primarily for personal reasons, you will not be viewed as highly by the selection committee.
- **If your GPA is below a 3.0, explain reasons.** Has your GPA steadily improved? Do you work a large number of hours each week and, thus, cannot devote as much time to your studies? Do you have extra obligations such as running the family business, or caring for young or elderly family members? Did you have one particularly rough semester due to illness, family situation, etc.? If a situation like this applies to you, explain this in your essay.

## Tips for the Follow-on Service Project

- General tips: [Gilman Essay](#) (scroll to the follow-on projects section). [Videos](#) (See the Composing Competitive Essays video and refer especially to minutes 3:08-6:19).
- Read the example projects completed by [Gilman Alumni](#). Most of them are outreach-oriented, which is essentially what Gilman is asking for. The purpose of the project is to promote both study abroad and the Gilman scholarship.
- Before suggesting you complete a certain project with the CU Study Abroad office, research what we already do.
- When describing your follow-on project, consider partnering with clubs or organizations with which you are already involved.
- Describe the who, what, when, where and why of your follow-on project.
- Describe what impact the project will have on your audience. What is your intended outcome with the audience - what do you hope they will DO as a result of your project.
- Consider creative uses of technology, media, photography, etc.