

Start Your Scholarship Search

Step 1: What scholarships are you eligible for?

Are you eligible for scholarships that are:

- Merit-based?
- Financial need-based?
- Diversity-based?
- For graduate students?
- For students who receive the Pell Grant?
- For first generation students?
- For students studying a critical language (ex. Chinese, Arabic, Hindi)?

Answer the following questions:

- What is your major/minor?
- What program/country are you going to?
- How long will you be studying abroad?
- What is your home city/country?
- What is your heritage/ethnicity?
- Do you have any skills we should be aware of? (ex. Strong writers can look for blogging scholarships; photographers/videographers can look for multimedia scholarships)
- Are you involved in any clubs, student organizations?
- Do you belong to a fraternity or sorority?
- What type of program are you doing (ex. Faculty-led, Partnership, Non-GVSU)?

Step 2: Start Searching Scholarships

Search Engines

*Note that this is NOT a full list of search engines! You can also do a general search online.

- www.gvsu.edu/studyabroad/scholarships
- www.gvsu.edu/myscholarships
- www.goabroad.com/scholarships-abroad
- www.diversityabroad.com/international-scholarships
- www.globaled.us/plato/resources.html

Step 3: Apply!

The more scholarships you apply to, the better your odds. Apply early and often! *Keep in mind that ALL scholarships will apply to study abroad, NOT ONLY study abroad specific ones.*

Good Luck!

TIPS FOR FUNDING RESEARCH

The scholarship database that the Padnos International Center has compiled is large but not completely comprehensive. We do our best to provide students with the most up-to-date information but the fact of the matter is there are more scholarships than we can possibly keep track of! This is a good problem to have, but what this means is that we strongly encourage students to do research on their own or work with other offices to find out about more scholarships.

SCHOLARSHIP RESOURCES

- **First check the Padnos International Center Scholarships** at www.gvsu.edu/studyabroad under the 'Financial Planning' section.
- **Nationally Competitive Scholarships.** Assistance in national scholarship preparation can be found in the Office of Fellowships in 230 Mary Idema Pew Library. This office is dedicated to helping students become more competitive during the application process.
- **Ask Academic Department** about possible scholarships for students. Often times each academic department has scholarships available to students in specific majors. Always worth asking the department at GVSU what is available.
- **Search on GVSU's scholarship database.** The PIC does our best to pull out scholarships that we believe will fit the student's needs. But a search on the full GVSU scholarship database may prove rewarding. www.gvsu.edu/scholarships
 - ❖ ***Note:** It does not have to be a study abroad *specific* scholarship to apply to study abroad.
- **Do a Web Search about student specific traits** for scholarships. Often times there are scholarships available for minorities, different majors, career pathways, ethnic background.
- **Search for hometown scholarships, grants or sponsorships.** Many times the city that a student is from may have a community foundation or some sort of grant or scholarship they are willing to sponsor for their fellow hometown resident.
- **IF studying abroad through a Non-GVSU program** make sure to check your providers website because OFTEN times, each provider has their own scholarships for their own programs.

FUNDRAISING IDEAS

We encourage students who are studying abroad to do as much saving up as they can before they study abroad. It's understandable that students who work during school are often doing so because they need to pay for daily life and it seems impossible to save. But if the student plans far enough in advance, it is possible to make a big dent in the cost of study abroad.

- **Piggybank Technique** - \$1 a day, \$5 a week, \$20 a pay check. Whatever the student is willing to set aside for their program will truly add up if they just set it aside. How much is the program really worth to you?
- **Craft or Goodies Sales Technique** - We know of students who sold handmade bracelets and lotions for 6 months who were able to save over 6,000 dollars. This seems quite the feat. But if one was able to find a way to buy a product for 3 dollars, sell it for 15, and say it's for the good cause of adventure and internationalization! People are usually willing to contribute.
- **Website Entrepreneur Technique** - In the past, students have created websites or blogs that describe their reasons for wanting to go abroad and where they wish to go. This website would also include a section for viewers to donate to your studies abroad. You can view some ideas about how to create your own fundraising blog at www.fundmytravel.com.
- **Gift Receiving Technique** - Instead of asking for presents for Christmas, Hanukkah or your birthday, ask for money instead to be put away for the trip. If you celebrate Chinese New Year, you should be in good shape - just save the red envelopes!
- **Collecting Cans Technique** - Tell your friends that you can collect all of their cans/bottles for the next couple months. After parties and general build up there should be plenty of money to be collected.

Scholarship Tips & Tricks

- Keep in mind that **Scholarship Season** is *January through April* of every year!
 - This means if you are planning to study abroad in the Winter semester you should be applying for scholarships a year in advance!
 - For students studying abroad in the Winter semester also look for scholarships that give out scholarships each semester rather than each year. For example the Gilman Scholarship and the Foundation for Global Scholars.
- Start a list early of all the scholarships that apply to you and their deadlines!
- When writing scholarship essays, remember that the main point is that they want to know *who you are and why should they give you money*. Scholarship writing can be very introspective into who you are and what you plan to do with your life. The goal is obviously to be awarded funds for your time abroad, but a great consequence, whether you are awarded or not, will be to find out more about yourself and your future plans. Don't underestimate the power of truth!
- Write a solid scholarship essay and use it for multiple committees, tweaking it of course to fit each scholarship guidelines. This will help save time and allow you to work efficiently. For a great study abroad scholarship check out the Statement of Purpose guidelines and suggestions on the Gilman Scholarship's website:
<http://www.iie.org/programs/gilman-scholarship-program>
- Scholarship writing takes time! This can be difficult if you are trying to write scholarships in the middle of a semester or if the due dates are right near exam time. So start early, or if you are a procrastinator remember that scholarships pay off!
- Spell Check! Make sure that you did not spell the scholarship committee's name wrong!
- Have people proofread your scholarship essays! The Writing Center is a great resource and are more than willing to read essays at any time. If you are applying to a national scholarship, the Office of Fellowships will help you make your essay and application the most competitive. Also, friends and family can be a great resource also!
- Have fun and remember that it takes a lot of paper work to get there, but once you are abroad the experience and will be something you will never forget.