SCHOLARSHIP ESSAYS

BEFORE YOU WRITE:
Read each question carefully.
• Do you need to answer a specific question or provide a general statement?
• Prompts will tell you everything you need to talk about - stick to the prompt!

Know your audience.
• This will help you decide what information to include in your essay and what to leave out.
• Most applications will be reviewed by faculty or staff!

Before writing, ask yourself these three questions:
1. What are my goals for studying abroad?
2. What do I hope to gain from this experience?
3. How will this scholarship help me achieve these goals?

WHILE YOU WRITE:

Start Strong:
• Establish your purpose by developing a solid thesis to explain your reason for studying abroad. Remember, your goal is to convince the reviewers that you’re the best candidate for the award.

Be personal:
• Avoid generalizations about yourself, your goals or program choice.
• What details will set you apart in the eyes of the scholarship reviewers?
• Mention specific things that make you unique - first generation, STEM major, a distinctive feature of your program or destination (homestay, research, internship, etc).

Be specific: Use concrete examples.
• Why did you select your specific program?
• What is the significance of your program location?
• What are your academic, professional, or personal goals?

Be realistic: Think about your goals and what you plan to gain from this experience.
• Be sure to include these in your essay if it asks for them.

Avoid clichés:
• It’s good to write about how gaining a global perspective matters for your future career, but be sure to elaborate on your specific field and interests.

Be creative: Introduce yourself to the committee and tell your story.
• Make the essay specific to you and your experiences.

End Strong:
• Reinforce how you will use this scholarship to help you achieve your academic, personal, and professional goals.

AFTER YOU WRITE:
• Check your spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Friends, professors, and the Writing Center in WTY Library can help!
• It may take more than one draft. Invest the time to create the strongest essay possible.
• Submit your essay before the deadline!
REQUESTING RECOMMENDATIONS

The UK EA Scholarship doesn’t ask for letters of recommendation - instead we ask your recommender to submit a form on our application portal. Follow these tips when asking your recommender to complete our recommendation form.

WHO SHOULD YOU ASK?

For the UK EA Scholarship, your recommendation form needs to be completed by someone who can speak to your academic abilities and goals for your program. Use the table below to plan for your letter of recommendation.

1. Recommender: Think professors, academic advisors, staff mentors, etc. Also think of a back-up in case the first person is unable to write the letter.

2. In-Person or Email: What’s the best way to contact your potential recommender? We recommend in-person if possible. Once you put their name in our system, we’ll email them!

3. Scholarship Deadline: Note the deadline for final submission and let your recommender know. Try to give them at least two week’s notice.

4. Recommender Deadline: Set a deadline for them to submit your letter, but be sure to let them know. This way, if the letter isn’t submitted by the deadline, you can always ask a backup.

KEEP THIS IN MIND:

Discuss your goals for this program with your recommender. Talk about your academic, personal, and professional reasons for going abroad.

Explain how you plan to use your newly developed skills after your program.

Have a conversation about how you’ll interact with your program and location beyond your coursework.

Make sure your potential recommender is someone you’ve spoken with about your program. If you can’t think of someone immediately, identify someone you would like to have that relationship with and schedule a time to talk to them about the points listed above.

Recommenders for the UK EA Scholarship do not need to submit a letter. They’ll complete a form that asks them to consider conversations with you about your goals, plans, and abilities.
BUDGETING BEFORE I GO ABROAD

COSTS TO CONSIDER WHEN PLANNING

- Do I have a passport?
- How much will my plane ticket cost?
- What is my program fee or deposit I’ll have to pay before I leave?
- What costs are included in my program fee and what will I need to pay for once I get there? (Hint: Check budget page)

HOW CAN I PLAN AHEAD?

Create a budget by first thinking about your income: Are you working part-time? Do you receive financial aid? What other sources of income do you have? Then think about what you will need to spend money on: bills, food, transportation, etc. Try to have your planned expenses come out as less than or equal to your income. If you have any income leftover, put it in savings!

When creating your budget, don’t forget to include savings. If you set some money in savings at the beginning of each week or month, you’ll be less likely to dip into it for spending money.

You should also consider your current spending habits and ways to adjust those in order to save more money for your program abroad.

WHAT ARE MY SPENDING HABITS?

How often do you spend money on things like shopping, coffee, and dining out?

Consider whether you really need these things or just want them. Then save some money using alternatives:

- Use your meal plan or buying groceries instead of dining out
- Attend free campus and community events instead of going out

APPLY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS!

UK Education Abroad offers scholarships for every term and summer. If you’re going abroad for an academic year, you can apply each term you’ll be away. You should also check with your college or department for possible awards. And don’t forget to do some searching online! There are many opportunities available, and you should apply for as many as you are eligible for.
BUDGETING WHILE ABROAD

Make sure to prepare a budget for the time you’re abroad. Think about how much you’ll be able to take with you. It’s unlikely you’ll be able to earn money by working while abroad, so it’s a good idea to have a plan for a limited amount of money.

PLANNING A BUDGET

Whether you’re going for 4 weeks or 16, there are quite a few things to think about. This doesn’t include everything, but when thinking about your budget while abroad ask yourself:

- Are meals already included in my program costs? How much will I need to dine out?
- How will I get around? Do I need to purchase a daily/weekly/monthly transport pass?
- What free activities are offered through the university or program provider? Are there other activities I want to do that aren’t included?
- Do I want to travel on weekends or other breaks? Where do I want to go and how much will that cost? Consider the price differences between:
  - Using trains, planes, or buses
  - Staying in an Airbnb, hostel, or hotel
  - Purchasing a meal plan, cooking your own meals, or dining out

SAMPLE BUDGET

Find a budgeting app to download or create your own. There are many different types of budgets, but a weekly spending plan will most likely fit your needs. No matter what you use, remember to keep it updated!

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Budgeted</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Difference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income (scholarships, savings, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenses (subtract expenses from income)</td>
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<td>Food</td>
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<td>Laundry</td>
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<td>Local Transportation</td>
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<td>Activities (museums, movies, etc.)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel (hostels, train tickets, airfare, food)</td>
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<td>Money Remaining</td>
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SEARCHING FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

UK EA SCHOLARSHIP DATABASE

- This is the place to go for information on scholarships funded by our office, opportunities through partner providers, and campus/department scholarships related to education abroad.
- View the database, and sort through scholarships, at international.uky.edu/ea/browse-scholarships

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Reach out to these resources for more information on potential scholarships, grants, and other forms of funding:

- UK Office of Nationally Competitive Awards
- UK Financial Aid and Scholarships
- Your College or Academic Department
- Your Student Organization(s)
- Campus Departments and Resources
- Partner Providers - Check websites for scholarship opportunities.
- Google - Try Googling scholarships based on your interests, identity and hobby.
  - Ask yourself: “What do I enjoy doing for fun? What am I studying? What’s unique about me or where I’m from?”

WHEN SEARCHING AND APPLYING

- Think Local - high schools, hometown communities, local businesses, and organizations may be willing to sponsor your time abroad. Chat with some people in Lexington, or at home, to find out about local funding and scholarships.
- Get Specific - a lot of businesses, websites, industries, etc., will have scholarships that are super specific to their field. Find a field that fits you and start searching!
- Apply for Everything - there are no limits to the number of scholarships you can win, but you have to invest the time in finding them.
- Do not dismiss scholarships with low amounts - education abroad scholarships can be stacked and small scholarships can make a difference.
- Do not use a generic scholarship essay - You wouldn’t use the same final paper for every class, so don’t use the same one for different scholarships - each is unique.
SMALL AMOUNTS BIG REWARDS
FUNDRAISING FOR YOUR PROGRAM

- Clubs, churches, or orgs may exchange a donation in return for a presentation when you return! But you have to ask!
- Write articles, take promotional pics, or create videos for a local business, paper, or radio stations while abroad in exchange for funds.
- Sell custom items like t-shirts, calendars, or cookbooks that people can pre-order, try booster.com.
- Have a yard sale, bake sale, or garage sale!
- Fundraise online with gofundme.com or fundmytravel.com.
- Send letters or emails to friends and family.

TIPS AND SUGGESTIONS

- Use your network of friends, family, and coworkers. They’re your biggest supporters!
- How will you give back? Writing a blog and sending updates from abroad is just one great way to keep contributors engaged.
- People don’t want to donate to a vacation. Make sure you always tell people how your program will impact you academically and professionally.
- BE CREATIVE! Google is your friend. Do not be afraid to think outside the box for innovative ideas.
Dear Uncle Phil,

As you know, for the past few years I’ve been studying psychology and Spanish at the University of Kentucky. During this time, I’ve been able to broaden my horizons through a variety of classes and gain experience through lab research in my field. I am working hard to make sure that my education and activities prepare me for grad school and the job market.

In preparation, I have decided to enroll in an intensive Spanish language study abroad program in Argentina this fall. Not only will this program give me a real world Spanish language experience, I will even be able to earn credit towards my psychology degree. Psychology courses, in Spanish, will allow me to explore my field in a new context, from a fresh perspective.

Because only 14.8% of U.S. college students study abroad, I know this experience will serve me well into the future by setting me apart from my peers.

The total cost of this program, including my airline ticket and other expenses, comes to about $11,000. While I am able to use some of my normal financial aid, apply for scholarships, and tap into my savings, I will still come up short.

If you could contribute, any amount would be greatly appreciated. And to let you know your money is going to good use, I will happily send you updates while abroad!

Thanks so much for supporting my current, and future, goals!

- John

To make giving easier for contributors (and increase your chances of receiving funds), you may want to consider including a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your letter.

Including a fun note with options for contributing not only gives your family and friends choices, but it makes asking for money a little less tense.

**I would like to contribute:**

- [ ] $25  Last month's electric bill was killer, but I'll support you!
- [ ] $100  I expect a cool souvenir when you get back!
- [ ] $50  Bueno, I dig it. Best of luck with the español.
- [ ] $250  It's been a good year. Since I love you so much, I'll share the wealth.