The Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Program is a fully-funded overseas language and cultural immersion program for American undergraduate and graduate students. With the goal of broadening the base of Americans studying and mastering critical languages and building relationships between the people of the United States and other countries, CLS provides opportunities to a diverse range of students from across the United States at every level of language learning. For complete information on the program, visit http://clscholarship.org/.

The CLS Program seeks participants with diverse interests, and from a wide range of fields of study and career paths, with the purpose of representing the full diversity of the United States. Participants are selected based on their commitment to language learning and plans to apply their language skills to their future academic or professional pursuits. Please note that CLS is an intensive group-based language program.

**Target Languages**

Participants in the CLS program choose to study one of fourteen languages deemed “critical” to US foreign interests:

- Azerbaijani, Bangla, Hindi, Indonesian, Korean, Punjabi, Swahili, Turkish, and Urdu do not require any previous study of the language;
- Arabic and Persian require at least one year or prior study; and
- Chinese, Japanese, and Russian require at least two years of prior study.

CLS recipients are expected to continue their language study beyond the scholarship period, and later apply their critical language skills in their future professional careers.

**Eligibility**

To be eligible to apply for the CLS, one must

- Be a US citizen, and
- Be enrolled as an undergraduate or graduate student at the time of application

Additionally, to participate in CLS, one must, at the start of the grant period

- Be at least 18 years old;
- Be in acceptable mental and physical health; and
- Have completed at least one academic year of study.

**Program Benefits**

The CLS Program covers most of the costs of participating in its overseas institutes, and provides the following benefits:

- Intensive overseas group based language courses (20+ hours per week);
- Room and board, often with a host family;
- A full cultural program;
- Host community language partners;
- U.S. academic credit issued through Bryn Mawr College; and
- Domestic and international airfare.

The CLS program *does not* cover US passport fees or the cost of medical exams required for finalists. Participants receive a small stipend to cover incidental expenses and meals not provided by the program. Upon completion of the program, participants also receive a certified American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) score.
Selection Process and Timeline

Students apply directly to the CLS program and are not required to obtain ASU endorsement. The application for 2019 grants will open fall 2018, with the deadline in November. All applicants will be notified via email in January 2019 as to whether or not their applicants have passed the initial review process. Applicants who advance will be notified of their status as a CLS recipient, alternate, or non-recipient in February, 2019. Recipients will then have one month to accept or decline the award.

Application Components

A completed application consists of the online application form, two recommendation letters, and uploaded copies of unofficial academic transcripts. The application is available on the CLS website: http://clscholarship.org.

Essays

The application form includes five essay questions:

1. What aspects of the CLS Program do you expect will be the most challenging for you? How will you meet these challenges? (350 words)
2. What are your strategies for interacting with people who are different from you or situations that are unfamiliar? How do you approach new environments? (350 words)
3. What unique background and life experience do you bring to the CLS Program? How will your unique perspectives contribute to the group you study with? How will your participation in the program provide your host community abroad with a broad view of the United States? (350 words)
4. What formal and informal efforts do you plan to undertake to build upon your linguistic and cultural knowledge after participating in the CLS Program? (100 words)
5. Why is it important that the CLS Program invest specifically in you with this award? What interests you about your chosen target language and the people who speak it? How will increased language and cultural knowledge help you achieve your future academic and/or professional goals? (500 words)

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit drafts of these essays to ONSA for review and to make use of ASU writing centers for advice on clarity and completeness.

Letters of Recommendation

Applicants will enter into the online application contact information for two people who have agreed to compose letters of recommendation. The recommenders will then receive notice to upload their letters to the online application. Letters of recommendation may be provided by an academic advisor, a current or past professor, or someone who knows the applicant in a professional or volunteer capacity. First-year undergraduate students should consider limiting the number of recommendations from high school teachers. The letters of recommendation may not be completed by anyone who is related to the applicant.

Transcripts

Each applicant must submit an unofficial transcript from the college or university they are currently attending, as well as unofficial transcripts from colleges and universities attended in the last five years. First-year students must submit an unofficial transcript showing their courses in progress. High school transcripts are not necessary.

Upon receipt of the award, all CLS recipients will be required to submit an official transcript from their current college or university. Any unexplained discrepancies between the unofficial and official versions of the transcripts will result in an automatic cancellation of the award with no appeal.