

Introduction

Welcome to your YES Abroad Application!

Dear Applicant,

We on the YES Abroad program are excited you're interested in studying abroad. YES Abroad is a wonderful opportunity to learn about yourself and the world around you, develop career and life skills, and represent your culture overseas. We know that studying abroad in high school can be scary and that this application process may be daunting. However, we are here for you along the way! We hope everything in the application is clear and well explained, but do not hesitate to reach out if you or your parents have a question. You can always call or email us. Additionally, you can save your work and come back to your application at any time.

A lot of applicants want to know the key to being accepted to the program. They want to know what we are looking for and how to provide the answer we think is best. The good news is that there is no one right answer. In fact, often we hear from participants and alumni that they never thought they had a chance of being offered a scholarship and were completely surprised when they received an invitation letter. This is because the program is looking for something more than the traditional markers of success, such as grades, test scores, or the expertly crafted essay. We are looking to find out about you as a person, what your interests and goals are, how you solve challenges, and much more. So, while it is a good idea to review your essays and to even ask a parent or teacher to look them over, ultimately what we want to hear about is you.

We look forward to receiving your application and hope to meet you at our Pre-Departure Orientation next June. In the meantime, we are here to help!

Good luck,

The YES Abroad Staff

Deadline	Tasks Due
Due Online December 5, <u>2017</u> by 11:59 Pacific Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online Application Form completed by the applicant—including Parent/Guardian Statement, signed Terms and Conditions, and uploaded school transcript.• Online Recommendation Form submitted by an educator.
Postmarked No Later than December 5, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grade Transcripts sent by school registrar or equivalent, if not uploaded into the online application by the student (see above)

Contact Information

YES Abroad scholarship staff are available from 9AM until 5PM Eastern to answer any questions about the YES Abroad scholarship, application, selection process, timelines, etc. We're available at YESAbroad@afsusa.org or 800-237-4636 ext. 2151.

Please note that our office will be closed on Friday, November 10 in recognition of Veterans Day, and from 2PM Eastern on Wednesday, November 22 through Friday, November 24 in recognition of the Thanksgiving holiday.

Program Information

Approximately sixty-five full scholarships are available for U.S. students to study abroad for an academic year with the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES) Abroad program. Living with a host family and attending a

local school, YES Abroad students promote mutual understanding between the United States and the host country by forming lasting relationships with the local community. The YES Abroad countries for the 2018 – 2019 academic year are:

- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Ghana
- India
- Indonesia
- Jordan
- Macedonia
- Malaysia
- Morocco
- Philippines
- Senegal
- Thailand
- Turkey

The U.S. Department of State reserves the right to amend this list at any time.

Basic Eligibility Requirements

The below eligibility details are for the 2018 – 2019 program.

- U.S. citizen
- Born between December 19, 1999 and June 19, 2003
- Enrolled in high school (including home school) at the time of application
- Prior French skills are required for Morocco and Senegal
- The YES Abroad program seeks applicants of all racial, ethnic, religious, socio-economic backgrounds, sexual orientations, and welcomes students with disabilities.
- For complete eligibility information, please see "Additional Eligibility Information" listed below.
- All grade point averages and academic performances are encouraged to apply.

Application Process and Timeline

- **December 05, 2017 (11:59PM Pacific) – Application Deadline**
The written application includes the following sections: cover photo, biographical information, placement profile, parent statement, letters of recommendation, academic information, health information, passport details (a passport is not required to apply at the time of application), statistical information, and essays. Submitted written applications will be evaluated by a Scholarship Review Committee, and applicant contact details will be shared with AFS-USA regional interview coordinators who will contact applicants regarding their regional interview.
- **December 2017 – February 2018 – Regional Interviews**
An AFS-USA regional interview coordinator from will contact each applicant on a rolling basis to share interview schedule details. Interviews will take place in December, January, and early February. All applicants must be interviewed. Please respond in a timely manner to your coordinator's communications.
- **Late January 2018 – Submission of completed Medical Evaluation and Academic Credit Agreement Forms**
Applicants must submit complete Medical Evaluation and Academic Credit Agreement Forms in order to remain eligible. Visits with your health care professional and dentist are required to complete the

Medical Evaluation Forms. If additional health information is requested, follow-up visits may be necessary prior to international departure. Medical information will not be considered as part of selection. The signature of a school administrator is necessary for the Academic Credit Agreement Form.

- **March 2018 – Finalist and Country Assignment Announcement**
Applicants and their parents/guardians will be notified by email of their application status in March on a rolling basis. Finalists will be notified of their country assignment, as well as their next steps and follow-up responsibilities. Some applicants may be notified of Alternate status. Alternates remain eligible for a Finalist position, should a Finalist be unable to participate in the program. More details regarding Alternate status are provided upon notification. Both Finalist and Alternate statuses are pending submission of their respective Acceptance Forms and other required documents.
- **March 2018 – Submission of Finalist/Alternate Acceptance Form**
Finalists and Alternates must complete and submit the Finalist or Alternate Acceptance Form and other required documents to indicate that they intend to participate in the program or accept Alternate status.
- **June 20 - 23, 2018 – National Pre-Departure Orientation**
All participants must attend the centralized National Pre-Departure Orientation (National PDO) from June 20 to 23, 2018. Attendance is required for the duration of this event, which serves as a primary training tool for participants. The scholarship provides participants with travel (from the 50 U.S. states and Washington, D.C.), lodging, and meals at the event venue, as coordinated by the implementing organization.
- **Late June – mid September 2018 – International Departures**
International departures (from the 50 U.S. states and Washington, D.C.) for participants commence on a rolling basis, beginning as early as immediately at the conclusion of the National PDO, and continue through mid-September, 2018. All participants must travel to and from their host country on the same flight, as assigned by their implementing organization.
- **Additional Information**
Finalists will learn about the additional steps they are required to take as selection announcements are made. Typical steps include applying for a visa, joining preparatory webinars/conference calls, completing independent readings, and additional verification of health information.

Selection Criteria

Successful applicants will:

- ...demonstrate maturity, good character, and scholastic aptitude
- ...demonstrate a commitment to cultural immersion in a host culture through a home stay experience
- ...demonstrate interest in learning the language of the host culture/community
- ...demonstrate an ability to meet cross-cultural challenges with maturity, humor, and an open mind
- ...demonstrate concrete ideas for sharing their overseas experience in their U.S. home school/community upon return

Please note that preference will be given to applicants who have received their high school education in the U.S. and who have not resided or studied abroad.

Academic Credit

Applicants for the YES Abroad program will be asked to agree to the following stipulations concerning academic credit.

- We understand that YES Abroad participants are not guaranteed to receive academic credit for specific courses taken overseas.
- We understand that the decision to accept overseas coursework as fulfilling the academic requirements of a U.S. school rests solely with the U.S. school and is our responsibility to arrange prior to program departure.
- We understand that schools overseas may impose academic standards or other requirements in determining grade level placement that differ from those imposed in the school that the applicant currently attends. We understand that the availability of courses offered in-country on the YES Abroad program may or may not meet the specific academic requirements of a U.S. school and that these courses are determined by the host school in-country.
- We understand that the program strongly advises against participants completing online courses and extensive independent study while overseas. The program must give prior approval and will request that a participant limit the time spent on such work during the program, should the program determine that it interferes with the participant's ability to fully commit to and participate in the normally required host school curriculum and other activities, host family, and host community. Disciplinary action may be taken in some cases.

Miscellaneous

- All applicants are expected to thoroughly review the scholarship website, including the FAQ page, for important scholarship details, such as information about visas and common costs not covered by the scholarship.
- Make intercultural learning a family experience. Although the YES Abroad program does not require your family to host an international exchange student studying in the United States, you can learn more about the opportunity by visiting this page: www.yesprograms.org/host.
- Would you like to nominate another student to apply for YES Abroad? If so, please visit www.yes-abroad.org/for-educators.

Additional Eligibility Information

The Youth Programs Division of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) seeks to make youth exchange programs funded by ECA available to a wide and diverse American audience. ECA also seeks to prevent conflict of interest issues from arising with regard to Department employees and federal award recipients who are involved in particular scholarships and exchange programs.

This eligibility policy is in addition to any program specific requirements and applies only to U.S. participants in the following programs sponsored (funded) by the Youth Programs Division, and only for programs that include travel outside of the United States:

- Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES Abroad)
- National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y)
- Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX)
- American Youth Leadership Program (AYLP)
- Youth Leadership Program (participants who traveled overseas only)
- Youth Ambassadors Program

Participation in Multiple Programs: Participation in more than one of the above-listed Youth Programs Division-sponsored exchange programs is permitted only in the following circumstances:

- The programs do not take place in the same calendar year.
- The first program in which the individual participated was a short-duration program of eight (8) weeks or less AND the second program is a semester or academic year program.
- Alumni of the semester and academic year programs are NOT eligible to apply for any of the programs listed above. Under no circumstances may an individual participate in more than two of the above-listed programs.

Family Members of Department Employees: Family members of employees of the Department whose official duties involve an ECA Youth Programs Division exchange program would be precluded from applying for that program. This is because there would be a conflict of interest or the appearance thereof if employees engage in official matters that affect the interests of their family members. In circumstances where a family member other than a spouse or dependent child wants to participate in a program in which the employee has official duties, the appropriateness of the employee engaging in such matters should be discussed with a Department Ethics attorney.

Family Members of Affiliated Private Sector Employees: Family members of employees of ECA-funded implementers of grant programs and Department contractors whose official duties involve a particular ECA-funded youth exchange program are technically ineligible for that program. Family members include spouse and dependent children.

Cover

Instructions

Please upload a clear photo of yourself by clicking on your profile photo in the top right corner of the application. We recommend using a school photo, or a similar photo that is in color, facing forward, smiling, and without other individuals present. You can do this by clicking on your profile photo in the top right corner of the website.

- Photo upload button

Biographical Information

Instructions

- *Please carefully complete all sections of this page and provide as much detail as possible. Information on this page is not used for or visible in the selection process.*
- *The YES Abroad program seeks applicants who represent the diversity of the United States. Students with disabilities and all racial, ethnic, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds are encouraged to apply.*

- Your Legal Name
- Contact Information
 - Address
 - Phone Number
 - Email Address
- Family Members

For placement and administrative purposes, please list the members of your family below. This information is required for parents, step parents, or legal guardians. For anyone else living in the home, this information is optional but will be helpful when matching you with a host family.

 - Home address(es)
 - Names
 - Relationship to the applicant

- Date and country of Birth
- Emergency Contact
 - Contact information for an additional emergency contact-person for the student

Placement Profile

Instructions

Please complete all of the below sections. This information is used for selection and host family placement purposes.

- Extracurricular Activities, Work, Clubs, and Organization
 - Activity name, description, frequency, and dates of participation
- Prizes, Honors, and Special Recognition
 - Description and date awarded
- Knowledge of Languages
 - What language or languages are spoken in your home?
 - Language knowledge: Language, years studied/spoken, and language ability (*Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced, Fluent*)
- Prior Overseas Experience
 - Please list the countries you have visited, as well as the type and duration of each visit. Examples include being born in or residing in another country, a tourist visit, a family visit, a family heritage visit, community service, or an international program. Please indicate the names of any international programs you have participated in.
 - Do you currently reside outside of the U.S., or do you intend to reside outside of the U.S. before September, 2018? If yes, please indicate the country.
 - Are you a citizen of any country in addition to the U.S.? If yes, please indicate which countries you are a citizen of. As a reminder, only U.S. citizens are eligible for this scholarship.
 - I have read the eligibility requirements located on the "Introduction" tab of this application, and affirm that I am eligible to participate in this scholarship.

Country Preferences

Instructions

- *Please rank your country choices 1 - 13, with 1 being the most desirable host country. Your rank of country preference does not influence program selection. While the YES Abroad Team does include this ranking in their consideration of country placements for program Finalists, applicants should be open to any of the countries listed. Those selected as program Finalists will receive their country assignments at the time of selection notification.*
- *To learn more about YES Abroad in each host country, please visit: <http://yes-abroad.org/countries>*
- *Please note that YES Abroad 2018 - 2019 programs commence between late June and mid-September, 2018.*
- *High school graduates and those applicants who will be over 18 at the start of the program are advised that YES Abroad participants in these demographics will generally be placed in classrooms with students one to two years younger.*
- *Please note that while placements in Morocco and Senegal require French language skills, no language experience is required to be eligible for the YES Abroad program.*
- *The locations listed below are expected to host YES Abroad programs in 2018, if conditions allow. The 2017 program in Turkey has been suspended, but will resume in 2018 if conditions permit. All program locations are subject to change.*
- *Questions may be sent to YESAbroad@afsusa.org.*

- Ranking of countries
- Are all country choices equally preferable?

- Comments

Essay Questions

Instructions

As a part of the YES selection process, your responses to the following questions will be evaluated by the selection committee. Please answer each question in detail.

- Why do you think living with a host family is important during cultural exchanges and what are some benefits and challenges of living with a host family? Be specific and provide examples.
- Describe a non-academic challenge that you have faced in the past two years. What strategies did you use to work through this challenge? What did you learn from this experience? Be specific and give examples.
- Why is living in a YES Abroad country important to you? What do you hope to learn from this experience? How will you, through your participation, share your experience and support the goals of the YES program both at home and abroad? Be specific and give examples.
- Life is full of unexpected changes. Please discuss a change that had an impact on your life in the last three years. How did you deal with it? What did you learn from this experience?

Letter to Host Family

Instructions

- *Write an introductory letter to your prospective host family that describes yourself. Please incorporate your motivation for participating in the program, as well as your answers to the following questions:*
 - *How would your family and friends describe your personality?*
 - *How would you describe your relationship with your family and friends? For example, how are you different from your brother/sisters and/or friends? What is your role in the family? In what types of situations do you seek advice from your parents?*
 - *What are your different roles in your community (For example: school, sports, community activities)? How do you prioritize what is important to you?*
 - *If a family could choose a student, why should they choose to host you? Explain what makes you unique and a good addition to a family and community.*
 - *What are your future education or career plans?*

- Letter to host family text box

Academic Information

Instructions

- *Upload your most recent official or unofficial copy of your academic transcript and enter your classes and grades into the "Subjects and Grades" section.*
- *Please note that we may request an updated copy of your transcript at a later date.*
- *If you participate in a non-traditional school, such as home schooling, please complete this page to the best of your ability.*
- *Eligible applicants with any grade point average and academic performance are encouraged to apply.*
- *Please contact the YES Abroad Team at YESAbroad@afsusa.org or 800-237-4636 ext. 2151 with any questions.*

- If you do not have grades to enter/upload, please provide an explanation below, including if you attend/attended a school that does not provide formal evaluation (including such home schools) or have not received your first high school grades, in which case please note this here and enter your most updated grades.
- Education and school information
- Are you currently home schooled?

- Are you currently enrolled in an IB school?
- Have you previously been enrolled in an IB school?
- List courses and grades

Parent Statement

Instructions

- Please upload a 500-word statement covering your child's:
 - Relationship with you and your family
 - Relationship with others
 - Reactions to disagreement and discipline
 - Level of independence
 - Strategies for coping with unexpected challenges, difficult situations, and conditions outside of your child's control
 - Reactions to being away from home in the past
- In addition, please address the following points:
 - Discuss any factors (e.g., dietary, physical, health issues, or other considerations) which should be considered in placing your child in a new environment.
 - Explain why you feel it is important for your child to participate in the program.
 - Describe any other family issues, changes, or concerns you would like to tell us about that might impact the applicant during the pre-departure or in-country phases of the program.
 - Please include your full name as well as that of the applicant at the beginning of this statement. Should you experience technical difficulty in uploading this document, please contact us at YESAbroad@afsusa.org.

- Letter upload button

Recommendation

Instructions

One recommendation from an educator is required for your YES Abroad application. Please provide your recommender with a copy of the Recommender Instructions (PDF) found on this page. This document contains the information your recommender will need to complete and submit his/her electronic recommendation. The YES Abroad application and recommendation are submitted separately by 11:59 Pacific on December 5, 2017. Please email YESAbroad@afsusa.org to determine if a recommendation has been submitted on your behalf, as late recommendations will not be accepted. In the event of more than one recommendation, only the first recommendation that is received will be considered. Please contact the YES Abroad Team with any questions at YESAbroad@afsusa.org or 800-237-4636 ext. 2151.

- Instructions download button

Photos

Instructions

- To help introduce yourself to a prospective host family, please upload a collection of 6-10 photographs that show at least one photograph of you, your family, your friends, and your participation in a favorite activity. Be creative!
- This information will not be seen by reviewers during the selection process and will be used exclusively for host family placement purposes.
- Please add descriptions to your photos.

- Photos upload button

Statistical Information

Instructions

The below information will not be reviewed during the selection process.

- Ethnicity
- Religion
 - What is your religious affiliation?
 - How often do you participate in structured religious services?
 - Bearing in mind that it is likely your host family will have different religious affiliation, how strongly do you feel about having access to structured religious services of your own faith?
 - Were you raised with a religious identity other than your current religious affiliation?
- How did you learn about the YES Abroad program?

Health Information

Instructions

- *Complete the following important health questions as completely and truthfully as possible.*
- *Directly following the YES Abroad application deadline, all applicants with submitted applications will be provided an official YES Abroad Medical Evaluation Form and its January deadline by email. The YES Abroad Medical Evaluation Form must be completed by a doctor or nurse practitioner. The form may be completed based on a recent physical that has been completed within the past six months, at the discretion of your doctor. The YES Abroad Medical Evaluation Form must be completed and submitted before the deadline. Failure to submit this form by the stated deadline will result in rejection of your application.*
- *The dental portion of the form must be completed by your Dentist based on an appointment within the past six months.*
- *All finalists' and alternates' medical evaluation forms are reviewed by independent medical professionals. This process is initiated after an applicant is selected as a finalist or alternate. The medical review process may take an extended period of time. During this period, finalists and alternates may be asked to provide additional information or clarification related to the medical review. Results of the medical review will determine if a candidate meets medical requirements necessary for program placement and participation in YES Abroad. As described in the Terms and Conditions, withholding relevant health information may be cause for disqualification or termination of the scholarship at a later date. YES Abroad provides a wide variety of preparatory materials and support for YES Abroad finalists.*
- *Any finalist's ultimate participation in the program is contingent upon being accepted by the host country's implementing organization based on a thorough review of the medical review findings.*
- Are you currently taking any medication or are you under any medical treatment? If yes, please indicate the type of medication or treatment, the reason for medication or treatment and the length of use. Also, indicate if this medication is injected.
- In order to help the program implementer consider your on-program safety and participation in everyday family and school activities, please provide information about any physical restrictions, health conditions, or learning disabilities. Do you have any physical restrictions, health conditions, or learning disabilities?
- Do you have any dietary restrictions? Excluding medical necessity, we encourage participants to be flexible regarding their dietary requirements. Please indicate below all restrictions, including vegetarianism, veganism, no pork, etc.
- Have you consulted a neurologist, therapist, psychologist, psychiatrist, or any other mental health professional?
- Pet allergies and restrictions

Passport

Instructions

- *In addition to entering your passport details on this page, please upload a color scan of the photo page of your passport.*
- *If you do not have a valid passport, please indicate this by writing "in process of application" or "will apply if selected" in the "Passport Number" box.*
- *Note: You will be required to obtain a passport, valid for at least six months beyond the scheduled program end date, in a timely manner prior to traveling abroad or beginning the visa process, if applicable. The governments of some host countries additionally require that the student's parents/guardians also submit their passports as part of the student's visa application process. In this case, parents/guardians would also be without their passports during the visa application process. Additionally, parents/guardians without currently valid passports may need to apply for a passport with expedited processing immediately upon scholarship selection notification. Delays with a parent/guardian passport application could jeopardize the student's ability to obtain a visa in time to participate.*
- *As a reminder: Only U.S. citizens are eligible to apply for this program and a passport is not required to apply for the program.*

- Passport upload button

Legal Information

Instructions

- *Please download and print the YES Abroad Terms & Conditions document, and read it carefully with your parents/legal guardian.*
- *Please sign, and have your parent/legal guardian sign in the designated areas.*
- *Once complete, please scan page nine (signature page) and upload this page using the "Upload New File" button, below.*

- Blank Terms and Conditions download button
- Completed Terms and Conditions upload button