

International Education Fee Scholarship Policies and Procedures

This document outlines the policies and procedures for the University of Houston (UH) to administer the International Education Fee Scholarship (IEFS).

A. Fund Usage

The IEFS fund will be used as financial assistance to undergraduate and graduate UH students to participate in an approved learning abroad program. Learning abroad programs may include, but are not limited to, faculty-led programs, reciprocal exchange programs, third-party affiliated provider programs, internship opportunities, research collaboratives, academic conferences, and volunteer activities abroad. Extension programs, 2+2 programs, and similar academic programs where the student will be awarded a degree from another institution are not eligible for this scholarship.

- The application due in Fall is for Winter Break, Spring, or Summer programs only.
- The application due in Spring is for Spring programs that have not yet started, Summer and Fall programs only.

Applications for programs outside of the above schedule will not be considered.

Students may not receive IEFS funding for programs in Travel Advisory Level 4 locations as outlined by the U.S. Department of State, and they have to have authorization for programs in Travel Advisory Level 3 locations. For further information, please review the [Learning Abroad travel warning policy](#) and the [Department of State travel website](#).

B. IEFS Award Guidelines

1. General Eligibility Requirements

- a. All UH undergraduate and post-baccalaureate students who have completed a minimum of 12 UH credit hours, have a minimum GPA of 2.5, and are in good academic standing are eligible to apply.
- b. All UH graduate students who have completed a minimum of 9 UH credit hours, have a minimum GPA of 3.0, and are in good academic standing are eligible to apply.
- c. Students are eligible to receive the IEFS only once as a student at UH.

2. Application Procedure - To apply for an IEFS award, each applicant must:

- a. Complete and submit the [International Education Fee Scholarship Application](#).
- b. Ask one UH faculty or staff member to submit a letter of reference on behalf of the applicant to IEFS@uh.edu. Only digital copies will be accepted. This letter of reference should be no longer than one page and should include the following information about the applicant: the applicant's name, the applicant's level of academic achievement in general, why the referee believes the applicant will be successful on the proposed program, and an evaluation of the applicant in two or more of the following categories:

- a. Communication Skills
- b. Common Sense & Judgment
- c. Ability to Work Independently and in Groups
- d. Adaptability & Flexibility
- e. Cultural Awareness

Students participating in a faculty-led program cannot receive a letter of recommendation from the faculty or staff member leading their program abroad. If multiple letters of reference are received, the IEFS Committee will review only the first letter that is received.

- c. Submit an IEFS application essay. The essay should not exceed two pages, typed, double-spaced and in 12pt standard font. The essay should describe how the chosen Learning Abroad program will enhance the applicant's education at the University of Houston. The essay should also include:
 - *Personal, professional, and academic goals.
 - *How the selected program will help the applicant reach his/her goals.
 - *What the applicant hopes to gain from the selected learning abroad program.
- d. Submit a description of the selected learning abroad program with cost information.
 - a. This can be a digital flyer or a screen shot from a program's website.
 - b. If the applicant includes costs outside of tuition, fees, airfare, room, and board on their application, the applicant must also provide documentation for the additional costs and justify why these costs should be considered.

With the exception of the letter of reference, all documents must be submitted in a single email to IEFS@uh.edu. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

3. Compliance Policy

- a. Each awardee must participate in and complete the learning abroad program described at the time their IEFS application was submitted. Any changes will require the approval of the IEFS committee or re-application.
- b. Each applicant must use the awarded scholarship funds toward their approved learning abroad program.
- c. The IEFS award will be revoked if any part of the information provided in the IEFS application is found to be untrue and/or if the applicant does not complete the learning abroad program, even if the program is paid in full. Exceptions may be made for emergency situations at the discretion of the Director of Learning Abroad Office, the Vice Provost for UH Global, and/or the IEFS Selection Committee.
- d. Each awardee will be **required** to volunteer at a Learning Abroad fair or other event after returning from their program for a total of up to two hours.
- e. The IEFS may be subject to tax and/or withholding in accordance with IRS regulations and it is the student's responsibility to pay taxes on scholarship awards.
- f. If a student has an outstanding balance on their UH account, their scholarship funds may be applied to that balance before a refund is issued.

C. Selection Committee – Committee Guidelines

- a. The IEFS Selection Committee is appointed by the UH Faculty Senate and consists of approved UH faculty and staff members.
- b. Members of the IEFS Selection Committee are not permitted to review applications of students who will be participating in their learning abroad programs or for whom they have completed a reference letter.
- c. Each application will be reviewed by two members of the IEFS Selection Committee.
- d. The IEFS Selection Committee will evaluate each applicant based on 1) strength of essay, 2) academic merit, 3) strength of letter of recommendation, 4) program length and cost, and 5) program type.

D. Awards

The IEFS is a competitive scholarship. Not all students who apply will receive an award. The total number of recipients and amount awarded to individual recipients will be based on the total funds available to Learning Abroad for each application cycle.