How-to Make Your Study Abroad Affordable

Apply for scholarships.

The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences has a number of scholarships available for graduate and undergraduate students in the college. Scholarship applications are due November 1 for spring programs, March 1 for summer programs, and May 1 for fall programs. There are also scholarships and grants available through Iowa State University as well as other outside sources.

Find financial aid.

Most financial aid can be applied to the cost of a study abroad program. Financial aid received may help cover the costs of the program fee and tuition applied to your University bill. For more information, contact Clay Gurganus at the Student Financial Aid office, 0210 Beardshear Hall. Phone: (515) 294-2223; e-mail clay@iastate.edu.

Focus on saving.

Just SAVE your money! A common tip for saving in general is to set aside 10% of your paycheck, so try to do this to save money for your study abroad trip.

Organize your priorities.

Put-off buying that new car or flat screen TV for a year and put that money towards your study abroad trip. Sure having new things is nice, but nothing can replace the experiences you have in another country!

Request funding from local businesses and organizations.

Spend an hour or two writing a letter to businesses and organizations in your hometown to ask them to support your study abroad trip. Be sure to include how this trip applies to your area of study and what you expect to learn from it. Follow-up by sending postcards while you are abroad and providing presentations after you return. Consider writing letters to your local bank, civic groups (Rotary, Lions, or Kiwanis), church, extension office, insurance agent, and any other business that your family frequently works with.

Do without birthday and holiday gifts.

Instead of asking mom and dad or grandpa and grandma for new clothes or a new iPod, consider just asking for money so that you can set this aside for your trip.

Ask neighbors and relatives for support.

Let your neighbors and relatives know that you are planning on studying abroad and see if they are interested in helping sponsor your trip. Once again, follow-up by sending postcards from abroad or bringing them back a small gift.

Be creative!

Host a bake sale, wash cars, rake leaves, paint houses—find any odd jobs you can on the weekends to help raise money for your trip!

Look on the Internet.

There are numerous scholarship and grant opportunities online for international trips so spend a few hours browsing the web!

Exclude unnecessary purchases.

Instead of eating out or making trips to the mall, try to set aside money each week for your trip. Put the $15 a week that you spend on pizza in a separate savings account and by the time you take-off you will have over $500 saved to spend on your trip! Or put the $100 a month that you spend on unnecessary purchases at Target, Walmart or the mall in a separate account and you will have close to $1000 saved to help cover the cost of your trip!

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