



National Security Language Initiative for Youth  
General Information for Recommendation Forms

National Security Language Initiative (NSLI-Y), a program of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, provides merit-based scholarships for eligible high school students to learn less commonly taught languages in summer and academic-year overseas immersion programs. The languages currently offered include Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), Indonesian, Korean, Persian (Tajiki), Russian, and Turkish. Previous language study is not required, and language learners of all levels are encouraged to apply. The merit-based scholarship covers the following program costs for participants: travel from the participant's home region to the pre-departure orientation location and the overseas host city; tuition and academic materials; in-country support; cultural activities; room and board; secondary medical benefits; and applicable visa fees.

NSLI-Y is part of a broader, multi-agency U.S. government initiative, NSLI, launched in 2006 to improve Americans' ability to engage with people from around the world. Since its inception, the NSLI-Y program has experienced dramatic growth in the number of languages taught and the number of scholarships offered. Today, the program has expanded to offer summer and academic year programs in seven NSLI-Y languages. By the end of the 2025-26 program year, more than 9,000 students will proudly call themselves NSLI-Y alumni.

For the 2025-26 program year, NSLI-Y is administered by American Councils for International Education in cooperation with other U.S. based organizations. These organizations implement the programs in NSLI-Y host locations, as conditions allow.

NSLI-Y programs immerse participants in the cultural life of the host country, giving them invaluable formal and informal language practice and sparking a lifetime interest in foreign languages and cultures. Now more than ever, it is important that Americans have the necessary linguistic skills and cultural knowledge to promote international dialogue and support American engagement abroad. NSLI-Y aims to provide opportunities to American youth that will prepare them to be leaders in a global world. Recommenders for 2025-26 NSLI-Y applicants will receive an email notification and further instructions for the online recommendation form from [highschoolstudyabroad@americancouncils.org](mailto:highschoolstudyabroad@americancouncils.org). Keeping in mind the context of a rigorous overseas immersion program, recommenders are asked to comment on the applicant's behavior, peer relationships, and ability to work in groups. Additionally, recommenders are asked to comment on the talents and skills that the applicant can contribute to an overseas immersion program and their general suitability for an overseas exchange experience.

Recommendations should be submitted by 4:00 PM Eastern Time on November 12, 2024.

Thank you for your role in supporting a NSLI-Y applicant.

For more information, please visit: [www.NSLIforYouth.org](http://www.NSLIforYouth.org)

Questions may be directed to NSLI-Y Administration at [nsliy@americancouncils.org](mailto:nsliy@americancouncils.org) or 866.790.2086