



Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship Application Guide

Thank you for your interest in the Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship! We have designed this scholarship to enable talented people, who are not U.S. citizens, from around the world to complete a cybersecurity program at the SANS Technology Institute. The scholarship is open to both seasoned professionals and those interested in transitioning into a career in cyber.

Before starting an application, review this instructional guide.

1. Ensure you meet our eligibility requirements

- **Check your individual eligibility on our Paller Eligibility form:**
<https://application.sans.edu/register/PallerEligible>.
- To be eligible for the Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship, applicants must:
 - Be a non-U.S. citizen and not currently reside in the U.S.
 - Be 18 or older
 - Have never earned a GIAC certification (*with scholarship exceptions*)
 - Be a native English speaker or able to meet the requirements for non-native English speakers
 - Meet the admissions requirements for one of our programs
- We offer programs and scholarships for all levels of experience. Applicants can have experience in cybersecurity, be new to the field, or not in a cyber role at all.

2. Consider a program of interest and eligibility

- Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship applicants will select a program of interest on the application form. Students can choose from the:
 - [Bachelor's Degree in Applied Cybersecurity](#)
 - [Undergraduate Certificate in Applied Cybersecurity](#)
 - [Job-specific graduate certificate programs](#)
 - [Cybersecurity Master's Degree](#)
- Explore the curriculum and [minimum requirements](#) for each of these programs. Applicants need to meet the minimum eligibility for **at least one** of these programs to be considered.

- If you are awarded the scholarship, the Admissions Committee will take into consideration your program of interest but will ultimately determine the program to which you are admitted.

3. Begin collecting your application items.

- The official application and submission of materials will only be open for a specific window of time (see the website for dates). However, these are items that you can work on completing before the application window opens to make the application process smoother.
- Please note that some of the requirements include mandatory fees to third-party organizations and applicants should be prepared to make this financial investment in their education.

You can prepare the items listed below, but please DO NOT SEND these documents to the college before you have started an application and passed the aptitude assessment round.

Official Academic Records (“transcripts”)

For this scholarship, you must provide an **official record of your undergraduate/bachelor’s degree studies.**

This document should:

- List all the courses (subjects) you completed
- Show the grades, marks, or scores you received for each
- Include your dates of attendance and the degree awarded
- Be issued by your university with an official stamp, seal, or signature

In some countries this may be called:

- Academic transcript (ex. *U.S., Canada, Australia*)
- Statement of marks (ex. *India*)
- Mark sheet (ex. *India, Pakistan, Bangladesh*)
- Diploma supplement (ex. *Europe*)
- Academic record (ex. *general term*)

What you need to do:

1. Contact your university and request your official undergraduate record.
2. Send this document to one of our evaluation partners:
 - a. TEC - [The Evaluation Company \(TEC\)](#)
 - b. IEE - [International Education Evaluations \(IEE\)](#)
3. Ask TEC or IEE to complete a **course-by-course evaluation** and send the evaluation directly to SANS.edu at transcripts@sans.edu.
 - a. *TEC and IEE charge for their services and we are unable to offer exceptions or scholarships for this cost.*

 **Tip:** If you are unsure what your country's document is called or which documents to submit, visit the IEE Required Documentation page and select the country where you earned your degree.

English Proficiency

Applicants must show proof that you can study in English at a high academic level.

Ways to meet this requirement:

1. Take an approved English proficiency test

We accept:

- TOEFL
- IELTS Academic
- Cambridge English Assessment

Required steps:

- Register for one of the above exams.
- Have your official score report sent directly from the testing organization to transcripts@sans.edu.
- See our [international student requirements](#) for minimum score details and test scheduling.

2. Request a Degree Exception

- If you have earned a degree from a degree program taught entirely in English, you may request a waiver.
- To request the waiver, indicate your request on the *English Proficiency Form* during the application process.
- You must send an official transcript from that school showing your language of instruction was English.

Important:

- We cannot make exceptions for scores below the minimum requirement.
- The only waiver available is for degrees taught in English — no other exceptions are possible.
- All tests have associated fees; we cannot offer scholarships or fee waivers for this cost.

Resume

1. An up-to-date resume is required. The resume should include your education history, a full work history with dates of employment and details on each role, any industry certifications, and relevant industry CTFs or exposure.
2. The resume document will be uploaded in the application portal.
3. We do not require you have experience in a cybersecurity role to be eligible for one of our (undergraduate) career-transition programs. The resume will provide helpful background to the Admissions Committee for what program(s) you are eligible for.

Once you have these items ready and the application window is open, start an application.

STEP 1: Go to the [Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship website](#) to find the application link.

- Choose “Start Paller Scholarship Application” and then either:
 - “No, I don’t have a SANS.org account”
 - If you do not have a SANS.org account, follow the instructions to create an account and access the application. Then return and use the same email to continue with our application.
 - “Yes, I have a SANS.org account”
 - Enter your SANS.org log-in information to begin
- You will be guided through the application forms, where you’ll provide information regarding your education background, employment status, and general information.

STEP 2: Aptitude Assessment

After you submit your application form, we require the SANS Aptitude Assessment be taken or be on file.

About the assessment:

- Designed by SANS.org to measure your potential for success in cybersecurity, SANS courses, and GIAC exams
- Covers topics such as networking, operating systems, and general information security concepts
- No study guides or preparation materials are available

What you need to know:

- We allow 2 lifetime attempts on the aptitude assessment. The email you receive after submitting your application, will include details on your eligibility to take the assessment, retake or let you know we already have your scores on file.
- You will **not** receive your score
- Complete the assessment as soon as possible to know if you are eligible to continue with a full application

Results:

You will receive an email notification within 2–3 days after completing the assessment (or after we review any eligible tests you already have on file). If you meet the minimum score required, we will invite you to continue with the next stage of the application process.

Please note: The Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship requires a very high score to be considered. It's possible to qualify for admission to a SANS.edu program without meeting the scholarship threshold. If that is the case, we will let you know.

Not meeting the scholarship minimum does not reflect negatively on your potential in cybersecurity. It simply reflects the highly competitive nature of this scholarship and the minimum aptitude we need to consider for a full tuition scholarship.

STEP 3: Submit your Materials

After passing the aptitude assessment, we will require some additional documents to determine eligibility and full consideration for the scholarship.

- Official transcripts/academic records
- Resume (*see details above*)
- English proficiency (*see details above*)
- Identity and Citizenship Verification
 - We verify applicants' identity and citizenship as part of the review process.
 - Select from a list of eligible options to upload a copy of your identity verification document.
 - For security purposes, we will automatically delete these identity documents 90 days after an application decision has been released.
- Video Essay
 - You will record your video **directly inside the application portal**.
 - The recording will be an **interview style** – an AI interviewer will ask you questions. You will speak your answers into your camera and microphone.
 - **The conversation will last about 3 minutes.** The main question you will be asked is:

SANS.edu is looking for talented, community-focused individuals who want to make meaningful change and protect organizations, nations, and people through cybersecurity. We are looking for individuals who want to make a difference in the world or their community. What is the difference you want to make?

Tips for success:

- Find a quiet place with good lighting.
- Test your microphone and camera before starting.
- Speak clearly and directly to the camera.
- Treat it like a real interview — dress professionally and keep your background distraction-free.
- Try to limit pauses when answering. If you need to think, say “*Let me think about that...*”

After you submit a complete application form, we will review your application, and you will receive a decision within the timeframe outlined.