

EHLS PROGRAM SELECTION CRITERIA

The EHLS program seeks motivated and knowledgeable scholarship applicants with a desire to lend their distinct skill sets to federal service. Applicants are measured against a set of criteria that will enable them to succeed both in the intensive program of study and in government positions.

Language Goals & Motivation: The EHLS Program is an advanced language learning program. In order to be successful, scholars must be able to articulate concrete goals and demonstrate the motivation to improve their English skills. Language goals should be very specific, indicating that the applicant possesses self-awareness in terms of their linguistic strengths and areas of improvement, rather than vague objectives (e.g., “improve my writing”). A strong applicant will clearly connect language goals with program participation and professional aspirations.

Cultural Knowledge: Communicative effectiveness entails more than language; values, beliefs, traditions, customs, norms, rituals, symbols, taboos, deportment, etiquette, attire, and time concepts also contribute significantly to communicative success in interaction. These elements are often the source of expectations regarding behavior, such as gestures, body language, physical distance between speakers, and deference due to status, age, and gender. Native speakers are needed by the federal government not only because of their language skills but also because of their knowledge of these cultural elements and norms, which are critical for true understanding and communication. A strong candidate will understand and be able to articulate the importance of this cultural knowledge in the federal workplace.

Research Skills: Throughout the program and for the capstone project, scholars will be required to use and further develop research skills. A strong applicant demonstrates experience of research skills such as defining the scope of a project and generating research questions, identifying and evaluating appropriate sources (or data points), synthesizing information from different sources, and analyzing synthesized information.

Professional Adaptability: Strong candidates and successful employees in the federal government must be able to demonstrate professional adaptability. This includes areas such as being able to maintain or shift focus on goals in response to changing priorities, control and filter emotions in a constructive way, and demonstrate self-management, accountability, and collaborative problem solving.

Compatibility with the Federal Workplace: The goals of the EHLS Program are to train advanced English speakers to be effective communicators and strong candidates for federal jobs. Strong candidates for a federal career demonstrate a commitment to public service and possess professional skills that are needed by federal agencies. Professional skills may include training in a specific field of study (e.g., chemistry, accounting) or more general workplace experience (e.g., writing skills, project management).

Language Skills in English and Critical language: To participate in the EHLS Program, applicants must demonstrate the following minimum proficiencies in English and the language under which they are applying:

- **English:** The minimum English language requirement is Limited Working Proficiency (ILR Level 2) in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. All provisionally selected applicants will participate in language testing in Washington, DC to certify that they meet these minimum requirements. Language testing includes multiple-choice reading and listening assessments developed by the Defense Language Institute-English Language Center (DLI-ELC); a writing assessment consisting of three prompts that is scored using an adapted DLI-ELC rubric; and a double-rated telephonic Oral Proficiency Interview conducted by Language Testing International.

- **Critical language:** The minimum critical language requirement is Professional Working Proficiency (ILR Level 3) in speaking. All provisionally selected applicants will take a double-rated telephonic Oral Proficiency Interview.