



**The Global Independent Study Grant, offered through the Office of Global Activities (OGA), is a grant worth up to \$3,000 awarded to students through a competitive application process.** Residential and online students in all curriculum tracks and pathways are eligible for this grant, including part-time students. Students **must** be enrolled in the MSW program for the Spring/Summer 2026 term or the Fall 2026 term to be eligible for the grant.

Travel must be international and last for at least 14 consecutive days (not including transit days) to qualify for the grant. Please note that students who will be enrolled in the Spring/Summer term (e.g. Advanced Standing, MasterTrack/SWEC, and UM Sociology + SW tracks) may **not** travel during scheduled coursework, and maximum travel time will be 3-3.5 weeks in August. Students who will not be enrolled in the spring/summer term (e.g. 20-month track students) have the option to travel for a longer period if they wish.

Below is a checklist for applying for the Global Independent Study Grant. Please note that applicants are not guaranteed funding.

## FALL TERM

### October

- Attend the **Global Independent Study Information Session**. If you are unable to attend the information session, contact [ssw.oga@umich.edu](mailto:ssw.oga@umich.edu) to set up an appointment to discuss your options with a staff member.
- Begin contacting **potential faculty instructors**. To complete a Global Independent Study, you **must** have a faculty instructor. Faculty instructors must be [clinical-track](#) or [tenure-track](#) (please note that lecturers and field faculty cannot serve as instructors). If you need help identifying an appropriate faculty instructor, you may arrange a meeting with OGA staff ([ssw.oga@umich.edu](mailto:ssw.oga@umich.edu)).

### October-December

- Open a Global Independent Study Grant application in [M-Compass](#) and review the requirements.
- After securing a faculty instructor, complete the [Global Independent Study Instructor Signature Form](#). Please note that your **faculty instructor's signature is required** to apply for the grant. You will need to upload a copy of this form to [M-Compass](#) as part of the application.
- Establish contact with an agency, organization, or individual in your GIS host country who will support you with your project while you are abroad. You will be **required to provide proof of contact** with an agency, organization, or other representative with whom you will be completing your GIS experience abroad as part of your grant application.
- Review other funding opportunities at <https://ssw.umich.edu/offices/global-activities/funding>

## WINTER TERM

### January-February

- Meet with your faculty instructor to develop a plan for your experience abroad and discuss how it fits within your larger educational goals. You will need to determine the number of credit hours you will receive for the independent study with your instructor's guidance and approval.
- Familiarize yourself with visa application and immunization requirements for your GIS country.
- Draft the essays and other required information for your [M-Compass](#) application.
- Research the items listed on the [Travel Cost Sheet](#) to compile an approximate budget for your GIS project.



### Early March

- GIS Grant **Application Deadline**: Submit all application materials through [M-Compass](#).

### Mid-March

- Check for email communication from OGA regarding grant acceptance and next steps
- Complete all required post-decision materials in M-Compass. Detailed information will be sent through email. **These items must be submitted before any funds can be dispersed to your accounts.**
- Complete the [Independent Study Recording Form](#). Once the registrar has processed the form, you will receive email permission to register for the independent study course (SW 528). Work with your faculty instructor determine the number of credits you will receive for the independent study. If you will **not** be enrolled in the Spring/Summer term, you **must** register for SW 528 in the winter term as a late add before the end of the term.

### March-April

- Apply for additional funding if needed. The OGA manages a [travel funding page](#) as a starting place.
- Check to see if there is a [U-M Health Risk, Travel Warning, or Travel Restriction](#) in effect for the country of planned travel. If so, you **must submit additional documentation** to the UM International Travel and Oversight Committee (ITOC), and provide copies of ITOC approval for your travel to the OGA via [email](#).
- Begin making trip preparations ([refer to Travel Planning Resources guide](#)):
  - 1) Research your GIS country and agency
  - 2) Apply for a passport and visa (if necessary)
  - 3) Purchase flights
  - 4) Consult [UHC travel health services](#) and the [CDC](#) for immunization and travel health recommendations
  - 5) Consult the [State Department's website](#) for current updates on country conditions
  - 6) Develop and discuss a communication plan with your faculty instructor

### April

- If all required paperwork has been submitted, grant award funding will be dispersed to your student account. Failure to submit the above paperwork on time will result in a delay of funds.
- If you are otherwise enrolled in coursework during the spring/summer term, you must register for SW 528 in the spring/summer term. You are required to complete the [Independent Study Recording Form](#) for approval **before** you can register.
- Attend the mandatory Pre-Departure Orientation. Detailed information about this event will be provided via email.

## **AFTER THE GIS PROJECT HAS BEEN COMPLETED**

### September/October

- Create and present a poster in the Fall term for the Global Social Work Poster Session. This is a **requirement for all students** funded through the Global Independent Study Grant, **including** those who will graduate in August 2026.

If you have any questions, email [ssw.oga@umich.edu](mailto:ssw.oga@umich.edu) or call (734) 615-0012.