

The Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship

Applications are accepted through January 15, 2025.

[Apply for a Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship](#)

[Download the Scholarship Application Guide](#)



Providing a World-class Cybersecurity Education for the World's Protectors

The Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship is an international scholarship program providing free access to a world-class cybersecurity education at the SANS Technology Institute (SANS.edu) to dedicated people – both in technical roles and those who are new to cybersecurity – who want to make their organizations, regions, and countries safer and more secure, and who show exceptional potential to succeed.

As the leading international cybersecurity program and the only college solely focused on cybersecurity education, SANS.edu is committed to identifying the very best new talent, filling the cybersecurity skills gap, and better protecting the societies in which our new cyber graduates operate.

The Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship is a non-residential program and does not require an F1 visa or provide eligibility to apply for an F1 visa.

[Download the Scholarship Application Guide](#)

Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship Timeline

Scholarships application portal opens: **October 1, 2024**

Scholarship application deadline (*including ALL materials*): **January 15, 2025**

Scholarship winners notified by: **February 28, 2025**

Scholarship winners must confirm acceptance by: **March 14, 2025**

Scholarship winners can begin their program as early as: **April 1, 2025**

Paller Cybersecurity Scholars have the option of completing their programs fully online while working full-time.

Meet the First Paller Scholars

The first cohort Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship winners exemplify the mission of our scholarship program to identify exceptionally talented international students (non-US citizens) who are committed to making the world a safer place through cybersecurity.

Each of the Paller Scholars selected in January 2024 was awarded a full scholarship to a SANS Technology Institute graduate program.



Catalin Bejan

Romania

Initially drawn to cybersecurity by hacker films, cybersecurity analyst Catalin Bejan looks forward to gaining leadership and advanced technical skills, as well as 9 GIAC certifications, as a Paller Scholar.

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Akin Bello

Nigeria

Security Analyst Akin Bello, who aims to hone both the soft skills and hands-on skills required for success in cybersecurity, is excited about learning from diverse perspectives and mentoring emerging talent.

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Michał Bełzak

Poland

Pen tester and red teamer Michał Bełzak pursued the Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship for the chance to get a top-tier education, challenge himself, and prepare to make contributions in research and education.

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Ana Maria Bogdan

Romania

Cyber Risk and Security Manager Ana Maria Bogdan seeks to make meaningful contributions to cybersecurity research and to support others in entering, transitioning within, or advancing their careers in cybersecurity.

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Vivian Boisabi

Kenya

Application Security Specialist Vivian Boisabi became a Paller Scholar to enhance her skills in ethical hacking, risk management, and advanced cybersecurity techniques to protect global cyber infrastructures.

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Mark Lester Dampios

Philippines

Pen tester Mark Lester Dampios aspires to excel in presentations, ensuring his audience fully comprehends his ideas, and to share cybersecurity knowledge both locally and internationally.

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Ruta Punka

Latvia

Information Security Specialist Ruta Punka transitioned to cybersecurity from a career



Elena Revzina

Latvia

Cybersecurity Engineer Elena Revzina pursued a Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship

in law and became a Paller Scholar because she values diversity, continuous learning, and a shared commitment to making a positive impact.

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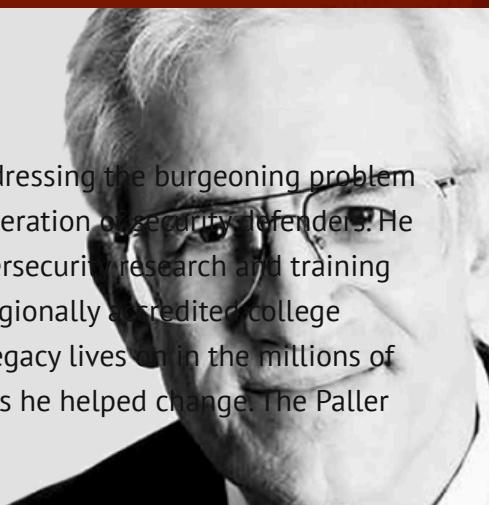
to refine her analytical skills and deepen her expertise in threat analysis.

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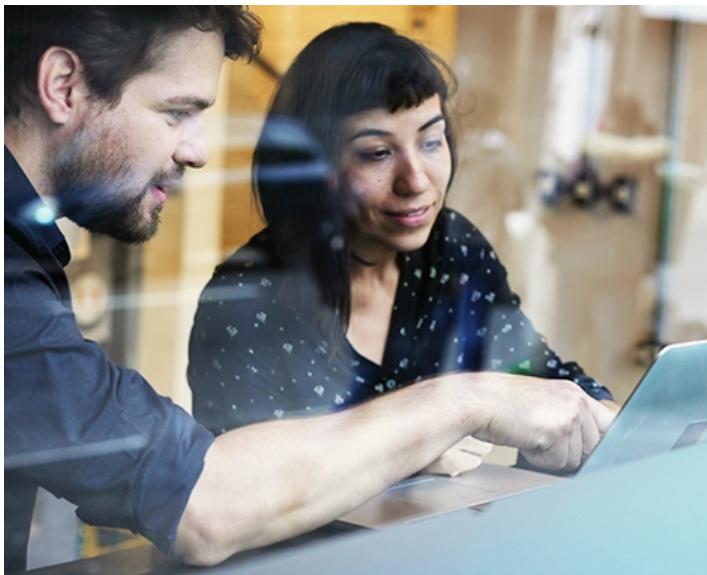
“Alan Paller dedicated his life to vastly improving cybersecurity practitioners’ skills to thwart ever-increasing threats. Due to Alan’s commitment, hard work, and kindness, hundreds of thousands of students have become better cyber defenders. His legacy and lifetime dedication continue to embody the SANS mission.” - Ed Skoudis, President, SANS Technology Institute

The Alan Paller Legacy

In 1989, RSA lifetime achievement award winner Alan Paller began addressing the burgeoning problem of cyberattacks by providing state-of-the-art education to the next generation of security defenders. He founded the SANS Institute, which has become the world’s largest cybersecurity research and training organization, and later the SANS Technology Institute, America’s first regionally accredited college specializing in cybersecurity, where he served as president. Today, his legacy lives on in the millions of breaches that haven’t happened and the hundreds of thousands of lives he helped change. The Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship is named in his honor.



“Alan Paller's legacy is that a lot of bad things did not happen and that a lot of good people entered this field to help.” - Dr. Johannes Ullrich, Dean of Research, SANS Technology Institute



What is the Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship?

The Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship is a fully funded international scholarship enabling exceptionally talented people who are non-U.S. citizens from at-risk regions to complete world-class cybersecurity programs at the SANS Technology Institute.

[Download the Scholarship Application Guide](#)



Who is it for?

We are looking for exceptionally talented, community-focused individuals over the age of 18 who want to make meaningful changes and protect organizations, nations, and people through cybersecurity. For curious problem solvers who want to make a difference, the SANS Technology Institute provides the world's best cybersecurity education, so you can confidently launch or advance a career that creates real impact.

Only non-U.S. citizens are eligible for the Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship. Classes and labs are conducted in English, so English language proficiency is required. We welcome students of all backgrounds, and selection is made without regard to gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, race, ethnic origin, religion, or disability.



What does it cover?

The Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship offers two scholarship tracks.

- **The New to Cyber Track** is for people who want to enter the field of cybersecurity and have at least 48 college credits. No prior technical experience is required. Students in this track will be considered for our undergraduate certificate and bachelor's degree programs in Applied Cybersecurity.
- **The Experienced Student Track** is for people who have a bachelor's degree and some IT or information security experience. Students in this track will be considered for our highly technical graduate certificate programs and our Master of Science program in Information Security Engineering.

Students at SANS.edu take one course at a time, and most courses conclude with an industry-recognized GIAC certification exam. The scholarship includes all course fees, course materials, and GIAC certification exams.

NOTE: The scholarship fully funds online courses but does not include travel and lodging expenses for students who choose to attend in-person courses.

Scholarship Applicants Are Considered for One of Our World-class Cybersecurity Programs

When you apply, our admissions committee will recommend the best program for you based on your academic history, experience, and goals.

NOTE: Do not apply for the Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship using the standard application form found on our program pages. Instead, complete the scholarship application form available by clicking on the "Apply for a Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship" buttons located on this page.



Applied Cybersecurity Certificate

Gain the foundational skills needed to launch a high-paying cybersecurity career.

- 12-credit upper division undergraduate program for students and career changers with at least 48 college credits
- Earn 4 professional GIAC certifications
- Get expert support for your job search from the SANS.edu Career Center

[Learn More](#)

Bachelor's Degree in Applied Cybersecurity

Become one of the most job-ready candidates in cybersecurity.

- Bring in 70 college credits and earn your bachelor's with 50 credits from SANS.edu
- Earn 9 professional GIAC certifications
- Intern as an Apprentice Incident Handler
- Get expert support for your job search from the SANS.edu Career Center

[Learn More](#)

Graduate Certificate Programs in Cyber Security

Strengthen essential technical knowledge and job-specific skills.

- 12- to 15-credit programs designed for working InfoSec and IT professionals
- Choose from a range of subject areas including cloud security, incident response, and pen testing
- Earn 4 or 5 professional GIAC certifications in each graduate certificate program

[Learn More](#)

Cyber Security Master's Degree

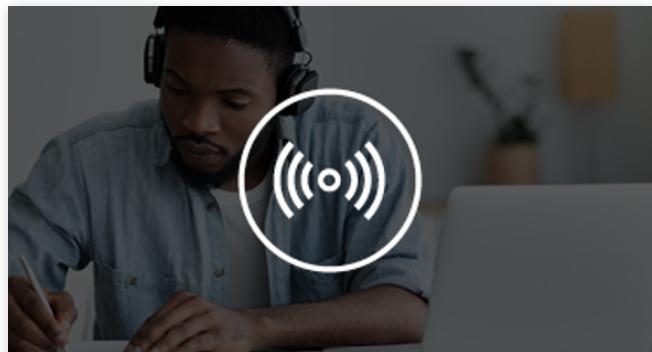
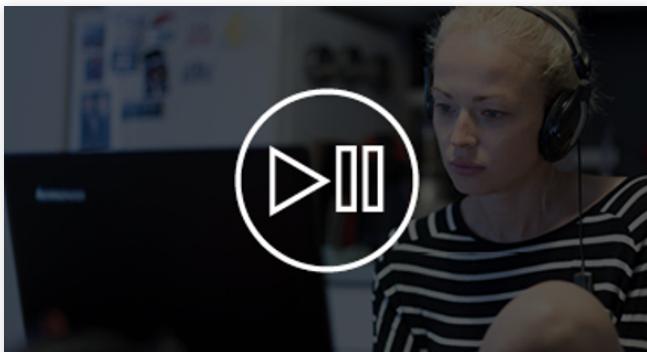
Take your cybersecurity career to the highest levels.

- 36-credit program designed for working InfoSec and IT professionals
- Earn 9 professional GIAC certifications
- Develop technical expertise and leadership skills
- Conduct research considered for publication in the SANS Reading Room and industry journals

[Learn More](#)

Course Delivery Options

NOTE: The scholarship fully funds online courses but does not include travel and lodging expenses for students who choose to attend in-person courses.



OnDemand

Our most flexible option gives you 24/7 access to online courses recorded by top cybersecurity practitioners. You can rewind and repeat content, including hands-on labs, quizzes, and exercises.

Live Online

Study from home – and save on travel and lodging expenses – through live, interactive scheduled online courses with SANS instructors and hands-on labs in a virtual environment.



In-Person

Immersive weeklong courses with hands-on labs are held across the country and around the world throughout the year. Meet fellow students and instructors and have the chance to attend special events, NetWars, vendor presentations, and more.



How does one apply?

International students who are non-U.S. citizens are invited to apply online through the Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship portal. Download the Scholarship Application Guide for complete instructions on how to apply. Scholarship applicants must complete their application by January 15, 2025.

[Download the Scholarship Application Guide](#)

[Apply for a Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship](#)



When will I be informed if I've received a scholarship and what are the next steps?

After the Admissions committee reviews all scholarship applications received by January 15, 2025, decisions will be released by February 28, 2025. Scholarship winners will be asked to confirm their acceptance of the award by March 14, 2025.

A dedicated student advisor will guide scholarship recipients through the next steps, including attending New Student Orientation and registering for their first class. Scholarship awardees can begin their studies as early as April 1, 2025.

[Download the Scholarship Application Guide](#)

[Apply for a Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship](#)

**Using Employer
Education Benefits
at SANS.edu**



Finance your cybersecurity education without a scholarship — using your employer-sponsored education benefits.

If you want to get the best education in cybersecurity while you work, and your organization offers employer-sponsored education benefits, you may be able to pursue a degree or certificate program at SANS.edu without a scholarship. Our programs are accredited and eligible for most tuition assistance programs. Learn more about how to use employer-sponsored education benefits at SANS.edu.

Learn More About Using Employer Education Benefits

Frequently Asked Questions

Eligibility and Cost

- **Who is eligible for the Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship?**

The Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship is designed for non-U.S. individuals who would not otherwise have access to cybersecurity education. Applicants can be new to the field of cybersecurity or have a career they want to advance in.

We are not accepting applications from individuals who have earned GIAC certifications (except through a scholarship program), are alumni of a SANS.edu program, have previously taken a SANS.org course, or are related to people who work for SANS or GIAC.

- **What countries are eligible to apply for the scholarship?**

Citizens of all countries are eligible to apply, except citizens of the United States as this scholarship is intended solely for international applicants.

- **Is there an application fee?**

There is no application fee for the Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship.

- **Is there a cost to apply?**

The SANS Technology Institute does not charge any fees to apply for the Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship but applicants may need to pay fees for official transcript evaluations and an English proficiency exam, both of which are handled by external companies with their own charges.

- **What does the scholarship cover?**

If you receive the scholarship, it will cover the entire tuition for the program you are admitted to by the Scholarship Committee. Items *not* covered include travel expenses for live events, fees for exam retakes in case of failure, and any costs related to required application materials supplied by external vendors, such as transcript evaluations and an English proficiency exam.

- **How do I select which program I am interested in applying for?**

When you start your Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship application, we will ask you to indicate which program you are most interested in. However, if you earn a scholarship, the Admissions Committee will select the program you are admitted to based on your qualifications and experience.

- **Is there a minimum age to be accepted?**

All accepted students must be 18 years old at the time of admission.

- **Will I need to get a visa to attend classes if I'm admitted?**

Because all SANS.edu programs may be completed entirely online, we do not require or issue any visas for our programs.

Aptitude Assessment

- **Is the aptitude assessment required?**

Yes, the aptitude assessment is required in order to determine a base eligibility for any of our programs.

- **Can I retake the assessment?**

No, we do not allow retakes of the assessment. We recommend setting aside enough time to concentrate fully on the assessment and utilizing the entire 2-hour duration.

- **Can I study for the aptitude assessment?**

No, the aptitude assessment was designed by SANS to evaluate your potential for success in SANS courses and GIAC exams, the core of our SANS.edu programs, and does not require prior study.

The best way to make sure you have a strong score is to set aside the full two-hours to take the assessment uninterrupted. The assessment is timed and you *cannot* stop and restart the assessment.

- **Do I get my assessment scores after completing it?**

No, we do not release the aptitude assessment scores. They are exclusively shared with the Scholarship Committee for their review.

- **When will I know if I qualify to continue after taking the assessment?**

We will contact you within 3 days after you complete the assessment to inform you whether you qualify to proceed.

- **What if I don't qualify to proceed with a scholarship application after the assessment?**

We seek the most highly qualified students, so while your assessment score may qualify you for a SANS.edu program, it may not meet the threshold for the Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship.

If you aren't selected for the Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship and you have other funding options, please reach out to discuss possible options.

Transcripts

- **What documents are required from my previous schools and what transcripts do I need to submit for my application?**

All applicants are required to submit official transcripts for *all* undergraduate work. **Official is defined as a transcript that is sent directly from your prior school to the SANS Technology Institute (or an evaluation agency like WES or IEE) without any interaction with the student.** Transcripts should include information about degrees earned, courses taken, and grades earned.

Steps: (1) Request to have an official transcript from your previous school sent to **WES ↗ or IEE ↗** for a course-by-course evaluation; (2) WES or IEE will send a full evaluation and the required transcript to the college for review once completed; (3) the **SANS.edu** transcript team will evaluate your transcript and you will see it marked as "Received" on your application checklist in the application portal. This can take up to 5 days to evaluate and connect to your application.

If you are not sure what documents to send or what a transcript is, you can search on IEE's website [🔗](#) under "Required Documentation" to get a country-specific list of required documents. Enter the country you have earned undergraduate/bachelor's degree credit in, and you'll receive a list of required documents.

- **Do I need to send a copy of my diploma?**

No, we do not need a copy of your diploma. Only official transcripts are required.

- **When should I request my transcripts?**

We recommend that you do not request transcripts from either of our partner agencies, [WES](#) [🔗](#) or [IEE](#) [🔗](#), until after you've taken the aptitude assessment and been informed if you should proceed with your application. If you are invited to continue in the application process, please request transcripts as soon as possible because processing may take several weeks.

- **What if I don't have any or enough college credits?**

Students must have a minimum of 48 college credits (approximately 2 years of undergraduate coursework) to be eligible for any of our programs. If you have not yet earned this amount, you are not eligible at this time. We invite you to reapply in the future once you have accumulated more credits.

- **How do I request a transcript from my school?**

Each school has a different process for requesting transcripts. Contact your previous schools to learn what their process is. Schools in the U.S. usually list the process on their website. Some international schools may require that the request for a transcript be made in person at the school. (International transcripts will need to be evaluated).

If you are not sure what documents to send or what a transcript is, you can search on IEE's website [🔗](#) under "Required Documentation" to get a country-specific list of required documents. Enter the country you have earned undergraduate/bachelor's degree credit in, and you'll receive a list of required documents.

- **Where should I send my transcripts? If my previous school will only mail physical copies of my transcripts and email is not an option, how do I get them evaluated?**

Steps: (1) Request to have an official transcript from your previous school sent to [WES](#) [🔗](#) or [IEE](#) [🔗](#) for a course-by-course evaluation; (2) WES or IEE will send a full evaluation and the required transcript to the college for review once completed; (3) the [SANS.edu](#) transcript team will evaluate your transcript and you will see it marked as "Received" on your application checklist in the application portal. This can take up to 5 days to evaluate and connect to your application.

If transcripts are international, then our evaluation agencies, [WES](#) [🔗](#) or [IEE](#) [🔗](#), will send official evaluations via email. Transcripts should be emailed to the SANS Technology Institute at transcripts@sans.edu. However, if your previous school will only mail a physical copy of your transcript, they can mail it to this address: SANS Technology Institute, 2093 Philadelphia Pike #4606, Claymont, DE 19703, USA.

- **Is an international evaluation needed for my transcripts?**

Yes, if you completed your undergraduate education outside the United States,

you will need to have your transcripts evaluated by one of our partner agencies: [WES](#) or [IEE](#). Please visit one of their websites and follow their steps for submitting your transcripts for a course-by-course evaluation.

Once an evaluation is completed by either agency, [WES](#) or [IEE](#) will send the evaluation and official transcript to SANS.edu directly. When we have received an official review copy of your transcript, we will mark your transcript as received on your application portal checklist.

Steps: (1) Request an official transcript from your previous school be sent to WES or IEE for a course-by-course evaluation; (2) WES or IEE will send a full evaluation and the required transcript to the college for review once completed; (3) [SANS.edu](#) transcript team will evaluate your transcript and you will see it marked as Received on your application portal checklist. This can take up to 5 days to evaluate and connect to your application.

- **Is there a cost to getting my transcripts evaluated?**

Yes, both agencies charge a fee for evaluating transcripts. You can find more information on their websites: [WES](#) or [IEE](#). We are unable to offer exceptions to this requirement or scholarships for the cost.

- **Do I need to send my graduate transcripts?**

We do *not* need graduate transcripts to consider your application. For any of our programs, we primarily need to review your official undergraduate transcripts. If you have graduate transcripts that you can obtain without difficulty and that you believe will be helpful to your application review, please feel free to have them sent to us.

- **If my university/college credits were completed at a school on the American credit system, do I need to have my undergraduate transcripts evaluated by WES or IEE?**

Yes, we still require an international evaluation, even if your school used the American credit system. The WES or IEE course-by-course evaluation provides a comprehensive review beyond just credit alignment with U.S. institutions.

English Proficiency

- **If my native language is not English, is there an English proficiency requirement?**

Yes, international students will need to take an English proficiency assessment and submit it as part of their application. We accept TOEFL, IETLS or Cambridge assessment exams. We do not accept other assessments such as TOEFL Essentials and Duolingo. Details on the scores and tests can be found here: <https://www.sans.edu/admissions/international>.

- **What are the minimum English proficiency scores?**

For the TOEFL exam, applicants must attain a minimum score of 25 in each of the sub-categories (Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing) and a minimum overall of 100, before applying to the SANS Technology Institute. Scores must be sent to us directly by the testing agency.

For the IETLS exam, applicants must attain a minimum score of 7.5 in each of the IELTS sub-categories and a minimum overall of 7.5, before applying to the SANS Technology Institute. IELTS scores must be sent to us directly by the testing agency, and candidates should take the Academic version of the IELTS exam.

For the Cambridge exam, applicants must attain a minimum score of 191 in each sub-category and a minimum overall score of 191. Scores must be sent to us directly by the testing agency.

We cannot grant exceptions for any scores that fall below our minimum requirement.

- **What if I do not meet the minimum English proficiency scores?**

At this time, we only accept students who have met our minimum English proficiency scores. To ensure a successful academic experience at the SANS Technology Institute, applicants must demonstrate fluency in both written and spoken English, encompassing professional, academic, and technical communication.

- **Are there any exceptions to the English proficiency requirement?**

The only exception to the English proficiency requirement is for students who hold a degree from a college or university that conducted their program in English. If you believe you qualify, please make a request for an exception on the English Proficiency Form in the applicant portal. We will need official transcripts (and evaluated transcripts if obtained internationally) to verify your exception. After receiving your request and transcripts, we will evaluate your eligibility.

- **If my work is primarily in English, is that an exception to the proficiency exam?**

No, we are unable to take work experience as an exception to the English proficiency requirement.

- **If I live in an English-speaking country, is that an exception to the proficiency exam?**

No, an English proficiency exam is required for any applicant who is not a U.S. citizen, regardless of residency.

Deadline

- **Is there an extended deadline?**

No, because the application will remain open for several months there is no extended deadline available.

Decisions

- **If I am denied, what are my options?**

If you aren't selected for the Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship, you might still qualify for a SANS.edu program. If you have other funding options, please reach out to discuss possible options. Additionally, the Paller Cybersecurity Scholarship is a yearly scholarship and you can apply again next year.

- **If I am admitted, what are my next steps?**

Next steps will be listed in the applicant portal. Once you complete those, you will be enrolled in New Student Orientation to meet your student advisor and start your first course.



We're happy to help. Email any questions to info@sans.edu.

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