**SELECTION COMMITTEE GUIDELINES**

The Vira I. Heinz (VIH) Program for Women in Global Leadership prepares women for tomorrow's global challenges by offering a unique opportunity for international experiences, leadership development and community service. Universities and colleges in Pennsylvania participate in the VIH Program. Three women from each institution are admitted to the one-year program and receive a scholarship of at least $5,000 to put toward the cost of an international experience of their choosing. The VIH Program has three principal components: the international experience, the Community Engagement Experience (CEE) and two weekend-long, intensive leadership development retreats. During the spring semester prior to and the fall semester following their international experiences, the VIH scholars meet in Pittsburgh for retreats that provide them with a foundation of skills necessary to maximize cultural learning while abroad and to engage their leadership skills in their own communities via their CEE upon their return. The Heinz Endowments view the VIH Program for Women in Global Leadership as a means for women who do not have any international experience to develop leadership skills, to gain intercultural experience, to succeed abroad, and upon returning, to contribute as a leader in their community. This is not a simple study abroad experience.

**VIH Program’s Application Process Timeline & Core Components:**

* Applicants select one or more of the three major programming areas of the Heinz Endowments (Creativity, Learning, and Sustainability). The Heinz Programming Area will serve as a common theme linking the student’s academic interests, goals for thier international experience, their CEE, and their career goals.
* Applicants complete and turn in their applications (and Student Aid Report if applicable).
* Scholarship committees at each of the VIH institutions review applications, interview applicants and select three candidates and up to two alternates and submit all information to the VIH Director at the University of Pittsburgh.
* Scholars work with their Campus Coordinators for up to two weeks to select a program that meets their academic goals and fits within their budget.
* Scholars sign a Letter of Agreement and submit it to their Campus Coordinators.
* Scholars have the option to participate in a peer-to-peer mentoring program and/or are mentored by their Campus Coordinators.
* Scholars will attend the first of two mandatory retreats during the spring semester prior to their international experience.
* The international experience of no less than 28 days for academic credit takes place in the summer after the spring retreat.
* Scholars submit a detailed Experience Report to their Campus Coordinators by September 1.
* Scholars attend the second of two mandatory retreats during the fall semester following their international experience.
* Scholars complete a CEE by January 30 of the year following their international experience. Scholars must submit via email a CEE Approval Form and CEE Report to both their Campus Coordinators and to the Director. They must also email the Director a Feedback Sheet and complete a 15 minute online survey by September 1in order for their final $1,000 to be released.

**Eligibility Requirements:**

* Undergraduate woman of sophomore or junior status at one of the VIH institutions
* U.S. citizen
* Full-time student status for no less than 2 terms (Baccalaureate degree in progress)
* QPA of not less than 3.0 at the time of application and throughout the program
* Will return to the university as a full-time student the fall semester following the international experience
* Is available to attend all activities during two mandatory weekend retreats: one during the spring term prior to studying abroad and one during the fall term following the international experience
* Commit to meeting all requirements of the VIH Program, including, but not limited to: a) submitting an Experience Report; b) completing a CEE and submitting a CEE Report; c) completing all assignments for the two retreats; d) assisting with the marketing of the VIH Program for no less than 12 hours
* International experience must take place in one country (no multi-country experiences)
* International experience must be accredited and last for at least 28 days
* Preference is given to women who fall within at least one of the five indicators of diversity as designated by the Heinz Endowments: racial/ ethnic minority, LGBTQIA+, registration with their institution’s disability office, demonstrable financial need (defined as being Pell Grant eligible), and major in a STEM field.
* Preference is given to women who study in Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Nordic States, or Oceania.

The Heinz Endowments stipulate that women admitted to the VIH Program at each of the VIH institutions cannot have any international experience for any reason (study or personal travel) prior to the international experience funded by the VIH Program. The only exceptions to this are the Arcadia freshman ‘Preview Program’ and travel to Canada.

**DIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS**

It is preferred that at least one of the three women admitted to the VIH Program at each of the institutions must fall within at least one of the five indicators of diversity as designated by the Heinz Endowments:

* Racial / ethnic minority
* LGBTQIA+
* Registration with their institution’s disability office
* Demonstrable financial need as indicated by Pell Grant eligibility
* Major in a STEM field

**ADDITIONAL NEED-BASED AID SCHOLARSHIP**

The Heinz Endowments want to ensure that any student, regardless of income, has the financial means to participate in an international experience of their choosing. Additional funding may be made available on a case-by-case basis, up to covering 100 percent of the experience abroad. Students who demonstrate financial need – defined as being Pell Grant eligible– must submit the following two documents along with their application by the stated application deadline in order to be considered for a supplemental scholarship:

* Student Aid Report (SAR)
* The financial aid award letter from their college or university

The Campus Coordinator will have the financial information available at the selection committee meeting, but will not pass out copies of these documents to all committee members. In the event that a student who is Pell Grant eligible is selected as one of the three VIH awardees, the Campus Coordinator at the student’s home institution will fax or email a scanned copy of the student’s application, including their two supplemental financial documents, to the Director of the VIH Program. A Centralized Committee will review all of the applications of VIH scholars who are Pell Grant eligible to determine the amount of additional funding that each awardee will receive.

**ADDITIONAL REGIONAL DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP**

All students who study in Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Nordic States, or Oceania will receive an automatic scholarship of $1,000. The Heinz Endowments promotes international experiences in less-travelled destinations.