



CRITICAL LANGUAGE SCHOLARSHIP

Non-Competitive Eligibility for Federal Employment

Under Executive Order 13750, alumni of the Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Program (along with the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program and the Fulbright U.S. Student Program) receive non-competitive eligibility (NCE) for federal employment for up to three years following the end of the program. This status grants you special access to job opportunities in the federal government.

WHAT IS NON-COMPETITIVE ELIGIBILITY?

Non-Competitive Eligibility, or NCE, allows U.S. federal government agencies to hire eligible exchange program alumni outside the formal competitive job announcement process. With NCE, you can compete for certain federal employment jobs that are open only to federal employees and/or to those with NCE status. In short, CLS Program alumni can receive a job offer with as little as an open position, a resume that reflects its requirements, and your NCE certificate.

WHERE DOES NCE STATUS APPLY?

NCE status applies to Civil Service positions within the federal government—non-elected and non-military. This includes positions in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the federal government. NCE status does not apply to the Foreign Service, which has a different hiring process. Go to www.careers.state.gov/career-paths/worldwide-foreign-service for more information.

DOES APPLYING THROUGH NCE GUARANTEE FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT?

No. You must meet qualifications, standards, and additional requirements for the job, such as a background investigation. The decision to hire eligible candidates is at the discretion of the hiring agency.

HOW LONG DOES MY NCE STATUS APPLY?

CLS alumni have NCE status for 12 months following the end of their program. Hiring managers may honor this status for up to 36 months if the candidate has served in the military, is still enrolled in a U.S. college or university, or has participated in other activities, that in the view of the appointing authority, warrants this extension.

HOW DO I GET MY CERTIFICATION OF COMPLETION?

American Councils, which administers the CLS Program, provides alumni with an NCE certificate from the U.S. Department of State upon successful completion of the program as outlined in terms and conditions.

HOW DO I FIND JOBS I AM ELIGIBLE FOR UNDER NCE?

Go to www.usajobs.gov. When you search for jobs, look for the asterisk in a gray circle * which indicates the “Special authorities” hiring path. **Tip:** Entry-level jobs are often grade GS-11 and below. When you apply for a position, you can upload your NCE certificate to your application.

HOW DO I GET IN TOUCH?

Contact the CLS Program by email or phone (our contact information can be found below).



CLS is a program of the U.S. Department of State with funding provided by the U.S. Government and supported in its implementation by American Councils for International Education.

www.clscholarship.org

email: cls@americancouncils.org
phone: 202.833.7522