

## **The Formal Application Process**

Once applicants are approved for the COST Program, the Office of Clinical Experiences will send notification of approval and include a link to complete the Formal Application.

COST participants should note that the formal application will require the following:

- proof of a passport
- a fee (paid with a credit or debit card)
- three (3) letters of recommendation
- two (2) essays

It is highly recommended that those interested in the COST Program start requesting the letters of recommendation for the formal application immediately as it may take several weeks to receive them. It is also highly recommended that you begin working on the two essays as soon as possible. Those interested in the COST Program will not be able to proceed with the Formal Application (and participate in COST) without these documents completed.

Letters of Recommendation: The three letters of recommendation should be from the following:

1. College of Education faculty member
2. P-12 Classroom Teacher
3. University of Alabama supervisor, current or former employer, or any individual who can attest to your character, professionalism & dependability

Essays: The two essays should be completed as outlined below. Note that Essay II is to be submitted to the Office of Clinical Experiences as part of the pre-application screening.

### **Essay I**

Write a brief essay (1-2 pages) describing your experiences working with children in school-based settings. These experiences can include volunteer work, community or church related work, and experiences related to University coursework. Indicate the amount of time you worked with each age group and in which types of activities you participated. Be as specific as possible.

### **Essay II (submitted with the pre-application)**

Write a brief essay (2-3 pages) describing the events and experiences that led you to seek a placement through the COST program. You may wish to include a

description of your family, honors received, memberships in organizations, work, and travel experiences.

Briefly describe your philosophy of education and the personal goals you hope to achieve through this experience. Highlight any special area of interest that relates to your student teaching placement. You should also explain why you are interested in student teaching through COST, and describe specific ways the overseas student teaching experience will contribute to your personal and professional development.

Hosts are particularly interested in the type of cross-cultural and teaching experiences you have had. DO NOT include a preference for a particular location in your essay since it may be sent to more than one site. This essay may be shared with a prospective host family.

**NOTE:**

**When writing your essays, you'll need to keep in mind who your audience and readers are. For example, if referring to RISE or CrossingPoints, you'll need to provide a description of the school (i.e. RISE and CrossingPoints are special needs schools; one works with children who are infants to 5 years old and the other works with adults as a transition program).**

Those interested in the COST program should familiarize themselves with the COST website at <https://www.gvsu.edu/cost/>. The section "Before You Go" contains useful information such as:

- Pre-Departure Guide
- Application Process
- Know Your Destination
- Passport, Visa, Flights
- \* Finances

\* Note that the Supervision & Placement Fee for the College of Education's COST Program is \$1,800 placement fee.

On the COST program website, go to the section titled "Programs" to view placement site options, requirements based on certification, and anticipated expenses for each country. As part of the Formal Application, COST Participants will select at least four different countries they would be willing to complete their COST Placement in.