

AddisCoder 2026 College Resources ([Presentation Slides](#))

**These are not comprehensive lists. Please refer to the college websites for latest updates.*

1. List of US Private Research Universities that meet full financial need

Northeast • Brown University • Cornell University • Columbia University • Dartmouth College • Harvard University • Johns Hopkins University • MIT (STEM-focus) • Princeton University • University of Pennsylvania • Yale University	West • CalTech (STEM-focus) • Stanford University Midwest • Northwestern University • University of Chicago • Washington University in St. Louis South • Rice University • Vanderbilt University
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2. List of US Liberal Arts Colleges that meet full financial need

Northeast • Amherst College • Bates College • Bowdoin College • Colby College • Colgate University • Hamilton College • Haverford College • Middlebury College • Swarthmore College • Wesleyan University • Williams College • Vassar College	West • Claremont McKenna College • Harvey Mudd College (STEM-focus) • Pomona College Midwest • Grinnell College South • Davidson College Women's Colleges • Barnard College • Bryn Mawr College • Wellesley College
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3. List of Korean universities that offer full scholarships for internationals

Universities in Seoul • Yonsei University - Underwood International College (https://uic.yonsei.ac.kr/main/admission.php?mid=m04_03_02) • Ewha Woman's University (Women's) (https://www.ewha.ac.kr/ewhaen/bachelor/scholarship-iss.do) • Sungkyunkwan University (https://admission-global.skku.edu/eng/grad/scholarship_undergrad.html)	Universities in Other Cities • KAIST (STEM-focus, https://admission.kaist.ac.kr/intl-undergraduate/application/ApplicationGuide/guide) • POSTECH (STEM-focus, https://www.postech.ac.kr/eng/admission-a-id/scholarship_information.do)
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Other top universities, e.g. Seoul National University and Korea University ("SKY") offer scholarships through the **Global Korea Scholarship (GKS) Program**.

More Resources (edited from AddisCoder 2025)

1. United World Colleges (international high schools)

- UWC is a network of international schools that brings together students from diverse backgrounds: <https://www.uwc.org/>. Each school has students from 70+ countries. There are 17+ schools and one of them is in Africa: <https://www.uwc.org/waterford-kamhlaba-uwc-of-southern-africa>.
- **Eligibility:** You can apply if you are 10th or 11th grade
 - Each country makes its own selection of students. Visit UWC Ethiopia's website for more information: <https://www.et.uwc.org/>. They care about grades, leadership, social responsibility, how well you can represent your country, international understanding, etc.
- **Scholarships:** Many UWC schools offer full or partial scholarships.
- **University Opportunities:** Gives an International Baccalaureate (IB) education; Strong university counseling and networking increase chances for admission to top universities.

2. Universities in Europe

Studying in Europe is cheaper than studying in the US (partly because they don't cover room and food, but tuition is also cheaper). The problem with Europe is that sometimes they can require B2 level French or German-you should check the language requirements carefully! The application itself is generally easier than the US: they usually focus on grades and standardized test scores.

- **Switzerland:** ETH Zurich (strong engineering - education in English), EPFL (good school)
- **United Kingdom:** World class education in English with scholarships which offer 100% aid: Oxford (Reach Oxford Scholarship) UCL (UCL Global Undergraduate Scholarship). Warwick (Warwick Undergraduate Global Excellence Scholarship)
- **Netherlands:** TU Delft (strong engineering - education in English), University of Eindhoven (strong engineering - education in English), Amsterdam University College (liberal arts education - perfect if you have diverse interests)
- **France:** Ecole Polytechnique (3 tracks: Math + Econ/Physics/CS; education in English)
- **Italy:** Bocconi University (strong economics school)
 - **Italy** is a good alternative to study medicine: Unlike the US, you can enter medical school directly after high school. Education is in English! They have their own entrance exam, but it is not too difficult, and the programs are affordable. You get WHO-recognized degrees in a 6-year combined program. If you want to study medicine, this could be a good option!
- **Germany:** Has good universities free of charge, but they may require German
- **Czech Republic:** Also has good universities that give education in English + affordable

3. Universities in Canada

- University of Waterloo (a strong computer science program!), University of British Columbia
- University of Toronto offers financial support for students impacted by conflict (students from Tigray or Gambella could consider this!): <https://www.registrar.utoronto.ca/financial-aid-awards/awards-scholarships/students-impacted-by-conflict-or-war>

4. Universities in East Asia (international student friendly and scholarships)

- KAIST (Korea), National University of Singapore (Singapore), HKUST (Hong Kong)

5. Universities in the US

- Helpful free course by top US schools on admissions: <https://www.coursera.org/learn/study-in-usa>
- In US college admissions, students are often expected to show **well-roundedness** and a **spike**.
 - **Well-roundedness** means being strong across academics, extracurriculars, sports, arts, and community service, showing balance and adaptability.
 - A **spike** is a standout talent or achievement in one area, like winning a national math competition or excelling in music.

1) Standardized test scores

- **TOEFL/IELTS/Duolingo:** 100+ TOEFL usually expected; some schools also accept IELTS, Duolingo English Test, PTE Academic, etc.
- **SAT:** U.S. admissions test (math + English). Time management in English sections is key.
- **ACT:** U.S. test (English, math, reading, science). Often easier for international students (less English focus).
- **AP (Advanced Placement):** U.S. high school subject exams where you can earn college credit while in high school (e.g., Econ, Biology). Shows U.S.-style academic strength. You can take AP exams even if your school doesn't offer AP classes.
- **IB (International Baccalaureate):** International diploma program, broader global recognition. You can register for IB exams independently, even without an IB school.
- **Test-Optional:** Most universities are now test-optional, but strong scores help, especially if you haven't done AP or IB.
- **Without AP/IB:** Use SAT or AP subject tests to prove academic level (e.g., SAT math/science for engineering; AP offers subjects from World History to Economics).

2) Essays

- Every year, Johns Hopkins University publishes the common app essays they liked. There are hundreds of them! I think it is helpful to read them to understand what is expected, but your essay should be uniquely YOU, so don't try to make the content similar:
<https://apply.jhu.edu/college-planning-guide/essays-that-worked/>

3) Letters of recommendation

- Important, but sometimes your teachers might not be good at writing them! Give them as much information as you can! You can even ask them to highlight a specific aspect of your application.
- MIT has a website on how to write good letters of recommendation - make sure your teachers read this! <https://mitadmissions.org/apply/parents-educators/writingrecs/>
- Your recommendations can come from academic teachers but also people related to your extracurricular activities (eg, your football coach, the manager of the company you interned at, the head of the NGO you volunteered for, or a professor in a summer school you attended)

4) Financial aid

- Prioritize schools that offer full financial aid – well-funded private universities (private research universities, liberal arts colleges). Note that many state schools like UCs: UC Berkeley, UC Santa Cruz... or ... State University will have limited scholarships to internationals.
- Many US universities have international campuses, e.g. **Northwestern University in Qatar, New York University Abu Dhabi**, that are international student-friendly and give financial aid!

5) Reaching out to admission officers

- You can email admission officers to ask for **FEE WAIVERS** for college applications!
- Don't be shy! You can also reach out to the admission office to learn more about specific scholarships or anything else the college offers (such as the study abroad programs, specific majors, SAT requirements, etc.): <https://admissionsight.com/how-to-email-admissions-office/>
- Ask about TOEFL, SAT requirements, and see if you can waive them due to financial or other hardships (eg, SAT is not offered in your country, region, and you have to take a flight to take it, which in itself is going to cost you a lot.) For example, they may let you take an online Duolingo test instead of the TOEFL due to your specific circumstance (Again, don't be shy!)

6) Extracurriculars activities

a. Summer schools at top colleges: There are some summer programs that are very prestigious and also give financial aid!! Applying to summer schools is also a great practice for applying to colleges later on. If you do participate in one, get a recommendation letter from the professor.

- **MIT RSI (Research Science Institute):** They accept two people (1 girl + 1 boy) from every country - competitive, but allows you to do university-level research.
- **SuMAC (Stanford University Mathematics Camp):** perfect if you want to study math! (gives financial aid to international students) For the application, you have to solve hard math questions (you don't have a time limit, no need to solve all the questions, but attempt them! They want to see how you think and your approach)
- **SSP (Summer Science Program):** gives financial aid to international students, has special programs in Astrophysics, Bacterial Genomics, Biochemistry, Synthetic Chemistry, Cell Biology,
<https://ssp.org/getting-started/>
- **YYGS (Yale Young Global Scholars):** very international student-friendly!!! Leadership program:
<https://globalscholars.yale.edu/>
 - You might have a better chance in YYAS (Yale Young African Scholars Program):
<https://africanscholars.yale.edu/>
- **PROMYS** (both US and UK branches): great math program, similar to SuMAC: <https://promys.org/>
- (An option in Europe) International science camp in Germany:
<https://xlab-goettingen.de/ueber-uns/kurse-und-camps/international-science-camp>
- **More:** <https://blog.collegevine.com/most-prestigious-summer-programs-for-high-school-students>

b. (Online) Programs and competitions

- Stanford Code in Place: online coding program
- AI4ALL Programs (AI courses for girls): programs in various colleges like Princeton, etc.
- Technovation Girls (6 months entrepreneurship challenge for girls)
- Global Social Leaders (a competition for top community service projects around the world addressing UN Sustainable Development Goals)
- If you like social sciences, try to join MUN (Model United Nations) or Debate competitions!
- If you like engineering/entrepreneurship, try to join Hackathons.
- There are a lot of online coding competitions!

c. (Online) International math and science competitions

- The most popular in the US are AMC or AIMEs – I am not sure if you are eligible but try.
- You can encourage your school to take part University of Waterloo's Math Competitions (e.g. Cayley Math Contest, Euclid Math Contest, etc., depending on your level)
 - They sent a certificate of achievement if you are in the top 10%.
- URFODU organizes international math and science competitions online
 - International Basic Sciences Knowledge Contest: <https://urfodu.ru/ww/en/>
- Math Kangaroo: <https://mathkangaroo.org/mks/> (Can participate online as well!)

d. Science and technology project competitions

- Join regional, national, and international (& TEAM-based) competitions.
- You can start a chapter/club in your school.
- For robotics, there are FIRST Tech Challenge and FIRST Robotics Challenge competitions:
<https://www.firstinspires.org/robotics/ftc>
- If you are into creativity and design, you can try participating in Destination Imagination:
<https://www.destinationimagination.org/>
 - Another engineering challenge: <https://tsaweb.org/teams>

e. Other ideas

- Try reaching out to professors and PhD students to do research with them!
- If you know coding, you could try interning at a company in Addis or abroad!