



## Al Ghurair STEM Scholars Program Application- Video Essay Tips

An important part of your application to the STEM Scholars Program is an essay that must be answered through a 1 minute video. The video essay question provides you with an additional opportunity to demonstrate, more interactively, what you will bring to our vibrant AGFE community. We understand that speaking to a camera is unfamiliar and can be intimidating. But it is also an opportunity to stand out against thousands of other applicants. Here, the team would like to offer some tips that may help you through the process.

### STEP 1: PREPARATION

The first step in any successful task is to plan ahead. Don't let your nervousness convince you to avoid or procrastinate the work. Start by splitting the process into pieces and tackling them one at a time.

#### **Start early**

Creating a solid video can be tricky and time consuming. Like any other part of your application, you should be thinking of ideas and preparing before the application is due, planning and practicing ahead of time. You may have to record your video several times before you are completely convinced with the outcome, so the earlier you start preparing, the better.

#### **Brainstorm**

Begin thinking of a short but powerful response that fits with the theme of the question and will really connect with the person watching your video. Think about your strengths and what impression you want to set. Brainstorm creative ways to start your video; if you can captivate your audience within the first few seconds, you're well on your way to a winning entry. Start by writing down all ideas that come to mind in a free flow style, then go through your list and eliminate ideas until you have the one that fits best. Next, build a script around the points you plan to address.

#### **Make sure you are addressing the question**

Do not lose sight of the question being asked to you while planning the video. Re-visit the question several times in the process to make sure you are actually answering what is asked. The question itself is designed to bring to life the person we have learned about on paper.

#### **Practice makes perfect**

Practice saying what you are planning to say in your video in front of someone else for their feedback. This will enable you to become more confident of the content and will also help in analyzing any mistakes that you may be making. Make sure to time yourself while you practice, and do not feel obliged to memorize the content word-by-word.



### **Time limit**

After planning your response and while practicing, test and see how long the response is taking. Make sure you are not going over the 1 minute time limit. If you are, try to re-visit your script and omit some points to help you keep it concise. We know that it is possible to go over by a couple of seconds, but we highly recommend that you stick to the time limit as it is part of the video assessment.

### **Ensure video quality at no cost**

We are not expecting students to submit professional videos; all submissions can be created at no cost to you. However, make sure to test your video quality and audio during the preparation step. Most smartphones or tablets can produce videos of suitable quality. You can take a selfie video from your phone or get a friend/family member to record you, making sure the video subject (you!) and content is clear to viewers.

## **STEP 2: RECORDING**

After completing the preparatory work, it is now time to get to business. Recording your video might take more than one session. Keep the below tips in mind, and don't let the camera make you anxious. This is your chance to show us the scholar behind the application.

### **Look your best**

Think of this as an interview- you want to make a good first impression and present yourself in an appropriate and professional manner. Wear something that is clean and appropriate. It is not necessary to dress formally, but if you would like to do so, go for it. Just make sure that you are comfortable, but also look presentable.

### **Location, location, location!**

You can record your video wherever you feel comfortable, such as a classroom, office, or home. Just make sure you choose a location where you have no distractions and there is no loud background noise, so your voice is audible. You can record the video outdoors as long as the background noise is not too loud. Make sure there is enough light in the location as well.

### **Language**

Make sure your video response is recorded fully in **English** and not any other language.

### **Let your personality shine through**

Applicant videos give the Foundation a sense of your personality and allow us to get to know you in a more personal way. So don't forget to be yourself while speaking! We are not looking for the perfect script read out by a student on camera. We are looking to learn something new about the applicant to this program. It is important to practice your main ideas, but when you record your answer, do your best to speak authentically and avoid reading notes.



### **Upload your video to maintain privacy but allow us access**

Upload the video to an easily accessible website, such as YouTube or Vimeo, then provide the video URL in the application. It is the applicant's responsibility to correctly configure the security and access settings for the video. For example with YouTube, we suggest using the "Unlisted Video" setting during your upload so that only individuals who have the URL can view it (it cannot be found by anyone searching the YouTube website or by search engines). Test the URL with a trusted peer or family member to make sure it works from another computer. If you do submit your application and find an issue with your video privacy or connection settings, you may be able to adjust these on the video while keeping the same URL. We are unable to watch videos in any other format and do not accept videos sent by email or through the mail.

### **SAMPLES**

To provide some inspiration and help you make progress on your videos, here are a few links to videos that really stood out among applicants to the program. Watch them for reference, but make sure your video reflects your unique ideas and style!

1. Ahmed from Egypt: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6ISxrV\\_NKg&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6ISxrV_NKg&feature=youtu.be)
2. Zeina from Syria: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-TB9RE3Rwqk&feature=youtu.be>
3. Yasser from Morocco: <https://youtu.be/3oeBrcBjV7A>

***Good luck with your essays!***