

Completing Scholarship Applications

Spending the time to create a complete application takes time and attention. Some simple steps might help set you apart from others and have you be a winner! Good Luck!

A Few tips:

- Before you fill out the application, make a complete blank copies of the form (*Just in case you make a mistake*).
- Scholarship applications should be a product of your *best* work.
- A huge part of applying for scholarships is proving that you, as the applicant, can follow directions precisely. If it says, ‘please print’; do so. If the application asks for a signature; do that too.
- Neatness will count if the reader cannot read your application.
- Each scholarship fund has its own guidelines. Before applying, be certain that you meet all the necessary qualifications such as academic standing, specified financial situation, and personal background. Explain how you meet them.
- If you want to be taken seriously, consider getting a generic email address rather than a cutesy one like “jellybean10” Consider setting up a separate email account for college and scholarship information.
- Make a copy of your ENTIRE application and keep it in a folder. That way, if your submission is lost, you can easily and quickly send another copy.
- Put your name on all of the materials; photo, every page of the essay, recommendations, etc. If part of your application is misplaced, there will be no confusion as to what belongs to which applicant.
- **PROOF READ!**

Transcripts

- If grantor is asking for sealed transcripts:, be sure there is a signature or stamp across the envelope seal.
- If they accept unofficial transcripts, then place them open as a copy.
- Obtain more copies of transcripts than you need today, you may need plenty as scholarship season progresses.

Cover Letter and other addendums

- Do not include a cover letter if the application forbids it.
- Be sure to include your contact information on your cover letter and sign it
- Show appreciation to group or organization for donating funds to potential students, like you. Thank them for opportunity to apply.
- Provide evidence that you have made something good happen; that’s leadership. If you have made a difference—in whatever way—share it.
- Spell out abbreviations that may not be generally recognized.
- Keep it brief.

Resume

- Always include a resume, *unless the grantor specifically states they do not want any extra papers*.
- Your resume should include: test scores, hobbies, volunteer experiences, work experience, leadership roles, club and extracurricular involvement, honors and awards.

Resume(continued)

- As the objective statement to your resume, state: “To be accepted to an accredited four- year university with scholarship funding.”
- Never think that any accomplishment or activity is too insignificant to be mentioned. If you’re proud of it, passionate about it, or think there is something even slightly interesting or unique about it, include it! Now is not the time to sell yourself short!
- Try to keep it to one side unless you can fill an entire page two.
- Consider scanning a picture of yourself onto your resume.

Letter of Recommendation

- When you ask a teacher or community member to write a letter for you, show them your appreciation. Ask them in writing. Include in your brief, typed note when you need the letter by and how you will retrieve the letter from them, or if they mail it directly. Provide them with background information about yourself (resume).
- Provide everything they may need including stamped envelopes. Send your letter writer a thank you, or even a candy bar!
- If you use the letter of recommendation form provided by the school; copy the second page, or type it, and save it so you do not have to duplicate your efforts.
- Consider getting extra signed copies addressed to: “To whom it may concern” for your next round of applications.

Essay

- Be sure to answer the questions
- Type your name in the upper right hand corner
- Make connections between areas of study, career goals, interests, and personal philosophies.
- If you start to feel like your bragging about yourself too much, don’t worry about it. In a sense, that’s what you are trying to do. You’re hoping to impress the scholarship committee with your accomplishments.
- Don’t just describe what you have accomplished; share how you felt when making those achievements.

Submitting your application:

- Do not wait until the last moment – life happens!
- Present your application flat, not folded, in a manila envelope with your return address in the upper left corner (tip: make a sheet or two of personalized address labels with your name and address on them)
- Place the application form first, and then attach your supporting documents.
- Consider taking the application to the post office and paying for proof of delivery OR... include a postage paid postcard with your address on it. Write on the backside:
“Please do me a favor by mailing this back to me when you have received my scholarship application.” Use the same previously made return address label for addressing the postcards.

Interview

- Dress appropriately; know your answers to common questions. Research the group you are interviewing with and show your interest in their mission. Make yourself *stand out*. Arrive early and don’t forget to familiarize yourself with the directions to your destination. Send a thank you note promptly afterwards (*you never know how that can benefit you later!*)