

A Guide to Applying for a Scholarship Through the Oklahoma City Community Foundation

We have created this guide to help you navigate the scholarship application process. This guide has five sections:

- **Definitions** explains the meaning of words and terms associated with scholarships and post-secondary education.
- **Eligibility Requirements** answers most frequently asked questions about the many scholarships we offer and their requirements.
- **The Application Process** provides an overview of the online application process.
- **Application Review** explains the process once you have submitted an application.
- **Notification and Awards** answers questions about how recipients are notified and what a scholarship can and cannot fund.

Definitions

Accredited – An accredited school is a college or university (post-secondary school) that is recognized by an accrediting agency as conforming to a set of quality educational standards. The U.S. Department of Education recognizes several accrediting agencies and schools not accredited by one of these agencies cannot offer federal financial aid.

Not-for-profit – A not-for-profit school does not exist for the purpose of making a profit.

For-profit (proprietary) – A school that is owned, managed and run as a profit-making organization.

Public school – a school supported by taxes and operated by a local government.

Private school – a school that is established, conducted and primarily supported by a nongovernmental agency; private schools are considered “not-for-profit” schools.

Central Oklahoma Guidance Counselor Network – 51 high schools in central Oklahoma/the Oklahoma City metro area. The Central Oklahoma Guidance Counselor Network is a component of the Oklahoma City Community Foundation’s Trustee Scholarship Initiative. Participating high schools include:

ASTEC Charter School	Harding Charter Preparatory School	Oklahoma Centennial High School
Bethany High School	Harding Fine Arts Center	Oklahoma Christian Academy
Capitol Hill High School	Harrah High School	Oklahoma Christian School
Carl Albert High School	Heritage Hall	Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics
Casady School	Jones High School	Piedmont High School
Choctaw High School	Luther High School	Putnam City High School
Christian Heritage Academy	John Marshall High School	Putnam City North High School
Classen School of Advanced Studies	Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School	Putnam City West High School
Crooked Oak High School	Midwest City High School	Santa Fe South High School
Deer Creek High School	Millwood High School	Southeast High School
Del City High School	Moore High School	Southmoore High School
Douglass High School	Mount St. Mary Catholic High School	Star Spencer High School
Edmond Memorial High School	Mustang High School	U.S. Grant High School
Edmond North High School	Norman High School	Western Heights High School
Edmond Santa Fe High School	Norman North High School	Westmoore High School
El Reno High School	Northeast Academy for Health Sciences & Engineering	Yukon High School
Emerson Alternative High School		
Guthrie High School	Northwest Classen High School	

General Application – The General Application should be thought of like a Student Profile. Applicants complete a General Application before applying to specific scholarship opportunities. Submitting a General Application does not mean that an applicant has applied for any scholarships.

Opportunity – refers to an individual scholarship.

Unweighted GPA – Unweighted Grade Point Average (GPA) is the earned GPA on a 4.0 scale.

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) – This form must be filled out if you wish to apply for financial aid from the U.S. federal government, including both federal loans and grants. All colleges require this form. The FAFSA can be completed online: <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>. The FAFSA is used by the Oklahoma City Community Foundation scholarship staff to determine an applicant's EFC (Estimated Family Contribution) and financial need for some, not all, scholarship opportunities.

Form 1040 - IRS Form 1040 requires reporting of certain types of income, which are then added together to constitute what is referred to as "gross income." From the gross income figure, certain deductions are then taken to arrive at an "adjusted gross income." Figures from the first two pages of the 1040 are used by the Oklahoma City Community Foundation scholarship staff to determine an applicant's EFC (Estimated Family Contribution) and financial need for some, not all, scholarship opportunities.

Eligibility Requirements

Do all scholarships have the same eligibility requirements?

No. Each scholarship has specific eligibility requirements that were defined by the donor when the scholarship was established. Eligibility requirements are stated for each individual scholarship, so be sure to read the requirements carefully.

Do I have to attend an Oklahoma college?

No, you may attend academically accredited, not-for-profit institutions or technical/trade schools in the United States unless otherwise specified in a specific scholarship description.

Can I apply for a scholarship if I don't know where I'll be going to school?

Yes. If you don't know which school you're going to attend, you can still apply for most Oklahoma City Community Foundation scholarships. You are encouraged to list your first-choice and second-choice schools on your General Application/Student Profile .

I don't have the best grades. Can I still be considered for a scholarship?

Yes. Some of the scholarships take grades into consideration, but other scholarships emphasize alternate areas of performance such as leadership, community service and other extra-curricular activities. Good grades are not always the only requirement for scholarship support.

I'm planning to go to trade school, not college. Can I still apply for a scholarship?

Yes. Several scholarships are for students planning to attend a technical school, trade school, or participate in an apprenticeship. Please complete the General Application/Student Profile and review the eligibility requirements under Recommended Opportunities.

I don't live in Oklahoma. Can I apply for an Oklahoma City Community Foundation scholarship?

No, in most cases Oklahoma City Community Foundation scholarships are open to Oklahoma residents only. The few exceptions would be: (1) an Oklahoma resident attending high school outside of Oklahoma, or (2) an applicant from Seward County in Kansas applying for the Hutch's Scholarship Award.

I haven't decided what my major is? Should I leave it blank?

No, please provide at least one subject area that you might consider majoring in.

The Application Process

Where can I find out what scholarships are available through the Oklahoma City Community Foundation?

A complete list of scholarships is available on the Oklahoma City Community Foundation's Scholarship Directory [here](http://occf.org/scholarshipdirectory.html): (link to <http://occf.org/scholarshipdirectory.html>)

How do I apply for a scholarship?

Detailed instructions regarding the application process can be found online: <http://occf.org/scholarships>.

How much does it cost to apply?

There is no charge to apply for an Oklahoma City Community Foundation scholarship(s).

Is there just one application to fill out?

No. Each scholarship has its own, unique application. There is one General Application/Student Profile that collects the basic information for each applicant; however, applicants must apply for each scholarship separately.

How long does it take to complete a scholarship application?

It varies depending on the scholarship. The General Application may take only 10-15 minutes to complete if an applicant has collected the requested documents in advance. For each individual scholarship, it may take 30 minutes or a few hours to complete the application, write any required short answers/essays, and gather other required materials such as letters of recommendation.

Can I give you a printout of my transcript from my school's website?

No. Your transcript must come directly from your school. With our online application process, you are required to submit the name and professional email address of a school official who can electronically submit an official transcript on your behalf. If you're in high school, ask your guidance counselor about sending copies of your transcript. If you're a college student, contact the registrar's office. At some schools it can take several days/weeks to process your transcript request, so be sure to make that request well in advance of the scholarship deadline.

Can I fax or email my application?

No. Scholarship applications must be submitted online at www.occf.academicworks.com.

Can I send in part of my application after a scholarship's deadline has passed?

No. Requested materials for any individual scholarship should be submitted together. When you are completing an application online, you can save and return to a scholarship opportunity prior to submitting a completed application online, just be mindful of each scholarship's application deadline. If you are having any problems uploading requested documents, contact Megan Hornbeek at m.hornbeek@occf.org or 405-606-2917.

Do I have to include a photo?

Including a photo on the General Application/Student Profile is not required; however, several individual scholarship opportunities do require a photo. If an applicant sees the message below when applying for a scholarship and has not included a photo on the General Application, he/she needs to return to the General Application/Student Profile and add a picture:

Did you submit a picture of yourself when you completed the General Application? (NOTE: If you answered "no," please know that a picture is required for this scholarship, and to be eligible for this scholarship you need to return to the General Application/Student Profile section and attach an appropriate picture/head shot.)

When attaching photos, applicants are asked to include a head shot style picture, no "selfies" please.

Can I apply for more than one scholarship?

Yes. You can apply for as many scholarships as you are eligible for but please carefully read the eligibility requirements of each scholarship that you're applying for.

What's the deadline for applying?

Each scholarship has its own application deadline. The deadlines are noted on the website and on the application. Online applications and all required documents must be electronically submitted by the given date.

Can I get an extension if I need one?

No. Because we receive so many applications, we are unable to extend the deadline. Applications sent after the deadline are considered late and will not be reviewed.

Application Review

Who makes the award decisions?

Each scholarship has its own committee of volunteers who read and evaluate each application. Some scholarship committees exist at the high school level, some are at specific colleges and other selection committees are Oklahoma City Community Foundation volunteers. Each selection committee makes their decisions based on the fund's guidelines and donor intent in compliance with IRS guidelines.

Are scholarships awarded on the basis of merit or financial need?

It depends. Some scholarships are merit based, some scholarships are based on financial need and some are a combination of both. Scholarship reviewers make their selections based on a compilation of various criteria, including but not limited to: leadership potential,

academic performance, work experience and commitment to school and community, as well as financial need and any other fund-specific requirements.

How does the Oklahoma City Community Foundation define financial need?

Financial need is not a factor for every Oklahoma City Community Foundation scholarship.

When financial need is a factor we use one of two documents to evaluate the need: (1) the FAFSA - Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or (2) the first two pages of your household's 1040 tax form. Using either document, the Oklahoma City Community Foundation scholarship staff will calculate the applicant's EFC (Estimated Family Contribution) to determine financial need. The EFC is the amount of money you and your family can contribute to paying for your education. It is determined by analysis of the FAFSA and/or entering information from the 1040 into an EFC calculator.

Notification and Awards

When will I find out if I've been awarded a scholarship and will you let me know if I have not?

Applicants are notified in writing if they are selected to receive a scholarship award. All applicants can login to AcademicWorks site (www.occf.academicworks.com) to check on the status of an application. A status of "not qualified" or "declined" indicates that an applicant was not selected for an award. Because of the rolling scholarship deadlines, we encourage applicants to check the website regularly for status updates.

What happens if I am selected as a scholarship recipient?

Scholarship recipients will receive an official letter by mail, as well as an instruction sheet regarding how to claim a scholarship. These mailed documents will be sent to the address that was provided by the applicant on the General Application/Student Profile. Award recipients should be on the lookout for these documents to arrive. Read them and respond in a timely manner.

Do I need to pay scholarship money back?

No. Scholarships are charitable grants that do not need to be paid back, provided they are used for the purpose stated in the scholarship award.

What expenses can the scholarship pay?

Scholarship awards may go to the payment of tuition, fees and books. Any exceptions (i.e.: room and board, etc.) are noted in the award descriptions.

How large are scholarship awards?

Amounts vary based on individual scholarship funds, the funds available and the number of recipients selected.

Will an Oklahoma City Community Foundation scholarship give me enough money to pay the whole cost of my college education?

Typically, no. Our scholarships are intended to provide partial support; therefore we encourage you to look into other financial aid resources such as federal grants, loans, and work-study awards. Your school will put together a complete financial aid package for you, which may include one or more of these types of support.

Will I receive a check for my scholarship?

No. Scholarship payments are mailed directly to the school's financial aid office.

It's October and I still haven't gotten my scholarship. What's going on?

Please refer back to the "how to claim your scholarship" instruction sheet that was mailed to you. The document is also available on our Oklahoma City Community Foundation Scholarships Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/OCCFscholarships>). It is possible that you need to send in an enrollment verification form and/or transcript.

Award recipients are also strongly encouraged to contact Wanda Minter (w.minter@occf.org, 405-606-2907) with any questions pertaining to a scholarship award distribution.

What happens if I move or change schools after I've been awarded a scholarship?

Award recipients who move should contact the scholarship staff and update their address.

Recipients who have a change of school should also notify the scholarship staff of the change. Certain scholarships have restrictions related to the school that the recipient must attend.

I received a scholarship and I'd like to send a thank-you note. Where should I send my letter?

Please send thank you letters to the Oklahoma City Community Foundation. The mailing address is as follows:
Oklahoma City Community Foundation
P.O. Box 1146
Oklahoma City, OK 73101-1146

If I receive a scholarship one year, will I automatically receive an award for the following year?

Most scholarships are not renewable; however, some scholarships are renewable or allow for reapplication. Review the scholarship description for further information.

I have a question you didn't answer here. What should I do?

Please contact our scholarship staff: scholarships@occf.org