

An Introduction to National Scholarships

What are national scholarships?

National scholarships are highly competitive, prestigious awards that provide support for a wide range of enriching experiences, including study abroad, graduate study (and sometimes undergraduate study also), federal employment, language learning, teaching, research, and public service.

You may have heard of some national scholarships – the Rhodes and Fulbright awards are among the best known – but many college students aren't aware that there is a wide range of prestigious national scholarship programs for freshmen, sophomores, juniors, seniors and recent graduates.

Who can apply for national scholarships?

National scholarships are looking for students (with or without financial need) who are developing strong interests and goals – academic and extracurricular – and who want to take advantage of every constructive opportunity that will help them reach their objectives. Just as each national scholarship offers a different kind of opportunity, each is also looking for a different range of strengths and interests in its applicants. If you develop a strong academic record, are thoughtful about your choices and devote yourself to activities you care about, you may well find one or more scholarships opportunities of interest to you. The National Scholarships Office can help you search for awards that fit your goals well.

The National Scholarships Office focuses on approximately 60 programs offering a wide range of opportunities for students with many different goals and interests.

Visit us online: www.scholarships.umd.edu



The National Scholarships Office at the University of Maryland aims to provide undergraduates with the best possible information, guidance and support as they learn about and apply for national scholarships.

We provide information on our website, through a weekly listserv announcement, through outreach to Maryland's many Schools, Colleges, Programs, and Departments, and through individual advising sessions.

We lead workshops for students applying for particular national scholarships, and we provide both general and personal advice on how to prepare the strongest possible scholarship application.

To make an appointment to discuss national scholarships that might help you attain your goals, contact us through the "Request an Appointment" button on our website's homepage.

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What are the benefits of competing for national scholarships?

Applying for a national scholarship is a challenging experience. While we certainly hope that many of you will learn about, apply for and win national scholarships, we want to emphasize that competing for these awards can be a highly rewarding experience in itself, whether you win or not.

Working closely with our staff, the experience of applying for a national scholarship should help you:

- Clarify your academic, career and personal goals;
- Become more aware of your strengths, interests, and commitments;
- Improve your writing skills and enhance your self-presentation;
- Get a better sense of the most appropriate graduate or professional study paths for you; and
- Gain an experience for learning and personal growth that is not normally possible in the classroom.

The experience of applying for a nationally competitive scholarship can help you reflect on and make well-informed decisions about academic plans, internships, study abroad, service activities, work and graduate or professional study.

How do I find national scholarships that are a good fit for me?

Our website is designed to help you start your search for national scholarships in two different ways.

You can search first by class year, and see what opportunities are available for Freshmen, Sophomores, Juniors, Seniors and Recent Graduates. There is also a page for students who are members of underrepresented minority groups (please note that minority students should also search by class year and scholarship types).

You can also search by scholarship types. Our website distinguishes between scholarships oriented toward study abroad and other international experiences; public service and public policy; science, engineering and math; graduate study in the US or abroad; and teaching opportunities in the US and abroad. You can use these categories to find awards offering the kind of opportunity you are most interested in.

When you've identified one or more opportunities of interest to you, please contact the National Scholarships Office using the "Request an Appointment" button located on our website's homepage. One of our staff members will then make an appointment to meet with you.