



Scholarship Website 'Must Haves'



Every scholarship needs a website.

The scholarship website is the primary platform. Be sure to build it using a responsive design template that looks good on any device. Maximize the marketing potential with these important, and strategic, components.

1. Name of the Scholarship + Award Amount

The basics first -- what is scholarship called, and how much money is it worth?

Applicants will want this information, and so will search engines.

TIP: Be sure to include the scholarship name and monetary value in the copy, not just in a fancy graphic. That way it is useful to humans as well as machine readable. Add this information in the website title and body copy.

2. Origin of the Scholarship

Why does this scholarship exist? Who benefits from it? Who created it, and why?

TIP: Storytelling! Many scholarships have rich stories behind them. Does your scholarship commemorate a person? Place? Ambition or ideal? By explaining the story behind the scholarship you can attract the best suited applicants.

3. An Inspiring Quote

Sometimes, a story is best encapsulated by a quote. Consider adding a relevant quote from your founder, CEO, or scholarship namesake.

Remember to add a brief bit of context to quote for best results. For example:

Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today. - Malcolm X, in his speech at the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) rally, 1964

TIP: Add photo, bio, video, or other media to add richness to the website.

4. Scholarship Eligibility and Deadlines

List scholarship eligibility requirements clearly. Include deadlines and submission materials. Bullet points are effective so applicants can self-select. Example:h

Applicants must be:

18 or older

Bilingual in Polish, German, or French

Resident of the United States or U.S. territories

Must submit 1 piece of audio, video, or new media work

Important dates:

Application Deadline: December 31st, 2020

Application Results Announcement: February 1st, 2021

Scholarship Amount: \$1,500 USD

Detailed applications should provide an overview of the process and materials to gather. Provide an overview before an applicant starts a lengthy submission process. For example:

The Spell Scholarship narrows applicants over a course of three evaluation rounds. Applicants prepare materials listed below. Successful applicants are invited to advance to the next round. To begin, gather the materials listed below labeled "First Round Evaluation".

TIP: Make it easy for applicants to apply directly from the website. Use application and review software that automatically saves work. If the software encourages applicants to return to address unfinished applications, even better.

5. Applicant Questions

Anticipate common questions and direct applicants to answers.

TIP: Address common questions in a searchable FAQ.

6. Scholarship Partners

Who underwrites the scholarship? Mention funding organizations by name. Link to relevant partner websites and consider co-promotion possibilities.

TIP: If you have numerous sponsors, create a separate page to showcase all of them.

7. Application Call-to-Action

Have a clear call-to-action to start the scholarship process. Make an obvious button and/or text link. Example:

Start Your Application >>>

TIP: Provide a way for people to share your scholarship with others, through email, text, or social media.

8. Information About Your Organization and Mission

Include a brief overview of your organization, mission, and goals. For example:

The North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP), is the certifying arm of Solar Energy International (SEI). SEI is the world's most respected, well-established, and widely recognized certification organization for solar professionals. Our mission is to provide industry-leading technical training and expertise in renewable energy to empower people, communities, and businesses worldwide. Why? Because we envision a world powered by renewable energy!

Advanced Scholarship Website Essentials Year Two and Beyond

Your scholarship website will grow over time. This is desirable because it will raise your visibility and reputation. Add these additional items to your website once you select your first round of scholarship winners.

1. Testimonials (Meet the Scholars)

Profile scholarship recipients, and, where appropriate, showcase their work. Ask recipients for testimonials to add to your website.

TIP: Testimonials can come in many formats. Choose a medium that reflects your scholarship. For example, art scholarships recipients may agree to display work on your website.

2. Scholarship Impact

Show how the scholarship has made a difference. If the scholarship funds a specific project or region, show the results.

For example, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation scholarship, the Gates Millennium Scholarship, outlines success in their tagline:

"Promoting Academic Excellence + Providing Opportunities + Reducing Financial Barriers For 20,000 outstanding students of color"

Additionally, the scholarship website maintains a section labeled "GMS Program Accomplishments" to showcase impact since their founding in 2000.

TIP: Visual representation of impact or reach can be especially compelling.

3. Alumni Database

List scholarship recipients in a searchable database. (Get permission to do so as a condition of the scholarship application.)

TIP: Keep past recipients engaged. Previous recipients can promote the scholarship or act as reviewers in the future.

4. FAQs

Expand your anticipated questions and answers based on feedback from scholarship applicants.

TIP: Sometimes you don't need more information, you just need better visibility of resources. Be sure your help section is easy to find and search.



OpenWater

Scholarship Management Software

Whether you're starting a scholarship program from the ground up or growing an established program, OpenWater can help you:

Attract Applicants

Direct applicants to a website that retains your primary site's branding and is easy to use.



Build Relationships

Make it easier for all parties to communicate before, during, and after the review process.



Streamline the Process

Keep everyone engaged and on task through multiple rounds of review.



Track and Report Results

Make it easier for all parties to communicate before, during, and after the review process.



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