



Private Scholarships Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Applying for private scholarships takes dedication and time, but to the successful recipient, the benefits can be well worth the effort. Plus, unlike student loans, these scholarships rely on the generosity of private donors and do not have to be repaid. Phoenix College (PC) offers tens of thousands of dollars in private scholarships every year, all in an effort to help students obtain a college education. This FAQ is intended to help guide you if you are planning on applying for scholarships. For additional information, including tips on how to write a personal statement, information about free scholarship workshops, and information on how to complete an application, visit phoenixcollege.edu/scholarships.

Q: *What is a private scholarship at Phoenix College and where does the money come from?*

A: Many of the scholarships promoted through the PC scholarship website are considered private scholarships. Private scholarships are free scholarship dollars made available especially to PC students by individuals such as alumni or employees, groups, or organizations who make financial contributions for the purpose of helping students achieve their educational goals.

Q: *Who qualifies for private scholarships?*

A: Generally speaking, private scholarships are reserved for students who meet certain criteria as outlined by the donor. Criteria varies, and may focus on such as areas academic, athletic or artistic talent. Scholarships are also available for students who are interested in particular fields of study or majors, who may be members of underrepresented groups, or who demonstrate financial need.

Q: *Where can I find information about private scholarship opportunities at Phoenix College?*

A: Scholarship information is available online, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and can be accessed by visiting the online PC Scholarship Website at phoenixcollege.edu/scholarships.

Q: *What if I don't have access to a computer and/or the internet?*

A: Students are welcome to access the computers located inside Fannin Library phoenixcollege.edu/library and in the Computer Commons (lower level, Fannin Library). If you are a registered student, there is no fee to use the computers

Q: *How do I apply for scholarships once I arrive at the scholarship website?*

A: With **Scholarship Manager**, PC's new online scholarship application system, students can complete and submit a single application each semester. **To use the system, go to phoenixcollege.edu/scholarships and follow these steps:**

1. Click on "PC General Scholarship Application" in the yellow box located at the right margin of the page. This will take you to the page entitled "Phoenix College 2009-2010 Scholarship Manager."
2. Read through the entire page.
3. Scroll down to the "Students" section to start your application. Pay close attention to the sample password ("Welcome1") and to the password requirements when creating your personal password.
4. Once you have started your application, you may return to the application as many times as you wish until you are ready to submit. Be sure to proofread your answers for accuracy before you submit your application, and that the recommenders whom you have asked to provide you reference letters have responded before you submit your application to the system.
5. In most cases, it is not necessary to provide a transcript when using Scholarship Manager to apply for scholarships as the system will verify your grade point average.
6. **Please note: Scholarship Manager will be open for applications during scheduled times of the year. The schedule for 2009-2010 is as follows:**

Spring 2010 Deadline: October 15th, 2009 (*Scholarship Manager application opens September 1*)

Fall 2010 Deadline: March 25, 2010 (*Scholarship Manager application opens January 25*)



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Q: *Do I need to provide a transcript when applying for scholarships?*

A: If you are completing your application on Scholarship Manager, it will not be necessary to include a transcript as the system will verify your grade point average. If you are completing a paper application, remember to attach a copy of your transcript(s). Unofficial copies are accepted. If you are an entering freshman, provide your high school transcript. If you attended other colleges prior to PC, provide them as well. On some occasions, scholarships may require you to complete an official, sealed transcript. Read the application directions to make sure which version you are expected to provide.

Q: *What are the benefits of using the online Scholarship Manager?*

A: The benefits of the online Scholarship Manager include:

- **Secure:** Students can create a profile and secure username and password on the system, which allows them to start an application, save it, and complete it later.
- **Convenient and Flexible:** Easy to access, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from any computer with internet access
- **Electronic recommendations:** Recommenders can submit their letters online, directly to the Scholarship Manager system, enabling students to track the status of their letters online.
- **Troubleshooting support:** The email alert system provides troubleshooting support to applicants.
- **Applicants are electronically matched with current OPEN scholarship opportunities based upon their eligibility.** Volunteer committees review applications and final recipients are selected.

Q: *What will happen to the paper application process now that the online Scholarship Manager has arrived at PC?*

A: As part of the “go green” movement at PC, all private scholarship opportunities will now be online. There may be times, however, when some scholarship opportunities will be promoted outside Scholarship Manager (**see “Additional Internal Scholarship Opportunities” at the scholarship website**). In cases such as this, downloadable/printable pdf copies of applications will be provided on the scholarship website, along with scholarship criteria, information on how/where to submit the application, and deadline date.

Q: *What happens after my scholarship application is submitted?*

A: Your application will be reviewed by a volunteer committee(s) and final recipients will be selected. This process may take between 4-6 weeks, depending on the number of applications received for a particular scholarship. Recipients will be notified of their selection via email. Regret letters will follow shortly thereafter.

Q: *What do I do if I’m notified that I have been awarded a scholarship?*

A: In most cases, you will be asked to return a signed acceptance letter to the college confirming your acceptance of the scholarship, accompanied by a thank you letter for the donor. Once this information is received by the college, the Financial Aid Office will be notified of your award and it will be posted to your student account at PC. Please allow the Financial Aid Office two weeks for processing of your scholarship award.

Q: *If I am already receiving federal financial aid, how will receiving a scholarship impact me?*

A: Each student’s situation will vary. Outside scholarships are considered resources. If you receive a scholarship and are already receiving need-based financial aid, you may encounter an over award situation according to federal regulations (<http://www.finaid.org/scholarships/overawardregs.phtml>). If this is your situation, you are encouraged to contact the Financial Aid Office for further information.



Private Scholarships Some Helpful Tips to Remember as You Complete Your Application . . .

Plan and Prepare

- Pay attention to the application **deadline date**. The earlier you start preparing your application, the better! Deadlines will vary, but once you become a pro at applying for scholarships, you will be able to respond quickly to short deadlines.
- Plan early! If you look to scholarship funding as an emergency way to pay for tuition at the start of a semester, you will most likely be disappointed. While there are few instances when scholarships might be available for same semester funding, most scholarships are advertised a semester in advance. Phoenix College offers alternative programs like the Maricopa Grants program, for students who seek emergency funding to cover tuition costs. Contact the Financial Aid Office or visit their website at: www.phoenixcollege.edu then click on "Students" then "Financial Aid." You may also enroll in the Tuition Payment Plan available through the Cashier's Office, www.phoenixcollege.edu then click on "Students" then "Cashiers."
- Complete the application by **answering ALL questions** to the best of your ability.
- **Attend a Free Scholarship Workshop!** These valuable workshops show students the do's and don'ts of how to apply for scholarships and are presented each semester by the **Honors Program**. Check the scholarship website for dates and locations.

Personal Statements

Dedicate time to completing the **personal statement** portion of the scholarship application. This is arguably the most important piece of the application. Once you have a draft, ask somebody else like a trusted instructor, a family member, or a friend to review it for you and provide feedback. Accuracy in spelling, grammar, sentence structure, etc., is essential. DO NOT rely on your computer system spell check, as it does not always do the job! **If you are completing your application on Scholarship Manager**, you can create the draft of your personal statement in a word processing document such as MS-Word, then copy and paste the final draft directly into the appropriate section in Scholarship Manager. If you need help with your personal statement, or would like to have it reviewed by someone else before turning it in, you may make an appointment with a Counselor at the **Counseling Department** inside Hannelly Center, **(602) 285-7392**, or stop by the **Student Success Center** located on the second floor of the "B" building, **(602) 285-7486**. For best results, have your entire application packet with you when seeking assistance.

Letters of Recommendation

Provide at least two letters of recommendation. Faculty members make a great resource for scholarship recommendation letters, but there is a recommended protocol when asking them or others to provide you with a letter. When you are deciding on which faculty member to ask for a recommendation, make sure you choose someone in whose class you are doing well. Consider also choosing someone from a class in your major or area of study (i.e., nursing majors should ask a nursing faculty). In some cases, you may wish to provide the instructor with information about yourself (i.e., a profile) to assist them in writing the recommendation. Instructors are busy just like you, so giving them as much notice as possible is always best (two-three weeks minimum). If you are unable to ask a faculty member for a recommendation, other options may include a supervisor, or someone who has overseen your work as a volunteer. **Stay away from asking friends or relatives for recommendations.** **If you are completing your application on Scholarship Manager**, the system will ask you for the emails of your recommenders and it will electronically send them a notice asking them to provide your recommendation online. Using your username and password, students can log on and track the status of the recommendation letters through the system to make sure they are completed before the application deadline. After your references have provided a recommendation, always send a thank you note or email. You may also wish to let them know whether or not you received the scholarship.