



Frequently Asked Questions

What kinds of scholarship programs are currently available?

There are a number of academic/merit-based scholarships available with different criteria, also needs-based grants and interest-free loans (See separate FAQs for details). Strong academic achievement, community service, and demonstrated commitment to AAUW goals and values are recurring themes.

Where do the funds come from to support the scholarship programs?

The main source of funding is the annual Scholarship Book Sale, as well as donations and bequests. We are a 501(c)(3) all-volunteer organization and welcome donations, volunteers, and members.

Are there any scholarships for graduate study?

Yes, the Olga Lindberg scholarship is designated for graduate studies, and graduate students may apply for a Catalyst for Change and/or Jacquie Walker scholarship.

Are there any scholarships for part-time study, non-traditional occupations, two-year degrees, or workforce training?

Yes, we offer ALT (Adult Learners in Transition) scholarships for those on a non-traditional path who are enrolled or accepted at an accredited institution for a course of study of at least two years, whether full-time or part-time.

Can students who are home-schooled apply for the Women Entering College Scholarship?

Yes, students who were home-schooled for part or all of their high school education may submit a Letter of Substantial Equivalency – issued by local school districts to affirm that the student has been homeschooled in compliance with state law. Additionally, the applicant will submit a transcript generated by the homeschool indicating where courses were taken, grade scale used, overall GPA, credits per course, etc.

Are there any scholarship opportunities for men?

Yes, Catalyst for Change and Jacquie Walker Scholarships may be awarded to men as well as women.

May I apply for more than one scholarship?

Yes, you may apply for all scholarships for which you qualify. However, you may only receive one scholarship (or grant and/or loan) each year.

May I receive a scholarship even though I have received one in the past?

Yes, it is possible to receive different scholarships at different times.

Can I get a scholarship for any school, and any course of study?

Yes, you may receive a scholarship for any accredited institution and any course of study.

Must studies be undertaken only in person?

No, students may be attending in-person and/or online.

What is an “accredited institution”?

A Title IV accredited institution is an educational institution that has been approved to participate in federal student aid financial programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Title IV schools include public and private universities, community colleges, and some vocational and trade schools.



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How does AAUW define western New York?

We serve an eight-county area consisting of Erie, Niagara, Orleans, Genesee, Wyoming, Allegany, Cattaraugus and Chautauqua Counties. Scholarship applicants need not attend college in the eight-county area, but must be from, or permanently residing in western New York. Check the specific guidelines for each scholarship.

Do I have to provide any financial information or the FAFSA?

No, our scholarships are merit-based grants for which we do not ask for any financial information.

What is an official transcript?

An official transcript is a certified academic record issued directly by the institution a student attended or is currently attending. It includes a complete enrollment history, listing all courses or subjects attempted, grades earned, and any degrees or awards conferred. To be considered official, the transcript must be properly authenticated – such as through a certified electronic copy – and bear the institution's authorized signature or seal. Transcripts marked "unofficial" will not be accepted.

What other requirements are there?

With the exception of Adult Learners in Transition (ALT) scholars attending part-time, who receive a smaller scholarship award, all scholarship awardees must be attending college full-time in the next fall semester. Full-time means at least 12 credit hours.

Who makes the decisions on which applicants are selected for scholarships?

There is no one person making any scholarship decisions. Each scholarship has a committee of volunteers who meet as a group and thoroughly discuss and make note of various factors contained in the application, the transcript, the letters of recommendation and the all-important essay. The committee chairs summarize their recommendations and submit to the Scholarship Director. The Scholarship Director then presents the final recommendations for approval by the Board of Directors.

When and how will I be notified whether I receive an academic scholarship?

Academic/merit scholarship applicants will be notified in April, approximately 60 days following the application deadline, by letter, and/or email.

If I win an academic scholarship, when can I expect to receive the funds?

Funds are disbursed directly to students by check upon receipt of proof of enrollment for the fall semester, generally late August.

Are there restrictions on how the funds may be used?

No, scholarship award winners may use the funds for any reasonable purpose – tuition, books and supplies, course materials, fees, transportation, housing, food, healthcare, dependent care (e.g., childcare), etc.

What is the application deadline?

The application deadline for all academic, merit-based scholarships is subject to change each year, but is currently February 13.

May I apply online?

All application materials should be submitted as attachments via email to the mailbox for the particular scholarship for which you are applying. If you cannot follow this procedure due to a disability, please contact us for alternate arrangements.



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What happens if I can't get all my materials in to you by the deadline?

Applicants whose application packages are incomplete, do not meet the stated criteria and/or who fail to follow directions are immediately disqualified. Please note, we are not responsible for lost or delayed electronic submissions.

Will I be notified if any of my submitted documents are incomplete or incorrect?

No. We do not normally provide individual feedback or notifications regarding incomplete or incorrect submissions. It is the applicant's responsibility to carefully review and follow all application instructions to ensure materials are complete and accurate.

What is your policy on AI?

You must provide original, personally written essays and responses without the use of any AI or artificial technology.

Will I be required to appear for an interview?

In most cases, the written application materials will form the basis of our decisions. However, we reserve the right to verify information, contact references, and/or request an in-person or telephone interview.

What if I don't want my name and/or photo used for publicity purposes?

Award winners may opt out of publicity; just let us know at the time of notification.

Must I be a U.S. citizen?

No. It is our policy there shall be no barriers on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or class.

In Summary:

- Follow directions carefully. Each scholarship has specific guidelines.
- Think carefully about who to ask for letters of recommendation.
- Get all materials in on time.
- Submit an original, thoughtful essay, keeping in mind AAUW's purpose and values.
- Tell your story. Explain your personal and academic journey, how you came to be on the path you are on.
- Include specific metrics – how much, how many, how often, and results achieved – such as meals served, hours of volunteer service, funds raised, community impact, etc.

