



SOUTHWEST FLORIDA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICANT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The deadline to apply is Sunday, February 24, 2019 by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time

Things to consider before completing a Scholarship Application:

- Complete the FAFSA, which will provide you with the SAR report needed.
- Obtain Letter(s) of Recommendation.
- Obtain Fall 2018 transcripts, or the most recent transcript available for adult learners, undergraduate and graduate students.
- Prepare Personal Essay, which will have a 500-word limit.
- Review the Southwest Florida Community Foundation Scholarship Listing.

Q. What documents do I need to upload in addition to filling out the application?

- A.** 1. Student Aid Report (SAR) from the completion of your FAFSA that indicates your EFC Score. This is a requirement for all scholarships.
2. Most recent transcript.
 3. ACT and/or SAT Score report.
 4. Letter(s) of recommendation.

Q. I don't have my Fall 2018 Semester grades yet. Will you accept a transcript without my Fall grades?

A. No, we will need a transcript including your Fall grades, to be considered. Until you have your transcript in hand, you can work on other parts of your application, as you are able to save your application as a draft and return to it at any time. If you are an adult learner, undergraduate or graduate student, provide the most recent transcript you have with your GPA.

Q. How do I upload the required documents to my application?

A. If the document is already saved on your computer, you can click the "Browse" button on the application and select the document to upload. If you have access to a scanner, you can scan the document and then upload it. If the file size is too large, your scanner may be set at too high a resolution; consider changing it to 150 dpi. For documents that may be more than one page, make sure that you upload all the pages as one document. If you upload pages individually, the new upload will override the previous upload.

If you do not have access to a scanner, or the file size is too large, consider taking a clear photo of the document, email it to yourself and save the photo to your computer or upload it directly from your phone. Be sure to save your application each time you upload documents, and always double check to make sure all of your documents uploaded correctly.

Q. I don't have access to a scanner or fax machine. What do I do?

A. Start by talking to your guidance counselor at school to see if the school has equipment that you can access. If that is not an option, please contact the Community Foundation, as we want to ensure that all eligible students have the opportunity to complete an application, and we are happy to assist you. However, do not send us copies of the required attachments, as everything must be **submitted online**, and hard copies will not be accepted.

Q. Instead of uploading my SAT and ACT scores, can I just upload my transcript since my scores are on the transcript?

A. No, you must upload a copy of your scores, and it is preferable that you upload them as a PDF or JPEG document.

Q. How long does my Personal Essay have to be?

A. You have 500 words to fulfill the Personal Essay requirements. The essay is a very important part of your application, as it helps the reviewers get to know you and can help you stand out from the other applicants. You should use the full space available. We recommend that you type it in a Word document, so that you can check for spelling mistakes and grammatical errors, and then copy and paste it into the Personal Essay section of your application.

Q. What should I include in my essay?

A. Write about your goals and plans, as well as achievements, setbacks and skills. The essay explains to the reviewer who you are and is a very important part of your application. **Be sure to read the scholarship description, of the scholarship(s) you are applying for, and address items in the scholarship description.**

Include the following in your essay:

- Goals and plans for your future
- College/University you plan to attend
- Planned field of study and why you chose this field
- Work experience
- Volunteer experience
- Extracurricular activities
- Describe your character and skills that demonstrate your abilities
- Be sure to include any adversities, or setbacks, you have experienced and how you overcame them.

Q. Do my letters of recommendation have to be signed and on letterhead?

A. No, they don't have to, but be sure your reference's contact information is included on the letter. If you have more than one letter, they must be uploaded together as one PDF document.

Q. What financial documentation is required?

A. You must include a copy of your Student Aid Report (SAR) from the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), which is an application students and their families must complete in order to be considered for federal financial aid, and many states and schools also use the FAFSA as part of their application process for non-federal aid. The Student Aid Report (SAR) is the report received that summarizes the student's financial need and provides the official Expected Family Contribution (EFC) number. Be sure and talk to your parents about the documentation required so that there is plenty of time to gather the information needed prior to the deadline, as we cannot review incomplete applications. This is a requirement for all scholarship applications.

Q. How will I be notified if I am awarded a scholarship?

A. If you are awarded a scholarship, you will be notified by email or by mail sometime in May.

If you still have questions:

email: Scholarships@floridacommunity.com or call the Foundation Office at 239-274-5900