



# 2023-24

# PHI MU FOUNDATION

# SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

# INSTRUCTION GUIDE

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## Questions? Contact Us

For any questions not addressed in this guide or the scholarship application, please contact Phi Mu Foundation's Development & Marketing Manager at [scholarships@phimu.org](mailto:scholarships@phimu.org).

Learn more about about the Scholarship Program and view FAQs on our website at <https://phimufoundation.org/our-purpose/academic-scholarships/>.

# SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION TIMELINE

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## 2023-2024 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION CYCLE

**DECEMBER 1, 2022**

Scholarship application launch!

**FEBRUARY 15, 2023**

Scholarship Applications due

\* Scholarship applications, transcripts and letters of recommendation must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. Pacific Standard Time

**JUNE 2023**

Scholarship Recipients are notified

**JULY 15, 2023**

Acceptance documentation due to Foundation office

**AUGUST 2023**

Scholarship funds dispersed to universities/colleges

# SCHOLARSHIP CHECKLIST

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**This checklist will give you the tools you need to make your application process a smooth one.**

The following items are suggested to assist you while completing your application:

- The most recent copy of your academic transcripts. (If you are an alumna returning to school, your previous educational institution should be able to provide you with a copy of these documents.)
- Address information for your permanent residence or P.O. Box
- Educational history for the last three colleges or universities in which you were enrolled. (Dates of attendance, name of school and any transcripts obtained while enrolled.)
- Combined family income (from parents, spouse or other sources.)
- An estimated cost of your financial needs for the 2023-2024 academic year (not including your Phi Mu dues, housing or transportation costs.)
- Your yearly wages or other sources of income
- Total amount of outstanding educational loans to date
- Total amount of other scholarships or grants awarded for the 2023-24 academic year
- Complete lists of Phi Mu chapter involvement, community involvement, academic or other awards, and work experience (while in college for collegiate members or for the past four years for alumnae members).
- Contact information for two recommendations from an academic or professional source

# ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

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## All applicants must meet the following criteria prior to completing an application:

- Applications must be received electronically by February 15, 2023 in order to be considered.
- A scholarship recipient shall be enrolled in an accredited college or university, working toward a degree, credential, or certificate as:
  - A full-time undergraduate student. Undergraduate applicants must have a 3.2 cumulative GPA on a 4.0 scale
  - A part-time or full-time graduate or doctoral student. Graduate or doctoral applicants must have a 3.2 cumulative GPA on a 4.0 scale
  - Applicants for scholarships based on financial need must have a 3.2 cumulative GPA on a 4.0 scale.
- A member may receive no more than one Phi Mu Foundation scholarship per year and no more than three Phi Mu Foundation scholarships during her collegiate and alumnae years.
- Undergraduate and Graduate scholarship recipients must, at the time the scholarship is awarded and at the time the scholarship is paid, be an initiated member in good standing of Phi Mu Fraternity. (Reference Phi Mu Fraternity Bylaws, Article 8, Section 2.)
- Enrollment criteria for Phi Mu Foundation Scholarships:
  - Undergraduate scholarships shall be awarded for a full academic year. An applicant may receive a scholarship for the fall term only if she is graduating at the end of that term.
  - Graduate or doctoral scholarships may be awarded for any semester or school term.
- Applicants are required to submit transcripts from each college or university. You will be able to upload your transcripts to the online application. Transcripts may be unofficial copies for the applications process; however, if you are selected for a scholarship, you will be required to submit an official copy.
- Applicants are required to submit two recommendations.
- All Scholarship recipients must complete the necessary acceptance information by the date instructed by Phi Mu Foundation Staff.

## Awarding of Scholarship:

- Scholarship recipients will be notified via email.
- Recipients who wish to accept their scholarship must complete the steps outlined in the offer email, including submitting all acceptance information before the deadline given by Phi Mu Foundation Staff
- **If the recipient no longer needs the award, they must notify Foundation Staff immediately.**

## Termination of Scholarship:

- Awards can be terminated for the following reasons:
  - If the recipient fails to complete the acceptance information in the initial offer letter
  - If the recipient is no longer meets any of the eligibility requirements
  - Any exception to the above shall be referred to and approved by the Board of Trustees.

# SCHOLARSHIP BREAKDOWN

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## **Merit-Based Scholarships vs. Need-Based Scholarships**

Merit-based scholarships are awarded by evaluating your academic criteria alone. No financial information is considered when determining merit-based scholarship recipients. Applicants will complete one application and automatically be considered for all merit-based scholarships for which they are eligible.

Need-based scholarships are awarded by evaluating your overall financial need. This is done based on a series of questions related to your current financial situation.

Eligible undergraduate applicants who wish to be considered for need-based scholarships must provide all information requested in the “Need-Based Scholarship” section of the application. Failure to provide any requested information will result in automatic disqualification for need-based scholarships.

1. Submit your FAFSA online (available at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)) as soon as possible.
2. After your FAFSA is completed and processed, a Student Aid Report (SAR) will be generated and emailed to you within 7-10 business days.
3. Upload your SAR as a PDF. Phi Mu Foundation can only accept a full, official Student Aid Report in PDF format; we will not accept the SAR Acknowledgment.
4. Enter the Expected Family Contribution exactly as it states on your SAR. Any discrepancies may result in ineligibility.
5. Enter the cost of attendance for your current university/college as reported on the government’s College Navigator Website at [www.nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator](http://www.nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator).
6. Please list any scholarships and grants (NOT student loans) you anticipate receiving for the 2023-2024 academic year. Please include government, private, and university/college-based financial aid.

You may only apply as a need-based applicant OR a merit-based applicant. Only one application will be accepted.

# HOW TO COMPLETE EACH SECTION

**This section is pretty self-explanatory. However, this question is key in assigning you the correct form for the rest of the application:**

**Q: At the time of completing this application, please indicate if you are a Phi Mu collegian or alumna member?**

A collegian is a member of a collegiate chapter. If you are currently an active member of a collegiate chapter, you will fill out the collegiate application, regardless of your enrollment status (undergraduate or graduate student). An alumna is a member who is graduated or has withdrawn from school. Basically, this question refers to your status for the current school year (at the time you are filling out the application). If you attended an undergraduate institution at all during this school year, you should choose collegian.

**Q: I am applying as a/an:**

You may choose between undergraduate applicant or graduate applicant. If you a current Phi Mu collegian but are about to graduate and have already or in the process of applying to graduate programs, please select Graduate Applicant. Below are further definitions of each applicant type:

*Undergraduate applicants are defined as:*

- Students who are currently enrolled in an undergraduate program at an accredited college or university and will remain enrolled in an undergraduate program for the entire 2023-2024 academic year.

*Graduate applicants are defined as:*

- Students who are currently enrolled in a graduate program and will remain enrolled for all or part of the 2023-2024 academic year.
- Students who have applied (or anticipate applying) for admission to a graduate program to begin during the 2023-2024 academic year (proof of enrollment is required if you are selected to receive a scholarship)

**Q: Are you a member of Phi Mu Foundation?**

Members of Phi Mu Foundation have a cumulative lifetime giving of \$50 or more. If you have questions about this status, you may reach out to the Foundation office at [scholarships@phimu.org](mailto:scholarships@phimu.org).

**Q: What is your current cumulative GPA (based on a 4.0 scale)?**

*If your university uses a 4.0 scale to calculate GPA:*

Enter your **most recent** cumulative GPA based on a 4.0 scale. Upload a PDF of the unofficial/official transcript that will confer/has conferred your most recent degree. The number entered as your cumulative GPA should match the GPA reflected in your unofficial transcript. If you are going back to school after an absence (i.e. a graduate program after entering the workforce), use your most recent GPA.

*If your university does NOT use a 4.0 scale to calculate GPA:*

Enter your most recent cumulative GPA based on a 4.0 scale. It is your responsibility to convert your GPA to this scale. Please make a note about the scaled GPA on your application.

**Q: Graduation Date (MM/YYYY)**

Indicate your anticipated graduation date from the degree program you will pursue during the 2023-2024 academic year. Seniors applying for graduate scholarships should indicate they are a graduate applicant and their anticipated graduate school graduation date.

# HOW TO COMPLETE EACH SECTION

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## **Q: Education History**

Starting with the program in which you are currently enrolled, and working backward, list the most recent post-secondary educational institutions (limit 3) attended for your most recent credit hours obtained; include two-year colleges, four-year colleges/universities, vocational and professional schools.

Upload an unofficial transcript(s) for this portion of the application. You will be required to submit an official electronic copy of your most recent transcript if you are awarded a scholarship. Indicate the university/college name and month/year you began and ended your attendance. If you are currently attending an institution, enter your projected graduation date as the ending date.

## **Q: By answering yes to this question, you are seeking consideration for a need-based scholarship and agree to furnish a copy of the FAFSA upon request?**

Phi Mu Foundation offers need-based scholarships. Applicants who apply for a need-based scholarship should be limited to those who are in dire need of financial assistance.

The Scholarship Committee will extensively review this portion of the application to determine if there is a dire financial need based heavily upon your answers to the financial questions in this application.

ALL NEED-BASED APPLICANTS ARE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE A FAFSA (FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID). APPLICANTS SEEKING NEEDS-BASED CONSIDERATION MUST SUBMIT A PDF OF THE STUDENT AID REPORT (SAR) DURING THE APPLICATION PROCESS. PHI MU FOUNDATION CAN ONLY ACCEPT A FULL, OFFICIAL STUDENT AID REPORT IN PDF FORMAT; WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ACCEPT COPIES OF THE SAR ACKNOWLEDGMENT. YOU MAY BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION OF YOUR ANTICIPATED EXPENSES AND/OR OTHER DOCUMENTATION AS DEEMED NECESSARY BY THE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE.

For questions about need-based scholarships, please contact Leinin Schuerr at 770.632.2120 or [scholarships@phimu.org](mailto:scholarships@phimu.org).

# HOW TO ANSWER THE ESSAY QUESTIONS

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**There are two sections of essay questions within the Phi Mu Foundation Scholarship Application: Involvement and Recognition Statements and Personal Statements. These essay questions are reviewed by the Scholarship Committee and serve as a way to better understand the experiences and needs of each applicant.**

## **Tips for both essay portions:**

Before you begin answering the essay questions, take a moment to review each question and consider your response. Here are some tips for providing well-written responses:

- *Use fewer words.* Each response has a maximum number of words. Your answers should not exceed this limit.
- ***Keep it confidential.*** Each scholarship application is reviewed on an anonymous basis by the Scholarship Committee. To ensure your identity is kept anonymous, DO NOT include any personal identification words while writing your essays. Words to avoid include:
  - Your first and/or last name
  - Your chapter name
  - Your school name
  - Names of chapter members or alumnae
  - Names of family members
  - Names of professors or other academic professionals
  - Names of cities or states
- *Proofread!* Type your responses in a word processing software prior to copying and pasting them into the essay fields within the application. Doing this will help you avoid spelling or grammar errors. If you feel comfortable doing so, have someone else proofread your essay responses to ensure they are well-written.

**Remember: your essay questions are just as important as your academic achievements. Your essay questions should be well-written, organized, and directly address the prompt.**

## **Involvement and Recognition Statements**

Think about who will be reading your application. The scholarship committee may not know what a “Tiger Pal” or “Singletary Scholarship” is or the level of work that you do as Scholarship Chair. Although you need to be concise, please describe what you did in each office/activity and the honors you’ve achieved. Sell yourself! Additionally, there should be no identifying details in your descriptions; we wish to reduce bias as much as possible.

Freshmen/first-year students: You are permitted to include high school activities if you do not have any college activities yet.

If you are filling out the alumnae application, you have the option to list significant offices you held in your collegiate chapter and/or other collegiate chapter activities in which you were involved in during college. This is optional and would be considered after your alumnae experience.



# HOW TO ANSWER THE ESSAY QUESTIONS

## Involvement and Recognition Statements Examples:

| Instead of...   |  | Write this...  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| Rhodes Scholar  | <i>Although pretty well known and prestigious, not everybody knows what this award is.</i>   | Rhodes Scholar - awarded to only 32 students nationwide for character, academics, leadership, and service.   | <i>This now includes a description of the award. This description is only 14 words, so there is room to add more details if the applicant wishes but this is clear and concise.</i>   |
| Philanthropy Chair of Delta Eta   | <i>Don't identify your chapter! Also, different chapters have different offices and duties in their standing bylaws and procedures so you need to share what you specifically did to show your level of involvement.</i> | Philanthropy Chair - I coordinated two large fundraisers, raising over \$5000. I also implemented weekly volunteering for our chapter at the local CMNH hospital, which is continued by the current chair. | <i>Specific accomplishments are given. Also note how the hospital is not named, which would be an identifying detail.</i>   |
| Lady Jaguars - conference champions for the past two years  | <i>What are the "Lady Jaguars" -- a sports team? Something else? More specificity would help the committee understand the level of involvement.</i>  | Lady Jaguars College Basketball Team - conference champions for the past two years   | <i>Adding "college" identifies the level of sport being played and is indicative of involvement (most evaluators understand that collegiate sports are substantially more time consuming than intramurals). Note: because "Jaguars" could be a mascot for a number of institutions, it would not be considered an identifying detail.</i> |
| Green Guide - I was a mentor for incoming freshmen, leading workshops and checking in with my assigned mentees. | <i>Nothing technically is wrong with this descriptor, but let's say the applicant listed this as a highly significant activity. They could give more information to showcase her level of involvement.</i>               | Green Guide - For the past two years, I was selected as a mentor for incoming freshmen, leading monthly workshops and checking in weekly with my assigned mentees.   | <i>Here, the applicant has added information that showcases how time consuming/involved this activity is, and also that she was involved more than once. If you have been involved in an activity for multiple years, indicating that adds to its significance.</i>   |

## Personal Statements:

There are two essay questions in this section. You must complete both essay questions. For the first questions, you have the option to pick one of the three topics. After selecting the topic on question #1, please do your best to directly address the prompt.

Maximum word count is 200 so keep your essay organized and well-written.

# RECOMMENDATIONS & WORKING WITH YOUR RECOMMENDER

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## Recommendations

All applicants are required to submit two recommendations from academic or professional sources.

Here are some examples of acceptable recommendation sources:

- A member of your chapter's Advisory Board (Ex: Chapter Adviser)
- Professors
- Academic Professionals
- Employers
- Managers
- Other Professional Sources

When selecting a recommender, be sure they can fully attest to your needs for scholarship assistance and provide an accurate testimony to your overall character and performance in the classroom or workplace. **You may NOT use a friend, fellow chapter member or family member to complete the reference on your behalf.**

Make sure to reach out to your selected recommenders before completing your application to ensure they are willing to fill out your recommendation. **They DO NOT need to write you a letter.**

## Working with your Recommender

When you arrive at the recommendation portion of the scholarship application, you will be asked to enter information about your recommenders. You will need to provide the following information:

- First Name
- Last Name
- Email

Our application platform will automatically send an email to your recommender. After you enter the recommender's information, contact your recommender, and inform them that they should have receive an email from our application platform. We strongly urge you to ask your recommender to confirm that they've received that email. If they do not receive it instantly, have them check their spam folder. Email [scholarships@phimu.org](mailto:scholarships@phimu.org) if they still do not receive the email.

Your recommender will be asked a series of questions through the email they receive. The recommender will be able to submit answers online using a website link unique to your application. You will not be able to view your recommender's responses.

You will have to submit your application for both recommender's to be contacted. Once both recommendations are complete, your application will be fully submitted. Applications cannot be considered unless both recommendations are complete.

You can return to your application at any time before the deadline to resend your recommendation request.

Above all, remain in contact with your recommenders until you receive both recommendations.

# APPLICATION TIPS

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## READ INSTRUCTIONS

- Review this instruction guide and the information in the application carefully.

## PLAN AHEAD

- Open the application and carefully review the requirements in advance.
- Gather all information you will need to complete the application. Print out the checklist at the beginning of this document to help you gather all of the information you need.
- Allow plenty of time to gather the required information and make sure both of your recommendation forms and your application are submitted before the deadline, February 15, 2023.

## CONTACT REFERENCES EARLY

- You are responsible for ensuring your References submit completed recommendation forms by the application deadline, February 15, 2023.
- You do not have to complete your application before sending recommendation requests, so send them out as soon as possible to allow your recommenders ample time to complete them.

## CONSULT WITH PHI MU FOUNDATION

- If you have any questions about the application process, please contact the Foundation's Development & Marketing Manager at [scholarships@phimu.org](mailto:scholarships@phimu.org).

## PROOFREAD

- Make sure your essays are well-written and free of errors; poorly written essays may negatively affect your application score and incorrect or incomplete answers may result in ineligibility.
- Make sure submissions do not include any personal information.

## SUBMIT ON TIME

- **Phi Mu Foundation will NOT accept late materials for any reason. There will be no exceptions to this requirement.**
- Be sure to save your application progress frequently.
- A complete application (including both recommendations) must be submitted by 11:59 pm Pacific Standard Time, February 15, 2023.

For questions about need-based scholarships, please contact Leinin Schuerr at 770.632.2120 or [scholarships@phimu.org](mailto:scholarships@phimu.org).