

# Guidelines for Applying for Scholarships



A good scholarship application is one which stands out from the rest; one which will impress the Selection Panel, and convince them that you are the best candidate for this Scholarship. Here at the Scholarships Office, we see a large number of such applications, and have put together some guidelines to help you make yours one of the best.

- Read the regulations of the scholarship well! This is very important. By doing this, you can get a feel for the attributes which the Selection Panel will be looking for when they award this scholarship. By reading the regulations well, you will also ensure that you don't miss including any vital information in your application.
- Write neatly and spell correctly when filling out the application form. The first impressions of the Selection Panel will depend very much on the neatness of your application. If you have obviously taken the time to write neatly, and check your spelling, they will be impressed. On the other hand, if you have completed your application roughly, they might well conclude that this scholarship is not very important to you.
- Write a covering letter, introducing yourself and explaining why you believe you are the applicant best suited for the scholarship – even if this is not specifically asked for.
- Attach all documentation which the application form asks you for (such as a CV and birth certificate). If, for some reason, you cannot supply a certain document, explain why. These documents are required for a reason, and the Selection Panel likes to see them. Remember, you do not have to include originals; we can make certified copies at our Office if you call in to see us.
- If the scholarship is awarded on academic merit, make sure you attach any academic records which you might have from other institutions at which you have studied. We can make certified copies of these, if you bring the originals into our Office. You only need to attach a copy of your University of Waikato academic record if the regulations specifically ask for it.
- If the scholarship is awarded partly or wholly on factors other than academic merit (such as community involvement, or sporting achievements), make sure you include any documentation which you can to support your achievements in these areas. These include letters of reference from people you have worked with or for, certificates, and anything else which you think might be of interest to the Selection Panel. Be selective; if you send in too much, not enough attention will be paid the information which is really important. However, make sure you have included enough to give the Selection Panel a good insight into your activities.
- Referees should be chosen carefully, as a Selection Panel will often rely heavily on what they say about you. Always provide referees with a copy of the regulations of the Scholarship, so that they are aware of the details of what you are applying for. Unfortunately, we can usually only use references for the Scholarship which they were provided for, so if you are applying for more than one scholarship, ask your referee to send in multiple copies (preferably with the name of the scholarship they are relevant to written in the header).
- We photocopy all applications to send to the Selection Panel – so the use of colour and binding / folders is not effective. However make sure documents such as your CV are attractive, and well laid out: it helps them to stand out.
- The best applications take time to write and organize. Think about what you write, proofread well, and take the time to include relevant information. It will be well worth it!