



CFSA Scholarship Program FAQs

→ What is the scholarship application timeline?

Applications typically open in early January each year and close in mid-February. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

CFSA's Scholarship Committee reviews scholarship applications and makes selections throughout March and April. Notification of scholarship awards will be made by mid-May.

→ Are only graduating high school seniors eligible?

This depends on the specific scholarship. See the eligibility criteria for each scholarship on our website to determine who is eligible. The CFSA General Scholarship is open to all graduates of Southern Arizona high schools from any year.

→ What does 'Southern Arizona' mean?

Applicants must have graduated from a high school based in Southern Arizona, which is defined as the counties of Yuma, Pima, Santa Cruz, and Cochise, as well as certain regions of the counties of Graham, Greenlee, Pinal, and Maricopa that are south of the Gila River. The yellow line below indicates where the Gila River runs.



→ What documents do I need to complete the online application?

- A current transcript – high school or university, as appropriate
- The Student Aid Report (SAR) from the FAFSA, if available
- The Estimated Cost of Attendance at your institution
- A letter of recommendation for first time applicants
- Proof of eligibility, for corporate applicants

→ How is financial need determined?

CFSA uses the Student Aid Report from the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as the primary determinant of financial need. Applicants also have the opportunity to provide additional information relevant to their financial need.

Applicants who are not eligible to complete the FAFSA may still apply for CFSA scholarships. Their financial need will be evaluated based on the additional information they provide.

→ What are my chances of receiving a scholarship?

While CFSA would like to award a scholarship to all eligible applicants, the availability of funds limits the number of awards made each year. An applicant's chance of receiving a scholarship depends on the number of applicants and the competitiveness of the applicant pool. These factors change each year. Meeting minimum eligibility requirements only guarantees that an applicant will be considered for the scholarship, not that they will receive one.

→ Can I apply for a scholarship directly to one of CFSA's fundholders?

No. Fundholders are prohibited by IRS regulations from selecting scholarship recipients. All scholarship applications must be submitted directly to the Community Foundation and are reviewed by a committee of community members who determine the recipients.

→ I see a Criteria-Specific Scholarship on CFSA's website available at my high school. Can I apply for it?

Maybe! You should reach out to your high school counselor to see what the application process looks like at your school. These scholarships are awarded by committees based at the different high schools and not by the CFSA Scholarship Committee.

→ What are my responsibilities if I am chosen as a recipient?

If selected to receive a scholarship, you will be notified by CFSA staff. You must complete a Scholarship Agreement which outlines the terms and conditions of the scholarship and confirms your enrollment information. We also ask for a digital photo and thank you letter that we may share with the scholarship donor(s). Your Scholarship Agreement, thank you letter, and digital photo will be submitted to CFSA's online portal.

Failure to return to Scholarship Agreement by the date specified in your award letter will be interpreted as the recipient declining the scholarship.

→ If I am awarded a scholarship, do I receive the check?

No. Scholarships are paid to the financial aid office of the recipient's school upon return of a Scholarship Agreement. IRS guidelines prohibit CFSA from making awards directly to a recipient.

→ How and when are checks issued?

Checks are issued directly to the financial aid office at the recipient's institution upon receipt of the Scholarship Agreement. Checks are normally sent by June 30, though many universities will not apply the funds to a student's account until the beginning of fall semester.

If you have not received your scholarship funds in your student account by the **first day of your Fall semester**, please contact first your financial aid office then, if necessary, the Community Foundation.

→ **If I receive a scholarship one year, will I automatically receive an award the following year?**

No. Some scholarships are not renewable. Others allow for renewal but require submission of a new application each year. The scholarship agreement will confirm whether a scholarship award is eligible for renewal. Renewal, when possible, requires demonstration of continued eligibility.

→ **Who can I contact if I have questions?**

Please reach out to Natalia Gabrielsen, Scholarship Program Manager, at scholarships@cfsaz.org or (520) 289-8003.