

How to Make Scholarship Providers Love You

Every year organizations award more than 1.5 million private college scholarships to students that are worth in excess of \$3.5 billion. Want to increase your chances of winning some of this college scholarship money? Here are 10 ways to increase the odds that you'll win a scholarship.

1. Give the scholarship sponsor what it wants. A scholarship application often contains the sponsor's scholarship selection criteria, but dig deeper. Research the scholarship sponsor on the web. Look for the organization's mission statement, which you'll often find in the "About Us" section of its website.

2. Get involved with your community. Students who volunteer enjoy a huge advantage with scholarship sponsors. Scholarship sponsors are looking for a long-time commitment to volunteering. This bias towards volunteering makes sense since many scholarship providers are nonprofits committed to helping others.

3. Look professional. Google your name to make sure that you have a professional online presence. Remove any inappropriate material from online social sites.

4. Use a scholarship search engine. Using scholarship search engines will make your job easier.

5. Don't ignore the optional questions. When supplying your background on scholarship search engines, answer the optional questions. Addressing these questions can generate about **twice** as many scholarship matches.

6. Learn more about scholarship odds. Read this post:

[CollegeStats.org: Which College Scholarships are Easy to Get? We Have the Data.](#)

7. Apply to every eligible scholarship. It's a numbers game and even among the most accomplished students, luck is a factor. Don't ignore the small stuff. Some scholarships worth \$1,000 or less may only have 15 or 20 students applying.

8. Look for essay contests. Students can be lazy and many will skip scholarship contests that require an essay. Applying for these scholarships could increase your odds of success.

9. Be passionate. When you're writing a scholarship essay let your personal voice come through. Include lots of details in your essay that helps reveal who you are. It's usually a good idea to focus on a problem and how you solved it or overcame adversity.

10. Think local. Ask your high school guidance counselors about local scholarships. Also check bulletin boards at libraries and outside financial aid offices. Local scholarships are going to be easier to win than regional and national ones.