

THE 2026 RHODES SCHOLARSHIPS FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: 01 October 2025 (11:59 PM, Eastern Time)

GUIDANCE FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENDORSEMENTS:

The criteria which determined the first Rhodes Scholars in 1902 still guide the selection committees today. These four criteria by which prospective Rhodes Scholars are judged are:

1. literary and scholastic attainments;
2. energy to use one's talents to the full;
3. truth, courage, devotion to duty, sympathy for and protection of the weak, kindliness, unselfishness and fellowship;
4. moral force of character and instincts to lead, and to take an interest in one's fellow beings.

Proven intellectual and academic quality of a high standard is the first quality required of applicants. The intellectual standard sought is very high and candidates must meet the entry requirements for their chosen course. An applicant is more likely to be successful if they are academically strong enough to be admitted to one of America's most selective graduate schools, and has a GPA of 3.7 / 4.0 or higher.

Beyond academic distinction, however, applicants will also be required to show integrity of character, interest in and respect for their fellow beings, the ability to lead, and the energy to use their talents to the full. Applicants should be able to demonstrate the vigor which will enable Rhodes Scholars to make an effective contribution to the world around them in whichever field they choose.

The Selection Committees for the Rhodes Scholarships will have a copy of the applicant's academic transcript, their academic statement of study, curriculum vitae, personal statement and letters of reference.

Institutional officials, including the President, Dean, or other official responsible for graduate fellowships, may endorse an applicant. An undergraduate institution may endorse an applicant by stating that they have satisfactorily completed two years of full-time study and received a bachelor's degree, or will have in the year following the Rhodes Scholarship application. It is preferred that applicants in their first year of graduate study receive an endorsement from the undergraduate institution from which they received their degree; for those in their second or later year of graduate study, the preference is for the endorsement to come from the graduate institution.

As part of the endorsement process, Colleges and universities are also invited, but not required, to organize committees competent to comment on the relative merits of applicants for the Rhodes Scholarship. The criteria used by Committees of Selection are explained above. Institutions are encouraged to submit an evaluation of the candidate within the institutional endorsement letter. This evaluation will be used by Selection Committees, and, in the event of the applicant's selection for a Rhodes Scholarship, will be forwarded to the authorities in Oxford for consideration of the Rhodes Scholar-elect's admission to an academic program and to a college of the University of Oxford.

The Rhodes Trust requires that personal and academic statements be entirely the applicant's own work, with no writing or editing by others. When uploading an endorsement letter to a candidate's application, institutional endorsers must attest, to the best of their knowledge, that no one at their institution has written or edited* the applicant's statements.

**Editing includes revising, correcting, modifying, adding, or removing text.*

We understand that this requirement has caused concerns in some fellowship advisory offices. The reason for the requirement is simple. We concluded that, in many cases, essays have become highly edited and formulaic productions that do not accurately reflect the applicant's actual writing style, personal story, or educational objectives. Fundamentally, they are no longer the work of the applicant. We ask simply that applicants be the sole writers and sole editors of their personal statements and academic statements, from draft to final form, and that the statements be unedited by institutional representatives, advisors, professors, or anyone else.

The Trust has also published guidance for candidates on receiving support with their applications, which it may be helpful to review in parallel, [available here](#).

Letters of endorsement must be a maximum of two pages (A4 or letter sized paper) and submitted online. An automated email from the application system will be generated once an applicant has registered their endorser. This email will include a link to the online endorsement form where the letter can be submitted.

Rhodes Scholarship endorsement letters are confidential and institutional representatives should **not** share them directly with endorsed applicants.

For more information for advisors please visit our website:

www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/scholarships/information-for-advisors

For information for US candidates please visit our website:

<https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/scholarships/applications/united-states-of-america/>

Endorsements must be received before 11:59 PM Eastern Time, 01 October 2025.