



WHAT MAKES A STRONG SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION?

Hint: It's about being yourself.

More than anything else, telling your story and who you are as openly and authentically as possible will make your application the best it can be.

Tips for Essays

The APIA Scholars applications have **three essay questions**, and you have **500 words or less for each** to answer them.

- **Brainstorm!** Map it out, draw, create bullet points, freewrite— do whatever works for you to get your thoughts on paper at first.
- **Spend time on your essays** – you may not need all 500 words to answer each, but you will need more than a few sentences.
- **Ask family, friends, teachers and others you trust to read over your essays.** Do they see the unique and remarkable person you are shine through your answers?
- **Make sure to proofread.**
 - Read it out loud
 - Sleep and come back to it
 - Read your sentences in reverse order
 - Proofread slowly
 - Ask someone else to read for grammar
- **Answer every part of the essay question.**
- Avoid generic answers – and avoid thinking your life is generic. **Write boldly.**

Essay 1: Describe what personal/ education/career goals you have, why you have them, and how you plan to achieve them.

Focus on: your passions, your dreams, your hopes for the future. Don't sweat it if you don't have a step-by-step plan.

Essay 2: Tell us how you hope to help your local and broader community through your education and future goals.

Focus on: how you would like to elevate and empower your community— however you may define community. **Write from the heart.**

Essay 3: Describe some challenges you have faced from any aspect of your life, how you worked through them, and how these challenges have changed you.

Focus on: not how big the challenges were, but how they impacted you. Share what you are comfortable with. **Tell us how they became a part of your story.**

Tips for Letters of Recommendation

Letters of recommendation give us an opportunity to **learn about you from a different perspective**. We want to know a bit of your story from someone who has seen what a remarkable person you are!

- **Pick someone who knows you well** and can speak to your character as a person and community member.
 - ⇒ A teacher, a supervisor at a job or volunteer position, a coach, a mentor, a spiritual leader are all possibilities. **A relative cannot be your recommender.**
- **Do not wait until the last minute!** Ask your preferred recommender as soon as you begin filling out the application.
- **Have a backup recommender in mind**, if your first choice is unable to submit a letter.
- **The recommendation form is online only** – make sure your recommender is aware/comfortable with this.
- **Double check your recommender's contact information** before you put it into your application.
- **Check in with your recommender** to make sure they have submitted their letter before the deadline.
- **Be open to a conversation** with your recommender about you, your accomplishments and your goals to help inform their letter.
- **Does your recommender need some tips?** Visit our Applicant Resources at <https://apiascholars.org>

Visit bit.ly/APIAScholars to learn more.