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General Scholarship Questions

1. What is APIA Scholars?

APIA Scholars is the nation’s largest non-profit organization devoted to creating opportunities that provide access to higher education and resources that cultivate the academic, personal, and professional success of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans (APIAs). These efforts aim to advance the conversation around access to education, elevate the voice of the APIA community, and empower APIA leaders to drive systemic change.

2. What are the scholarships offered by APIA Scholars?

APIA Scholars has two scholarship programs: The **APIA Scholarship** and the **AANAPISI Scholarship**.

Both scholarships have a special focus on those who live at or below the poverty line; are their first in their families to attend college; are representative of the APIA community’s diversity (geographically and ethnically), especially those ethnicities that have been underrepresented on college campuses due to limited access and opportunity; and have placed a strong emphasis on community service and leadership as well as solid academic achievement.

The **APIA Scholarship** is our largest scholarship program, open to incoming or returning AANHPI undergraduate students attending any U.S. accredited university or college.

The **Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) Scholarship Program** is a collaboration between APIA Scholars, AANAPISIs, and the communities they serve to provide scholarships, expand institutional capacity, and mobilize local resources to help foster economic development. The AANAPISI Scholarship is available annually to students attending APIA Scholars AANAPISI partner campuses:

<https://apiascholars.org/about/partners/aanapisi-partners/>

Please see question 10 for the eligibility criteria of both scholarships.

3. When is the scholarship application open and how can I access it?

There is one scholarship application for both awards. Applicants eligible for the APIA Scholarship will be considered for the AANAPISI Scholarship if they meet eligibility requirements.

The 2023-2024 APIA Scholars scholarship application is open from Wednesday, September 7, 2022, to Thursday, January 19, 2023, at 5PM EST. It must be submitted online:

<https://apply.mykaleidoscope.com/scholarships/apiascholars>. You should register your account under an email you will have access to until at least September 2023.

4. What is the selection timeline for the APIA and AANAPISI Scholarships?

Application Open: September 7, 2022

Recommendation Deadline: January 12, 2023, at 5PM Eastern

Applicant Deadline: January 19, 2023, at 5PM Eastern

Finalists Notified: Mid-Spring 2023

Scholars Notified: Early Summer 2023

Scholars will be required to submit the 2023-2024 FAFSA SAR and their most recent transcript

Scholars Disbursed: Late Summer 2023

5. What are the award amounts available for both scholarships?

The APIA Scholarship ranges from \$2,500 to \$20,000. The AANAPISI Scholarship ranges from \$2,500 to \$5,000.

6. Are the scholarships one-year awards or multi-year awards?

There are both one-year awards and multi-year awards available with both scholarships.

Individuals who receive a one-year scholarship can apply for another scholarship the following year.

An applicant can only receive one scholarship in an academic year, not both.

7. What can the APIA and AANAPISI Scholarships be used towards and how are they paid out?

Both scholarships can be used towards a Scholar's cost of attendance, including but not limited to: tuition and fees, room and board, and textbooks.

Our scholarships are **only** paid and sent directly to a Scholar's college or university, not to the Scholar themselves.

8. Are the scholarships taxable?

The scholarship recipient is responsible for taxes, if any, that may be assessed against your scholarship award. We recommend consulting a tax advisor or financial aid counselor for more guidance. In general, tuition is considerable a non-taxable item.

9. Are there any informational materials that can be distributed about the scholarship?

Yes! Please see our Application Resources page (<https://apiascholars.org/scholarship/resources/>) for our brochure and flyer. Both are available to be disseminated digitally or to be downloaded and printed to whichever group or organization might benefit.

Eligibility Questions

10. What are the eligibility criteria for the APIA Scholarship and AANAPISI Scholarship?

All applicants must:

- Be able to describe their ethnicity, heritage, or ancestry in relation to the countries, territories, or lands in Asia or the Pacific Islands
- Be a citizen, national, or legal permanent resident of the United States. Citizens of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of Palau are also eligible to apply
- Must have applied for federal financial aid, for the 2023-2024 academic year, using the Free Application for the Federal Student Aid (FASFA) by mid-April 2023

For the APIA Scholarship:

- Be enrolling or continuing enrollment as an undergraduate student in a U.S. accredited college or university in Fall 2023
- Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.7 on a 4.0 scale (unweighted), or equivalent, or have earned a GED

For the AANAPISI Scholarship:

- Be enrolling or continuing enrollment as a full-time, undergraduate, degree-seeking student at one of APIA Scholars AANAPISI Partner Institutions, during the Fall 2023 term. Please see qualifying partner campus in question 11.

11. What are the AANAPISI Scholarship partner schools?

American Samoa

American Samoa Community College *Pago Pago*

California

American River College *Sacramento*

California State University, East Bay *Hayward*

California State University, Sacramento *Sacramento*

City College of San Francisco *San Francisco*

Coastline Community College *Fountain Valley*

De Anza College *Cupertino*

Irvine Valley College *Irvine*

Laney College *Oakland*

Mission College *Santa Clara*

San Francisco State University *San Francisco*

San José State University *San Jose*

University of California, Irvine *Irvine*

Georgia

Georgia State University *Atlanta*

Guam

Guam Community College *Mangilao*

University of Guam *Mangilao*

Hawai'i

University of Hawai'i at Hilo *Hilo*

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa *Honolulu*

Illinois

University of Illinois at Chicago *Chicago*

Massachusetts

University of Massachusetts Boston *Boston*

Micronesia

College of Micronesia – FSM *Kolonia, Pohnpei*

Minnesota

Century College *White Bear Lake*

Metropolitan State University *St. Paul*

University of Minnesota Twin Cities *Minneapolis*

Nevada

University of Nevada, Las Vegas *Las Vegas*

New York

Hunter College, CUNY *New York*

Queens College, CUNY *Queens*

Northern Mariana Islands

Northern Marianas College *Saipan*

Texas

Dallas College *Dallas*

Washington

Highline College *Des Moines*

Pierce College *Puyallup*

South Seattle College *Seattle*

University of Washington Tacoma *Tacoma*

Please note that not every institution that has been designated as an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution by the U.S. federal government is a partner with APIA Scholars for the AANAPISI Scholarship.

12. How is Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander defined? Can I apply if I identify as multi-racial/multi-ethnicity?

Applicants that can describe their ethnicity, heritage, or ancestry in relation to the countries, territories, or lands in Asia or the Pacific Islands are eligible to apply. We welcome AANHPI students who are multi-racial or multi-ethnicity to apply.

13. What immigration/residency statuses are eligible?

Applicants must be a citizen, national, or legal permanent resident (green card holder) of the United States to apply. Citizens of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of Palau are also eligible to apply.

14. Do I need to be living in the U.S. to apply?

No. If you meet all eligibility criteria, including attending a U.S. accredited university or college in Fall 2023, then you do not need to be living inside the U.S. to apply.

15. Can I apply if I've previously received a scholarship from APIA Scholars?

If your scholarship has been fully disbursed, then yes, you may apply if all other eligibility criteria are met. This means recipients who will already be receiving funding for the 2023-2024 academic year, whether as a multi-year scholar or deferred scholar, are not eligible.

16. I attend an AANAPISI partner scholar – can I only apply for the AANAPISI Scholarship?

The new APIA Scholars application combines the APIA Scholarship and AANAPISI Scholarship. If you attend an AANAPISI partner school, then you will automatically be considered for both scholarships **BUT** applicants can only be awarded for one scholarship.

17. Can I apply if I'm not the first in my family or in the first generation of my family to attend college?

Yes. APIA Scholars welcomes applicants of all family educational backgrounds, and we consider many factors when reviewing scholarship applications.

18. Can I apply if I am not receiving federal financial aid or other financial aid?

Yes. While we require scholarship recipients to submit their 2023-2024 FAFSA Student Aid Report, it is not required to have received financial aid from other sources to apply.

19. Can I apply if my or my family's income is not at or below the poverty line?

Yes, if all eligibility criteria are met. APIA Scholars considers many factors when reviewing scholarship applications, and a student's socioeconomic status is only one part of it.

20. I'm graduating from my undergraduate program in December 2023 – can I apply?

Yes, you can still apply. If you were to be selected as a scholar, we would communicate with the school that your funds need to be used in full during the fall semester. You would also be limited to scholarships that are only a one-year award.

21. Can I apply if I am:

- a. a current undergraduate student?** Yes! Our scholarships are open to anyone who will be an undergraduate in the 2023-2024 academic year.
- b. pursuing a second bachelor's degree?** No. If you have received your associate's and are pursuing your bachelor's degree, you are welcome to apply.
- c. a graduate student?** No. Our scholarships are for undergraduate students only.
- d. a continuing education student?** If you will be a degree-seeking undergraduate student in Fall 2023 and meet all other eligibility criteria, yes.
- e. a vocational school student?** Students must be pursuing a degree-seeking (bachelor's or associate's) undergraduate program in Fall 2023 to be eligible.
- f. an international student studying in the U.S.?** No. Please see question 13 for eligible immigration/residency statuses.
- g. attending/planning to attend a community college?** Yes! Whether you plan to only receive an associate's or continue to a bachelor's, community college students are welcome to apply.
- h. pursuing or received my GED?** If you will have received your GED by July 2023, yes.
- i. a student returning to college after a break or starting college later in life?** Yes! We welcome non-traditional students of all walks, if all other eligibility criteria are met.
- j. currently enrolled in both high school and college?** If you will receive your high school diploma (or GED) by June 2023, then yes, if all other eligibility criteria are met. You will be considered as a graduating high school student for our purposes.
- k. planning on taking mostly online college courses?** Currently, most of your courses for the 2023-2024 academic year should be in person. However, we understand that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to disrupt lives and will allow for mostly online courses as needed.

Application Questions

22. I am having technical issues with the application – what do I do?

Please send an email to help@mykaleidoscope.com and our partners at Kaleidoscope will be able to assist you. You can also send a message requesting assistance directly in the Kaleidoscope platform.

23. I need to request a disability accommodation for the application – what do I do?

Email us at applicant@apiascholars.org and we will work with you to create the accommodations necessary so you can access and submit the application by the deadline.

24. What documents do I have to submit for the APIA Scholarship application?

For the initial application, there is only an optional recommendation letter submitted by a recommender (see the Recommendation Letter section on page for more information).

Applicants selected as scholarship recipient will be asked to submit their 2023-2024 FAFSA Student Aid Report and their most recent, unofficial transcript. These are required to secure a scholarship. If a selected scholarship recipient does not provide these during the scholarship confirmation process, the scholarship offer will be rescinded.

We highly recommend you have completed and submitted your 2023-2024 FAFSA by early April 2023 and get a unofficial copy of your transcript as soon as you have your Fall/Winter 2023 grades.

Any documents sent to APIA Scholars before they are expressly asked for by APIA Scholars will be disregarded.

25. I do not know where I'll be going to college next fall – what do I put in the application?

We ask that you list your first-choice college or one of the colleges you are considering in this section. We understand that most first-time college students do not know currently where they intend to enroll. The institution you plan to attend will not affect how your application is reviewed.

26. I am not sure what my major/intended career will be - what do I put in my application?

If you do not know what you will be majoring in, or if you are currently undeclared, please select “Undecided” from the drop-down menu.

For intended career, put what you are most strongly interested in pursuing and the general professional industry/field that falls under.

We realize these things might change over the course of a few months. Those who are selected as finalists will be asked again what their major and intended careers plans are.

27. I don't have any extracurricular activities or work experience – what should I do?

APIA Scholars considers many factors when reviewing scholarship applications and understands that for a variety of reasons not everyone may have had the ability to have extracurricular activities and/or work experience. That is why those sections are optional. We have a section of the application called Life Circumstances and Family Responsibilities you can use to talk about

why you might not have been able to have the extracurricular or work experiences you would hope.

28. How long do the essay responses on the application have to be? Do I have to answer each essay prompt?

You have up to 500 words per essay to answer each question. While there is no minimum word count, please note you should take more than few sentences per prompt to thoughtfully answer each. The essays are an important part of the application, and the area where APIA Scholars is best able to understand who you are as a whole person.

You have 4 essay prompts, and you get to pick which you answer. You will either respond to 3 of the prompts, or 2, if you elect to have a recommender submit a letter instead. You must answer every part of each essay prompt you choose to respond to.

29. Do I have to complete my application in one sitting? Can I change it after I submit it?

Your application will automatically save up through the last step, and you can edit it as much as you need to before the deadline. However, once you click “Submit”, that is the final submission of your application, and you cannot go back and edit your application.

If there is a key error, such as an issue with your email address, phone number, or contact information of your recommender (if you selected that option), then you can reach out to help@mykaleidoscope.com for assistance. As the deadline approaches, however, there will not be capacity to assist in this matter. Please double check your application before submitting.

30. How do I know if my application is received and fully complete?

You will receive an automatic email when you submit your application. You can also check your dashboard in Kaleidoscope to see if it was submitted.

If you did not choose to have a recommendation letter submitted, once your application is submitted, then it is fully complete.

If you did choose to have a recommendation letter submitted, your application is only fully complete once the recommendation letter is received. You can check your dashboard for the status of the letter, and you will receive an automatic email as well when it is submitted.

31. Can I submit my application after the deadline?

No. The application has a firm deadline of January 19, 2023, at 5PM Eastern Time. Recommenders have a firm deadline of January 12, 2023, at 5PM Eastern Time. If your recommender does not submit their letter by the recommender deadline of January 12th, 2023, you have until January 19th, 2023, to submit a third essay response. Any application, including recommendation letter, which is not completed in full by that time will be automatically disqualified.

32. Are there resources to help me create a strong application? What if I am an English language learner?

Please see our Application Resources page for an application guide, tips for a strong application, as well as guidance that can be sent to recommenders for letters of recommendation:

<https://apiascholars.org/scholarship/resources/>.

APIA Scholars encourages you to talk to your school, college counselor, or a trusted teacher/instructor to help you navigate the application process if English is not your first language. We understand the difficulty that many of our communities face in learning English and take that into consideration as we review our applications.

Recommendation Letters/Recommenders

33. Is a recommendation letter required?

No. Applicants can choose whether to answer 3 essay prompts or answer 2 essay prompts and have a recommender submit a recommendation letter on their behalf.

34. When is the optional recommendation letter deadline? Can it be submitted late?

The deadline for recommenders to submit their recommendation letters is January 12, 2023, at 5PM Eastern. **This is an earlier deadline than the application deadline.**

Late recommendation letters will not be accepted. Instead, all applicants with missing recommendation letters at that time will have until the applicant deadline on January 19 to write a 3rd essay response. It is the applicant's responsibility to make sure their application is submitted by the deadline.

35. Who can write a recommendation letter?

Anyone who can speak to your character thoroughly and thoughtfully – this is not an academic recommendation letter. People to consider could include teachers, professors, school counselors, faith and spiritual leaders, work supervisors, volunteer coordinators, mentors, coaches, extracurricular activity leaders. **Recommenders cannot be relatives or close friends.**

36. How is a recommendation letter submitted?

Recommendation letters are only accepted online via our application platform. Applicants will enter the contact information of their recommender (First Name, Last Name, and Email Address). It is especially important to put in the correct email address for the recommender. Emails are automatically sent to the recommender from Kaleidoscope, asking them to register on the Kaleidoscope platform, login, and complete the recommendation form for the applicant. If the applicant put in the incorrect email address (including using a different version of a recommender's email), the recommender will not be able to see the recommendation form.

We have specific instructions of what we want included in the recommendation letter. It is important that recommenders follow these instructions – they are included in the invite email and on the platform in the recommender dashboard.

37. How will I know if my recommender submitted their letter?

You will receive an email when your recommender has submitted the recommendation letter. Please note your recommender must submit their recommendation letter before the deadline of January 12, 2023, at 5PM EST.

38. My recommender is having technical issues with the platform – what should we do?

Please have them reach out to the Support Team at help@mykaleidoscope.com, asking them to include your name and email in their email.

39. Can I change my recommender?

You should avoid changing your recommender if possible and think thoughtfully before you put in the recommender's information. You must put in your recommender's information in your application to advance to the next step of the application. Once you've saved your recommender's information and clicked "Next Step" and email will be sent to your recommender. If you choose to change your recommender, be sure to let your original recommender know about this in case they have already began the process of completing your recommendation. If you wish to change your recommender after you have submitted your application, please reach out to help@mykaleidoscope.com for support. Please note that all recommendation letters must be received by January 12th, 2023, at 5PM Eastern Time, so if you must change your recommender, do not wait until the last minute.

40. Is there any guidance for recommenders?

Yes, please refer to our Guidance for Recommenders document located on our Application Resources page: <https://apiascholars.org/scholarship/resources/>.

My question was not answered in this FAQ – what should I do?

Please email applicant@apiascholars.org, providing in as much detail as possible the question you have/issue you are experiencing. We receive a high volume of emails when the application is open and will respond to your inquiry as quickly as we are able.