



FND SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION GUIDELINES

How to Write a *Winning*
Scholarship Application

What Opportunity Does the *Application* Provide You?

§ The application may be the *only* way the Jan La Belle Scholarship Committee has for knowing:

- Who you are;
 - What you can do;
 - What you have accomplished;
 - How you have achieved your accomplishments; and
 - What you want to do for your future.
- The application may be your *only* way to **SHINE** and **STAND OUT** beyond all other applicants.



How Do You Begin?

- § Read the application fully and/or have someone who is familiar with scholarship applications to review it with you (e.g. parent, teacher, school counselor).
- § Note any questions or points of confusion you have.
- § Contact *Family Network on Disabilities staff* with your questions.
- § Develop a schedule for each step of completing the application by working backwards from the DUE date. Stick to those timelines so you can avoid last minute panic!
- § Start early gathering documents or information that is requested on the application.

How Do You Begin?

- § Don't be afraid to ask for help. If you have never completed a scholarship application, it can be tricky.
- § This is your chance to tell the Committee why you are a deserving, worthy young person who has been working hard, realizes your gifts and talents, has given back to others, wants to continue to learn and achieve, believes in yourself, and needs some financial support.
- § Be honest, but be rich in what you write.
- § Use as much space as you want. Don't limit yourself to the form. Add pages if you want.
- § Talk to a knowledgeable person about what he/she thinks the Scholarship Committee is looking for. Other people can give you advice, a different perspective, and honest feedback.

How Do You Decide Which Option?

- § **Consider Option A:** If you have excelled academically, met standards appropriate to or beyond your capacity, and/or are interested in attending a program in a community college, college, university, or other educational institution.
- § **Consider Option B:** If you have completed a high school or general equivalent diploma and are interested in a career or trade that requires more study or certification at a community college, college, university, trade school, or other institution.

What Documents Do You Need?

- § **Two letters of reference** – Give careful thought to who you can ask for a reference. The Scholarship Committee is looking for responses from an adult about your **unique** abilities, attitudes, and accomplishments. Think about who knows you best; who has experienced or observed your commitment to and involvement in learning through meaningful activities in school, in the community, and at work; and who can write a high quality letter that honestly communicates things about you that would impress someone else.

What Documents Do You Need?

- § A completed **Verification of Disability** form included in application. Please have a medical or educational professional complete the form.
- § A **high school transcript**.
- § **Proof of your activity and accomplishments** (e.g., certificates, awards, letters of commendation, pictures of trophies or ribbons, postsecondary or trade school or program acceptance letter, etc.)
- § Standardized **assessment** scores (Option A only)

What Do You Need to Complete a High Quality Application?

- § **Desire** to do your best
- § **Belief** in yourself
- § **Support** of friends and adults
- § **Legible penmanship or access to a computer** word processing program (Typed or word processed applications most often look more professional than one that is handwritten.)
- § **Standard English grammar, spelling, punctuation, and writing skills** (ALWAYS proofread, have someone else review, and use Spell-check on your application.)





What is Important to Think About for the Personal & Career Aspirations Section?

- § Where do you want to be in **two years? Four years?**
- § **Why** do you want to be doing that?
- § How have you **developed those goals?**
- § What important events have you participated in that have **prepared you** for starting to work on those goals?
- § How have **others impacted** your decisions?
- § What **internal abilities or dispositions** do you have that may impact your success?



What is Important to Think About for the Financial Resources Section

- § **Why** do you need the Jan La Belle Scholarship?
- § What **other financial resources** will you need to achieve your goals?
- § How are you going to **ensure you have the financial support** necessary for you to complete your goals?
- § What **other scholarships** have you received?
- § What **methods** have you used to find financial support?
- § **Who** can support you with financial assistance or in obtaining financial resources?



What is Important to Think about for the Community Service Section?

- § What types of **volunteer work** have you done, no matter how “small” you think it seems? (For your neighborhood, community, a community agency or program, a civic organization, church, school, child care center, an individual needing assistance, an animal shelter, etc.)
- § What did you **do** during these experiences? (When, where, number of hours, type of activity, your role, who else was involved)

Your letters of reference and documentation should definitely address these activities!



What is Important to Think about for the Community Service Section?

- § When you were involved in your volunteer work or community service, what did you learn about yourself? Others? the World?
- § After you completed your volunteer work or community service, what did you learn about yourself? Others? the World?
- § How did the experience make a difference in your life? Others? the World?
- § How did you integrate what you learned about yourself, others, and the world into your life?

What Do I Do After I Complete the Application?

- § Review it, proof it, have others read it, edit it and read it again!
- § Make sure you have all the documents you need to include in your application package.
- § Ask yourself this most important question, “If I were a Scholarship Committee member and I read 150 applications, would **this application stand out?**” If the answer is, “No” or “Maybe” make changes to it!
- § Remember many individuals such as yourself want or need financial assistance to achieve their dreams and goals. You want the Committee to say, “Although there are many great applications written by many deserving individuals, **THIS one STANDS OUT** above all the rest!”

Things to Remember!

- § **Submit the application package as early as possible AFTER you are sure there are no errors and it thoroughly has answered all the questions, includes all the documentation you need, and is the best representation of yourself that is possible!**
- § **Check with FND to make sure your application was received and had all the required information.**
- § **Although no rating is given for attractiveness, an application packet that is easy to read, flows smoothly, includes a great deal of information, and clearly shows your assets and activities goes a long way in impressing the Scholarship Committee members!**

Family Network on Disabilities
is here to **support YOU!**

If you have any questions,
please contact us!

The best of luck to each of you.

We wish we could provide
financial scholarships
for **ALL** applicants!