The Smith Scholarship Foundation, Inc.

This is a fillable PDF that needs to be saved to your computer. It is not saved on our website, so remember where you save it so you can come back to it as often as you like. Save it frequently so you do not lose your work (Ctrl+S on Windows or Cmd+S on MacOS).

Application Timeline & Important Dates

Application deadline: January 15, 2027.

Your FAFSA, including your Student Aid Index (SAI), must be filed before you submit. You may start and work on the application before the FAFSA is finished.

You can return to this application as many times as you need. Mark each checkbox on this page as you finish that item. Your application cannot be submitted until every box is checked and you have signed the certification in Section 13.

Sections to complete

- ☐ Section 1 — Applicant Information (your details, parent information)
- ☐ Section 2 — Household & Family Context (household roster, benefits, household costs)
- ☐ Section 3 — Financial Need (FAFSA, Pell Grant, SAI, Work-Study)
- ☐ Section 4 — Your School & Academic Opportunities (coursework, GPA, test scores, programs)
- ☐ Section 5 — Colleges You Are Applying To
- ☐ Section 6 — Other Scholarships
- ☐ Section 7 — Work & Responsibilities at Home
- ☐ Section 8 — Community Service & Volunteer Activity
- ☐ Section 9 — Activities, Leadership & Athletics
- ☐ Section 10 — In Your Own Words (essays)
- ☐ Section 11 — Letters of Recommendation
- ☐ Section 12 — Understanding & Commitment
- ☐ Section 13 — Certification & Signature

Attachments you must include when submitting your application (all attachments should be submitted as PDFs unless indicated otherwise; no screenshots, and no images should be submitted unless otherwise indicated)

> *For any attachment you don't have a PDF for, you must scan it and then submit a PDF of that scan. If you do not have access to a scanner, please ask your counselor to provide you a PDF version of the document in question, or use a scanner app on your phone that can convert it to a PDF before uploading.*
>
> *A good free scanner app for this is Adobe Scan: download for iPhone or download for Android. It is free, and it saves each scan directly as a PDF you can upload. (iPhones can also scan to PDF from the built-in Notes app, and Android phones from the Google Drive app, without installing anything.)*
>
> *For your essays document, do not upload a Word file: save it as a PDF first. This short video shows how: How to Save a Word Document as a PDF (YouTube). In Word, the steps are File, then Save As (or Save a Copy), then choose PDF as the file type. In Google Docs, use File, then Download, then PDF Document.*

☐ This application PDF filled out with the relevant information in each section.
☐ FAFSA Submission Summary (Section 3)
☐ Most recent transcript (Section 4)
☐ ACT or SAT score report (Section 4)
☐ Essays, as a single combined PDF containing your responses to Prompts A, B, and C and to any optional prompts (D, E, F, G) you answer (Section 10)
☐ Two letters of recommendation, with an optional third (must be provided separately by recommenders whose information you input into the separate recommender intake form – see Section 11 for how to check on your letters)

School counselor

Name	Email	Phone

Recommenders

Confirm with each recommender that they are willing to write a letter for you, then enter their contact information in the separate recommender intake form on the Smith Scholarship application website as soon as you begin your application, so your recommenders have enough time to provide their letters before the deadline. Two recommenders are required; a third is optional. Recommenders submit their letters directly; they are not attached to this form.

Recommender 1 — Name	Relationship to you	Email	Phone
Recommender 2 — Name	**Relationship to you**	**Email**	**Phone**
Recommender 3 (optional) — Name	**Relationship to you**	**Email**	**Phone**

Scholar Application

Thank you for your interest in the Smith Scholarship Foundation. This application asks about your academics, your activities, and your life outside of school, including work or family responsibilities many students carry. There are no "right" answers; we want an accurate picture of who you are and what you have done with the opportunities and time available to you.

> *A note on privacy: everything you share here (your household situation, financial circumstances, and personal essays) is read only by the Foundation's review committee. We do not share your answers with your parents, guardians, or your school. If something you share is especially sensitive, you can label it "Confidential" and reviewers will handle it with extra care. We follow strict safeguards to protect what you share, though, as with any record-keeping system, we cannot promise it will never be disclosed by accident.* ***This is your story to tell, in a place meant to be safe to tell it.***

Section 1 — Applicant Information

Full legal name		**Preferred name (if different)**
Date of birth	**Phone number**	**Email address**
Home address *street, city, state, ZIP*		
High school		**Expected graduation date**
Intended college major or field of study *OK to say "undecided"*		

Parent / Guardian Information

Parent 1 - Name	Parent 1 - Date of birth

Parent 1 - Address (if different from yours)

Parent 1 - Education level

☐ Some high school ☐ HS diploma or GED ☐ Some college
☐ Associate's degree ☐ Bachelor's degree ☐ Graduate or professional degree

Parent 2 - Name	Parent 2 - Date of birth

Parent 2 - Address (if different from yours)

Parent 2 - Education level

☐ Some high school ☐ HS diploma or GED ☐ Some college
☐ Associate's degree ☐ Bachelor's degree ☐ Graduate or professional degree

If you are unable to provide information about a biological parent, please tell us a little about the situation.

A short answer such as "N/A" or "not part of my life" doesn't give us enough to go on. Whatever you are comfortable sharing about the circumstances helps us understand your household.

Section 2 — Household & Family Context

This helps us understand your household, not to judge it, but to see an accurate picture of who is in it and what everyone is doing. Every option below is a normal, common answer; answer whichever fits.

We read every response with care.

Who do you currently live with? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Two parents (married or partnered)
- ☐ One parent (single-parent household)
- ☐ One parent and a step-parent
- ☐ Grandparent(s) or other relative
- ☐ Legal guardian
- ☐ Foster care or kinship care
- ☐ Homeless or at risk of homelessness
- ☐ Other:

Household roster

List everyone who lives in your household, including yourself. For anyone working, include their annual income if salaried or their hourly rate if not (your best estimate is fine).

Name	Relationship to You	Age	Working? (Y/N, employer)	Annual Income or Hourly Rate	In School? (grade/program if yes)	Disabled? (Y/N)	Retired? (Y/N)

For anyone in the roster above who is not working and not in school, mark Y under Disabled or Retired in that row if either applies. If neither applies, check a box below and briefly explain, including which household member it applies to (for example: caring for a family member, between jobs).

- ☐ A serious illness or medical condition
- ☐ Another reason not listed above

Does your household carry significant costs that affect what is available for your education? For example: medical bills not covered by insurance, the cost of caring for a disabled or handicapped household member, a parent's student loans or the college costs of a sibling already in school, supporting relatives in another household, or debt from a family emergency.

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, briefly describe (optional):

Household benefits & circumstances

Benefit or Other Payment	Received? (Y/N)	Received By (name from roster)	Monthly Amount (if applicable)
Child support (including payments received through the state)			
Spousal support or alimony			
Retirement or pension payment (if not already listed in the household roster)			

☐ None of the above

☐ Other (describe and monthly amount, if any):

Section 3 — Financial Need

FAFSA Information

Your FAFSA must be filed before this application can be submitted.

Have you filed the FAFSA? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Pending

Date FAFSA filed (if Pending)

☐ I am experiencing a FAFSA processing issue that is delaying my results

If checked, briefly describe the issue below; you may submit this application without a completed SAI while it is being resolved:

Pell Grant, SAI & Work-Study

Are you eligible for the Pell Grant?	Pell Grant amount
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Pending	
Student Aid Index (SAI), from your FAFSA Submission Summary *Required before submission*	**Has Federal Work-Study been included in any financial aid offer you have received?**
	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not yet offered

SAI explanation required if you are not Pell-eligible

> *We first want to know whether you are Pell-eligible, above. If you are not Pell-eligible due to your SAI, use the space below to help us understand your family's real financial picture: the FAFSA formula does not always reflect what is actually available; for example, it can count income from a stepparent or from a parent who does not live with you or support your household. If you are not eligible for a Pell Grant for some reason other than your SAI, tell us that reason here as well.*

Section 4 — Your School & Academic Opportunities

This gives the committee context for your transcript, not a judgment of your school. Indicate whether your high school offers each type of coursework below, and how many such courses you have completed or are currently enrolled in. *We'd love to hear how you made the most of it.*

Course Type	Offered at Your School? (Y/N)	Number Completed/Enrolled
AP (Advanced Placement)		
IB (International Baccalaureate)		
Dual-Enrollment / College Courses		

Cumulative GPA (0–100 scale) *e.g., 87*

Class rank (if your school calculates it)

> *Report your GPA on a 0–100 scale. If your school reports GPA on a 4.0 scale or in letter grades, you must convert it to a 0–100 scale before entering it here. Your school counselor can help you with the conversion if you are unsure how to do it. A GPA left on a 4.0 scale, or entered as a letter grade, will be treated as invalid.*

Test Scores

There is no minimum test score, but taking one of these standardized tests (the ACT or the SAT) is required.

Which test are you reporting? (check one)

- ☐ ACT
- ☐ SAT

Composite score *Required before submission*

Number of times you have taken that test

> *The Foundation encourages you to take the ACT or SAT more than once. Scores usually improve with each attempt, and many colleges award their own scholarships based on your score, so a higher score can mean more money offered to you directly by the school.*

Do you intend to take it again?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Undecided

If yes, date your next test is scheduled for

College readiness & enrichment programs

Check any of the programs below you have participated in.

School- or district-based programs:

- ☐ TRIO Upward Bound
- ☐ TRIO Talent Search / Educational Talent Search
- ☐ TRIO Educational Opportunity Center
- ☐ GEAR UP
- ☐ AVID
- ☐ These programs were not offered at my school

Other ways you have prepared for college:

☐ A college-access or college-prep organization (e.g., College Possible, a QuestBridge College Prep program, or a local equivalent)

☐ A summer bridge or pre-college program on a college campus

☐ College fairs, campus visits, or job shadowing you sought out on your own

☐ Other:

If you checked any of the above, briefly describe (program name, how long, what it involved):

Section 5 — Colleges You Are Applying To

List every college or university you have applied to (or plan to apply to), and where things stand. This helps us see that you are building a realistic, funded plan, not applying to just one place and hoping.

College / University	Preference Rank (1 = top choice)	Application Status (Applied / Pending / Accepted / Waitlisted / Not Yet Applied)	Institutional Scholarship Offered? (Y/N)

Rank the Schools

Why these schools? For each school listed above, briefly explain why you want to attend: what you learned about its class sizes, course offerings, or specific degree programs that fit your goals, not just its reputation, location, or tradition. Reasons like "my family has always gone there" or "I like their football team" are not, on their own, acceptable; we want to see that you have actually researched the school as an academic and career fit. Number your answers to match the preference rank you gave each school in the table above (1 = your top choice):

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Section 6 — Other Scholarships

List all scholarships you have applied for, in progress on, or plan to apply for, large or small, as well as any you have already been awarded. This scholarship is meant to work alongside your own efforts to fund college, not replace them, and this list is how the committee sees that work.

Applied For / Pending

Scholarship Name	Amount	Status (Applied / Pending)	Application Deadline	Expected Announcement Date (if known)

Awarded

> *If you indicated in Section 5 that a college offered you an institutional scholarship, list it here too, along with its amount and whether it is renewable.*

Scholarship Name	Amount Awarded	Renewable? (If so, for how long)

Section 7 — Work & Responsibilities at Home

Many strong applicants balance real responsibilities outside of school. If any of the following describe you, tell us about it: this counts in your favor, the same way a leadership role or a varsity sport would. *This is a good place to give yourself credit.*

Keep your answers below short; you'll have room to elaborate in the essay prompts (see Prompt A-1).

Paid work

Do you currently work for pay? ☐ Yes ☐ No	**Average hours per week**	**How long have you held this job?**
Employer / type of work		
How do you use the money you earn? *for example: household bills, supporting family, savings for college, personal expenses*		

Caregiving

Do you regularly care for a family member? *for example: a younger sibling, a parent, or a grandparent* ☐ Yes ☐ No	**Average hours per week**
Who do you care for, and what does that care involve?	

Household contributions

Do you regularly handle household responsibilities? *for example: managing bills, translating for family members, transportation, cooking, or cleaning* ☐ Yes ☐ No
Briefly describe what you handle and how often

Section 8 — Community Service & Volunteer Activity

List volunteer or service activities, including informal service (e.g., helping at a place of worship, tutoring a neighbor) as well as organized programs. List a contact person for verification. *Service comes in many forms, large and small.*

> *Use one row for each calendar year you took part in an activity. For example, if you volunteered with the same organization in 2024 and 2025, give it two rows, one for each year. "Year" means the calendar year, not your grade or school year. "Months active" means how many months of that calendar year you were involved.*

Organization / Activity	Your Role & Brief Description	Year	Months Active	Hours per Month	Contact for Verification
Example row (do not copy): *First Baptist Church food pantry*	*Volunteer; sorted donations and packed weekly grocery boxes for families*	*2025*	*9*	*8*	Name: *Mary Johnson* Phone: *(205) 555-0142* Email: *mjohnson@example.org*
					Name: Phone: Email:
					Name: Phone: Email:
					Name: Phone: Email:
					Name: Phone: Email:
					Name: Phone: Email:

Section 9 — Activities, Leadership & Athletics

List school or community activities, clubs, or teams (work already listed in Section 7 need not be repeated here). Note any leadership role in the Role column, and list a contact person for verification. *Everyone has a talent. This is a good opportunity to brag about yourself.*

> *As in Section 8, use one row for each calendar year you took part in an activity. Give the calendar year itself (for example, 2025 or 2026), not your grade or school year, and report months active in that calendar year along with typical hours per month.*

Activity	Role / Position (note any leadership role)	Year	Months Active	Hours per Month	Contact for Verification
Example row (do not copy): *Marching band*	*Section leader, trumpet (led sectionals and helped new members learn drill)*	*2025*	*10*	*20*	Name: *Mr. David Reed, band director* Phone: *(205) 555-0187* Email: *dreed@example.org*
					Name: Phone: Email:
					Name: Phone: Email:
					Name: Phone: Email:
					Name: Phone: Email:
					Name: Phone: Email:

Section 10 — In Your Own Words

Write your essays in a separate document, such as Microsoft Word or Google Docs, then save all of them together as one PDF and submit it with your application materials.

Answer Prompts A, B, and C. Each prompt shows its own word requirement in parentheses. Prompts D, E, F, and G are optional, but we strongly encourage you to answer them; they give the committee a fuller picture of you and allow a better evaluation of your application.

> *This isn't a writing competition; it's how we get to know you. Write in your own voice and include specific, factual details: real names, places, dates, and examples from your actual life, not general statements. Essays must be your own original work. Essays that are polished but vague or generic, or that appear to be AI-generated or plagiarized, will be treated as incomplete and will not be considered, regardless of how well they read. We do encourage you to have someone you trust proofread your essays for errors that could distract from your content: correct grammar, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization.* ***This is a safe place to tell your real story*** *(see the privacy note on page 4). Nothing you write here goes to your parents or your school.*

Applicants may answer one or both of the A prompts. If you answer both, each essay needs its own 300 words.

Prompt A-1 — Responsibility & Growth (Required: answer A-1 or A-2; minimum 300 words)

Many students take on real responsibility at home: a job, caring for a family member, translating for parents, or helping manage a household. Describe a time you took on this kind of responsibility: what did you do, what did it require of you, and what has it taught you about yourself? Use specific details, such as names, places, and dates, rather than general statements.

Prompt A-2 — Responsibility & Growth (Required: answer A-1 or A-2; minimum 300 words)

Some students step up and take charge somewhere outside the home, in a leadership role (team captain, band leader, club officer) or another situation where real responsibility was placed on them. Describe a time you did this: what did you do, what did it require of you, and what has it taught you about yourself? Use specific details, such as names, places, and dates, rather than general statements.

Prompt B — Working Toward a Goal (Required; minimum 300 words)

Describe a goal you worked hard to reach, in school, at work, in your community, or at home, even when the resources or support around you were limited. What did that effort look like day to day, and what kept you going? Walk us through it concretely (that is, with specific, real examples of what you actually did), step by step, not in general terms.

Prompt C — Looking Ahead (Required; minimum 300 words)

Why does earning a college degree matter to you? Describe the future you are working toward, for yourself and for the people who matter to you, and the kind of career and stable life you hope a degree helps you build. Then show us the plan behind it: what research you have done, what a realistic timeline looks like, and the concrete steps you are taking (or plan to take) to get there.

Prompt D — Significant Challenge or Hardship (Optional but encouraged, no minimum)

Every applicant faces some kind of challenge or obstacle on the way to pursuing a college degree: financial hardship, a physical or health-related condition, a disability, abuse, family drama or disruption, academic difficulty, a personal challenge such as shyness, or fear of rejection or disapproval from others, or another kind of difficulty, whether you have experienced it in the past, overcome it, or continue to deal with it now. Describe a significant challenge or challenges you have faced and how you coped or continue to overcome.

Prompt E — Personal Triumph (Optional but encouraged, no minimum)

What do you personally consider your own triumph or success, no matter how big or small? This could be something like tutoring someone and watching their grade improve, helping care for a younger sibling, finally learning a dance routine, or making first chair in band. Tell us about the one that feels most personal and meaningful to you, and why.

Prompt F — Talent or Creative Pursuit (Optional but encouraged, no minimum)

Do you have an artistic or creative talent, traditional or nontraditional? This could be something like music, visual art, dance, or theater, or something less traditional like cooking, gaming, building or mechanical work, fashion, or digital design. Tell us about it and what it means to you. You can add a link to social media, links to YouTube videos if your preferred creative format is video, or attached digital media for formats such as photographs or other visual art.

Prompt G — Additional Context (Optional but encouraged, no minimum)

Is there anything else about your home, school, or community circumstances that you'd like the selection committee to understand as they review your application?

Section 11 — Letters of Recommendation

Your recommenders send their letters directly to the Foundation; nothing is attached to this application. After you submit the Recommender Intake Form (Step 2 on the Applicant Portal), we email each recommender a personal link, and we email you each time a letter arrives.

Before you submit your application, please check on your letters:

- Have you received a "Good news" email from us for at least two recommenders?
- If a letter has not arrived, check in with that recommender. Ask them to look for an email from the Smith Scholarship Foundation, including in their spam folder. We also send them reminders.
- If a recommender's email address was wrong, or they are not able to write for you, open the link in your confirmation email to correct the address or name someone else. We will contact the new person automatically.

Letters are due by January 15, 2027 at 11:59 p.m. Central Time.

Questions? Call (205) 202-4076.

Section 12 — Understanding & Commitment

This scholarship is not a one-time gift or an entitlement, and selection is not automatic or guaranteed. If you are selected, becoming a Scholar is the start of an ongoing partnership: you will be expected to maintain the required GPA, complete the Foundation's volunteer-hour and program requirements, and stay engaged with mentoring and Foundation events as described in the Scholar Handbook. Funding can be reduced, placed on probation, or ended if those requirements are not met. We are looking for applicants who bring real grit, compassion, and a desire to give back, along with hard work. Applicants need to go into this understanding that our scholarship comes with real, ongoing accountability.

☐ I understand that selection is not guaranteed and that, if selected, continued funding depends on meeting the Foundation's ongoing GPA, service, and program requirements.

Section 13 — Certification & Signature

I certify that the information provided in this application is accurate to the best of my knowledge, and that the essays in Section 10 are my own original work: written by me, in my own words, and not generated or substantially written by artificial intelligence or copied from another source. This application is signed by the applicant only; it is not shared with or co-signed by a parent or guardian.

Applicant signature _____

Date _____

Great job; you should be proud of the work it took to get here.