Scholarship Application Guide

Stark Community Foundation is one of the area's major sources of college scholarship support. These opportunities are made possible by generous individuals, families and businesses to benefit students in Stark, Carroll and surrounding counties. To apply, visit starkcf.org/for-grantees/for-students/scholarship-opportunities and click **Begin Your Application.**

Tips to remember:

- Incomplete and/or late applications are NOT accepted. Do not forget to click "Submit Application" when you are completely finished with the application.
- Most scholarship applications are due by April 1 at 11:59 p.m. **We recommend you submit your application by March 1 since some scholarships may require additional information you will not know about until your application is submitted.**
- For security purposes, our portal will automatically log you out after 90 minutes of inactivity.
- Once you submit a scholarship application, you CANNOT make changes.

Please be prepared to upload the following as part of your scholarship application:

- FAFSA Submission Summary – PDF format only. You can access your Student Summary on the FAFSA website at www.fafsa.gov. If you still need to complete your FAFSA online, know that it can take 2-3 weeks to process. If you have general FAFSA questions, please contact your guidance counselor.
- School Transcript – PDF format only. You must provide your most current transcript as of the deadline. If your transcript is in a sealed envelope, please remove it, scan it and upload it as part of your application.
- References – You will need the names and email addresses of guidance counselors, teachers, employers, etc. willing to submit an online questionnaire on your behalf (reference letters no longer required). References **must be submitted by the application deadline**. You are responsible for following up with your references.

Logging In or Creating an Account

1. Visit starkcf.org/for-grantees/for-students/scholarship-opportunities and click **Begin Your Application** to start the process.

2. **If you previously created an account:** Enter your previous login information. If you do not remember your password, click the "Forgot your Password?" link and create a new password.

3. **If this is your first time applying for a scholarship from Stark Community Foundation:** Click **Create New Account.** Be sure to use an email address you will check frequently, even after the school year ends. Using a school (high school or college) provided email address is not recommended.

4. After completing the required fields, click **Next** and create a password. Your password must be at least twelve characters and contain one special character. Once finished, click **Create Account** to finish your registration.

5. An automatic email will be sent to your email address to confirm your account was created successfully. If you do not see an email from Stark Community Foundation (administrator@grantinterface.com), check your junk or spam folder. This email address will be the primary method of communication regarding the status of your scholarship application(s).

Applying for Scholarships

1. You can apply for most of Stark Community Foundation's scholarships by completing our General Scholarship Application. This one application will automatically match you to qualified scholarships and will recommend others that require supplemental information and/or references. The deadline is April 1 at 11:59 p.m.

   If there are additional scholarship opportunities, these opportunities will be listed on the Apply page. Pay close attention to the eligibility requirements and deadlines for these stand-alone opportunities as they vary.

   To begin applying, click **Apply**.

2. Our Online Scholarship Portal will autosave your work after every 100 characters typed or when you begin a new question. You can save your scholarship application at any time by clicking **Save Application** at the bottom.

3. When filling out scholarship application(s), keep the following in mind:

   Questions
   All questions marked with an asterisk (*) must be completed.

   Character Limits
   Pay close attention to character limits. You must shorten your response to fit within the character limit before you can successfully submit your application.

   Uploading Documents
   File upload questions will only accept one document per question, and a file size limit will be noted. If you try to upload a file that's too large or an unaccepted file type, a warning message will appear, and your file will not be saved.

   References
   Most scholarship opportunities require two references, while a few require more. Follow these directions to request a reference via a short online questionnaire.
   - Enter the email address of the reference and click **Compose Email**.
   - Compose a brief email to the individual asking them to submit a reference on your behalf. Be sure to include your full name in the email.
   - Click **Send.**
   - The reference will receive your email and an email from Stark Community Foundation.
   - Check with your references to be sure they received the emails. This step is crucial because spam filters can block emails.
   - You may submit your application(s) before the references have been sent. However, references must be received by the application(s) deadline.
   - The date and time the reference is uploaded will appear on your application below the Compose Email question. This information will also appear in the Applicant Dashboard.

4. Once completed, you can submit your application by clicking **Submit Application**. If you have missed required questions, the Online Scholarship Portal will tell you. All required questions must be completed before you can submit. After submitting, you can view and print the application, but you cannot go back and edit it.

5. After submitting the General Scholarship Application, you'll be redirected to a Confirmation Page listing the opportunities you automatically applied for. You'll also see a list of opportunities that require supplemental questions and/or references. You have the option to complete the questions or decline each opportunity.

6. Click **Continue** to view the first scholarship opportunity that requires supplemental questions. If a supplemental question is used on multiple scholarships, your response will carry across the applications. If you update your response on one application, it will automatically update on the other applications using that question.

7. If you want to apply for the scholarship opportunity, complete the required questions and/or reference requests and click **Submit Application**. If you do not wish to apply for the scholarship, click **Decline Opportunity**. You can always click **Save Application** and return later to complete the questions.

Accessing Your Applicant Dashboard

1. Once you have created an account, you will automatically be directed to the Applicant Dashboard when you log in. You can access your Dashboard anytime by clicking the Icon at the top.

2. In the main dashboard screen, you can see your application status. If you have submitted an application, you can view and print but cannot make changes. If you have saved the application, you can edit it.

3. From the Applicant Dashboard, you can also check the status of your requested references by hovering over the person icon in each scholarship box.

If you have additional questions,
email scholarships@starkcf.org or call 234-458-2905.