

P.E.O. Scholar Awards (PSA) Policies, Procedures and General Information



P.E.O. Scholar Awards are one-time, competitive, merit-based awards for women of the U.S. and Canada who are **pursuing a doctoral-level degree** at an accredited college or university. In addition to recognizing and encouraging excellence in higher education, these awards provide partial support for study and research for women who will make significant contributions in their varied fields of endeavor.

I. ELIGIBILITY

A. A woman is eligible for nomination by a local chapter if she:

- Is a citizen or legal permanent resident of the U.S. or Canada at the time of her nomination
- At a minimum, has a bachelor's degree
- Is within two years of her graduation date and has at least one full academic year of work remaining to complete her **doctoral-level degree** as measured from the time the first award payment is made (August 1). Those in a multiple-degree program (e.g., pursuing both an M.D. and a Ph.D.) must be within two years of completing the entire program from that date.
- Is enrolled in her program at an accredited U.S. or Canadian college or university. Study abroad is permitted provided the student is enrolled in a U.S. or Canadian postsecondary institution.
- Is enrolled part time at the time of nomination, provided she is enrolled full time during the year of the award (see Conditions of Acceptance)

B. A woman is not eligible for Scholar Awards support for a:

- Master's degree
- Certificate program
- Residency, fellowship, specialization, postdoctoral research, etc.

C. The applications of individuals who satisfy these eligibility criteria will be evaluated on a nondiscriminatory basis without consideration of race, age, national origin, religious affiliation, disability or P.E.O. connection.

II. THE AWARD

A. P.E.O. Scholar Awards are one-time, competitive, merit-based awards.

B. P.E.O. Scholar Awards are given once each year for the ensuing academic year. Each is a significant monetary amount that will provide partial support for a year's study. The number and amount of the awards are determined each year in accordance with the funds available.

C. P.E.O. Scholar Awards are announced by May 1 each year. Letters regarding awards are sent to both successful and unsuccessful nominees, with copies to nominating chapters.

D. Certificates of Award are sent to the P.E.O. Scholars following formal acceptance of the award.

E. Awards are paid to the recipients in two installments. The first payment is mailed/direct deposited upon receipt of the student's confirmation of enrollment. The second payment is mailed/direct deposited upon receipt of the student's confirmation of continuing enrollment and first progress report, which is due no later than January 31. The second payment may not be disbursed to a student if it is determined the student no longer meets standards for eligibility.

F. Awards to Canadian women will be paid in Canadian dollars. The only exception will be if the Canadian recipient attends a U.S. university and incurs expenses in U.S. dollars, then payment may be in U.S. dollars if requested by the recipient.

III. LOCAL CHAPTER NOMINATION PROCEDURE

A. Nominations for the P.E.O. Scholar Awards are made only by local chapters, using the online nomination form at www.peointernational.org.

- The chapter should be familiar with the academic status and accomplishments of the nominee and be satisfied that she meets the criteria for eligibility.
- When feasible, a personal interview with the potential nominee is encouraged.
- The local chapter should advise the nominee of the Conditions of Acceptance for the P.E.O. Scholar Awards (see Conditions of Acceptance).

B. Nomination policies to be followed by local chapters include:

- No information regarding the P.E.O. Scholar Awards may be placed on the website of any

college or university, but chapters should encourage colleges and universities to link to the P.E.O. International website.

- In identifying nominees, no formal pre-application process shall be used.
- No more than one chapter may nominate a single candidate.
- Local chapters may not request from their nominee(s) official transcripts or written recommendations. These documents are part of the confidential review process between the Scholar Awards board of trustees and the nominee.

C. Chapter approval is granted by a majority vote at a regular or special meeting.

D. Submission of Nomination and Chapter Letter

- Nominations are accepted from August 20 through November 20.
- The online nomination form and submission instructions are available on the P.E.O. International member website (www.peointernational.org).
- The local chapter completes the Online Nomination Form, which includes a letter (200-300 words) detailing their knowledge of the nominee.
- The nominating chapter will receive an email notification when the application materials are sent to the nominee.

E. Chapter Responsibility

- If a nominee of a local chapter is selected to receive a P.E.O. Scholar Award, the chapter is encouraged to keep in touch with her.
- Chapters are encouraged to support the Scholar Awards project financially.

IV. NOMINEE'S APPLICATION PROCESS

A. Application Materials

- Upon receipt of the Chapter Nomination Form, online instructions and a link to the application are sent to the nominee from the P.E.O. Executive Office.

B. Completion of the Application

- The nominee is responsible for completing the Application Packet and submitting it to the P.E.O. Scholar Awards office by the individually designated due date. Questions by the nominee with regard to the application process should be directed to the P.E.O. Scholar Awards office at (515) 255-3153 or psa@peodsm.org. The P.E.O. Scholar Awards office notifies the nominee upon review of her application.

C. Due Date for the Completed Application

- Each nominee is given 45 days to complete the application. The nominee's due date will appear on her application form.

D. Application Files

- Applications are evaluated and compared, with final decisions made by the Scholar Awards trustees.

E. Basis for Evaluation

- The nominee's proposal:
 - Research-based nominees are asked to describe their research, including an overview of their project, their methodology, the source of their data, the significance of the project and other information of relevance, including findings, patents, etc.
 - Professional program nominees (i.e., M.D., D.V.M., J.D., etc.) are to write an essay about the significance of their chosen field and any experiences, research projects, etc., related to the field that will help differentiate them from their peers.
- It is often better to apply further into the doctoral program when evidence of achievement is more complete, giving a more thorough picture of an applicant's professional work.
- Potential to make significant contributions in their varied fields of endeavor or for a positive impact on society
- Letters of recommendation from three university professors or other professional mentors who can address the quality and future impact of the candidate and her work
- Evidence of scholarly activities – publications, presentations, patents, performances, etc.
- Academic awards and honors – honor societies, scholarships, etc.
- Academic record – grades
- Career objectives
- Unique academic, leadership and global experience

F. Notification

- All nominees will be notified of their award status by May 1.

V. CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE

To receive a P.E.O. Scholar Award, a prospective Scholar must agree to:

- A. Devote full time to pursuing a doctoral-level degree during the year of the award and to maintain a high level of scholarship; students

must be enrolled for the number of graduate credit hours required by their universities to be full time or be enrolled for dissertation credits if in the dissertation phase of degree work. Scholars will be required to submit proof of this enrollment.

- B. Notify the P.E.O. Scholar Awards board of trustees if making a change in her field of study or projected date of graduation
- C. Submit a brief progress report promptly at the end of each semester to the P.E.O. Scholar Awards board of trustees
- D. Honor, as schedule permits, reasonable requests to speak to gatherings of P.E.O. members
- E. Use funds provided for **necessary expenses** incurred while pursuing a doctoral-level degree; funds are not to be used for debt reduction (educational or personal).
- F. Provide a headshot photo as specified, by June 1

VI. PUBLICITY PERTAINING TO RECIPIENTS

Local chapters are encouraged to publicize their support for the P.E.O. Scholar Award recipients they sponsor and share their accomplishments. However, the chapter must receive a signed copy of the P.E.O. Photograph and Publicity Consent Form from the media kit found on the P.E.O. International member website prior to sharing any personal, identifying information for their recipient on news media, P.E.O. websites or social media accounts.