

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

There are some general steps you can take to make sure your scholarship application is viewed as a strong application. Review the following to ensure that your application stands out to the selection committee.

Grammar/Spelling

Proofread your materials before you submit them. Cover letters, resumes and essays with misspellings and typos suggest that the applicant hasn't spent enough time or isn't invested in doing an excellent job preparing the materials. Ask someone else to proofread your materials as well. A second set of eyes can be very helpful.

Proper sentence structure and grammar also indicate that you have put great thought and effort into your work. Reviewers note the quality of the materials. Consider seeking assistance at the Writing Center, located in 300 Carver Hall.

Cover Letter

For Presidential Leadership Initiative Awards, part of the application process is a cover letter indicating why this particular scholarship is fitting for you. If you are applying for more than one scholarship, you can submit one cover letter but must indicate why you would be an appropriate recipient for each award. Note the differences in the foci of the scholarships.

Answering the Question

Be sure that you've addressed all aspects of the essay question. Review your materials and be sure that you haven't missed any aspect about which you are asked to write. Incomplete essays are viewed less positively by reviewers.

Quotes and Other Borrowed Ideas

If you use quotes or ideas that originated from someone else, you must give credit to that individual. This is true in a scholarship essay as well as in general writing. Give credit where credit is due.

Reference Letters

You may want to follow-up with those who you ask to submit reference letters on your behalf to ensure that they have submitted the letters. If a letter is missing, the application is considered incomplete.

If you have specific questions about the scholarship process, please contact Mimi Benjamin in the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs (mbenjami@iastate.edu; 515-294-4420).