



# SCHOLARSHIP FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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## Operational Training

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## Versions

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## Disclaimer

This Knowledge Pack (KP) may contain minor variances of screen captures but the steps are the same.

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this training a Bellevue University employee and student should be able to

- Find answers to the most commonly asked questions about scholarships
- Know where or whom to go to for additional resources or contacts to obtain more specific information or answers

# Frequently Asked Questions

Welcome! This training guide provides answers to the most commonly asked questions by students about scholarships at Bellevue University. It is designed to be a self-service tool to provide students with quick answers to questions about how to search and apply for scholarships; receive assistance before, during, and after submission of a scholarship application; awarding; disbursement; and more. Additionally, the questions are intended to serve student facing employees with retrieving information commonly asked by students about Bellevue University's scholarship processes and procedures to better serve the student and increase the employee's knowledge on the topic.

## Pre-Application Questions

### 1. Does Bellevue University automatically award scholarships?

In most cases, no, in order to officially be considered for scholarships, you must complete the scholarship application in full. Once completed, CommunityForce will match you to the most appropriate scholarships based on your information and circumstances. (Exceptions: Teacher Education Scholarship, Bruin Advantage Scholarship, and university grants.)

### 2. Do I need to be enrolled in order to apply for scholarships?

You do not have to be enrolled in classes in order to submit an application; however, you do have to be enrolled in order to receive a scholarship. As soon as you apply for admission at Bellevue University and you subsequently receive your student ID, you can start applying for scholarships. In order to finalize and submit your application, you must be admitted to the University and program of study. (The only exception to this is for incoming freshmen who have just graduated or are getting ready to graduate high school.)

### 3. Do I need to be admitted to Bellevue University in order to apply for scholarships?

It depends. For new first-time freshmen coming directly from high school, no you do not need to be admitted first in order to submit a scholarship application. However, if you are a new transfer undergraduate or new graduate student, yes, you need to first be admitted to the university and your program of study in order to fully submit your scholarship application. For Ph.D. and DBA students, you must be in your 2nd or 3rd year in order to apply for research-based scholarships.

### 4. Where and how do I apply for scholarships?

Bellevue University utilizes CommunityForce for scholarship management. In order to determine what opportunities for which you may be eligible, you can either search available scholarships utilizing the "search" tab or you will need to complete the actual application. The online application is located at <https://bellevueuniversityscholarships.communityforce.com>. To learn more about the application process, please reference the CommunityForce Student How to Guide at <https://www.bellevue.edu/admissions-tuition/scholarships/pdfs/communityforce-how-to-guide.pdf>.

**5. Can I apply for more than one scholarship? If I am awarded one scholarship, am I ineligible to apply for others?**

You may apply for multiple scholarships. However, be certain to read the eligibility criteria to ensure that you meet the minimum requirements. Like other financial aid, scholarships are applied towards your cost of attendance and combined with other sources cannot exceed this cost. However, other restrictions may apply.

**6. If I am applying for multiple scholarships, should I submit separate applications for each scholarship?**

No, you only need to fill out one application per application cycle or the applications you match too within the CommunityForce site.

*\*This does not apply to the Student Athlete Scholarship Form, Scholarship Renewal Form, Ph.D. and DBA Applications.*

**7. Do I have to apply for scholarships every year?**

Each academic year, if you are interested in being considered for scholarships, you will need to log into CommunityForce and complete a new application in its entirety.

*\* Tip: New scholarships for which you may be eligible are added throughout the academic year; therefore, it is suggested that you log in often and update the Fund Eligibility section within your application by clicking on the "Update List" button. (This is applicable only to the Freshman and Undergraduate/Graduate Applications).*

**8. Do I need to complete a FAFSA to qualify for scholarships even if I am not planning to take out a loan?**

Yes, in order to apply for most scholarships, you must first complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and have the results sent to Bellevue University. Completing and submitting the FAFSA does not commit you to accept anything offered to you, but many times it is required for scholarship purposes. The FAFSA is available on the web at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov). Bellevue University's financial aid code is #002538.

**9. What if I don't qualify to submit a FAFSA? Am I still eligible for Bellevue University Scholarships?**

Yes, students not eligible to complete the FAFSA will be required to complete the Federal Student Aid Estimator provided by the Department of Education. You may access this form by going to <https://studentaid.gov/aid-estimator/>. The completed form must be uploaded to your scholarship application in order to determine eligibility.

**10. What are the criteria for the scholarships?**

The criteria for each scholarship vary based on donor requirements and preferences. Most of the scholarships at Bellevue University require a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA for undergraduates and 3.0 for graduates to qualify. Additionally, many require full-time enrollment, financial need (SAI below 20,000 and for renewable scholarships below 15,000), and are for a specific major/program a student is pursuing.

### **11. What scholarships are available to international students?**

Unfortunately, there are few opportunities for international students. The vast majority of scholarships offered internally at Bellevue University are through donors, not the institution itself. Donors decide the eligibility criteria that surround their individual scholarships and put requirements and preferences in place for the types of students selected to receive their money. At any time, new scholarships may become available that are open to international students. It is suggested that you search via the “Search” tab in CommunityForce to see if any opportunities exist in the term for which you are applying.

There are many agencies and organizations outside the institution with scholarship opportunities that may be available to support international students. Below are some scholarship databases that can be researched to find these opportunities:

- Fastaid: <http://www.fastaid.com>
- Fastweb: <http://www.fastweb.com>
- Scholarships.com: <http://www.scholarships.com>
- Scholarships4students.com: <http://scholarships4students.com>
- The Scholarship Page: <http://www.scholarship-page.com>

You may also consult the International Programs Office to determine if other financial resources exist for international students.

### **12. Can GUILD students apply for Bellevue University scholarships?**

Unfortunately, students who are pursuing courses as part of GUILD Education are not qualified for Bellevue University Scholarships.

### **13. What scholarships are available to graduate students?**

Unfortunately, there are few opportunities exclusively for graduate students. Most of the scholarships awarded through Bellevue University are restricted to local undergraduate students and mainly provided through donors. Donors decide the eligibility criteria that surround their individual scholarships and put requirements and preferences in place for the types of students selected to receive their money. At any time, new scholarships may come available that are open to graduate students. It is suggested that you search via the “Search” tab in CommunityForce to see if any opportunities exist in the term in for which you are applying.

There are many agencies and organizations outside the institution with scholarship opportunities that may be available to support graduate students. Below are some scholarship databases that can be researched to find these opportunities:

- Fastaid: <http://www.fastaid.com>
- Fastweb: <http://www.fastweb.com>
- Scholarships.com: <http://www.scholarships.com>
- Scholarships4students.com: <http://scholarships4students.com>
- The Scholarship Page: <http://www.scholarship-page.com>

You may also consult with the Graduate Enrollment Office to determine if other financial resources exist for graduate students.

#### **14. Does Bellevue University offer merit-based aid?**

Bellevue University does offer a one-time grant for community college transfer students who have earned the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) distinction.

#### **15. Are all scholarships based on GPA?**

Most scholarships at Bellevue University are needs-based, not merit-based. Scholarship awards are made based on your overall scholarship application (essays, activities and accomplishments, financial need, GPA, etc.). For most, you must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 (undergraduate) or 3.0 (graduate) for initial eligibility and consideration.

#### **16. Am I required to enroll full-time to receive a scholarship?**

Each individual scholarship in the “Search” tab lists the eligibility criteria to be considered and subsequently be awarded.

### **Application Process Questions**

#### **1. I do not know my Student ID; does this mean I can’t apply? Where can I go to get my Student ID?**

If you are a new student to the University, you can contact your Admissions Counselor and your Student ID can be provided to you. If you are a returning student, you can ask your Student Coach. It is always a good idea to keep track of your Student ID number as you will need this to log into your CommunityForce application, Blackboard, and BRUIN Student Portal.

#### **2. After I filled out the “Search by Scholarship Eligibility” fields, it brought up some scholarships, but I do not understand how to apply for them.**

Reference the CommunityForce Student How to Guide at <https://www.bellevue.edu/admissions-tuition/scholarships/pdfs/communityforce-how-to-guide.pdf> for a step-by-step walk-through to apply for scholarships.

#### **3. Who do I contact if I am experiencing a technical problem with login?**

Please contact Bruin Support Services via

Email: [BruinSupportServices@Bellevue.edu](mailto:BruinSupportServices@Bellevue.edu) (24 hour ticket submission)

Phone: 1.402.293.2000 or 1.800.756.7920 - Press option 4 for technical support

#### **4. I am trying to input answers for the essay questions, and they will not save. What do I do?**

If you are trying to right-click and “paste” without success, try “Ctrl+V.” If you are still experiencing issues, please contact [scholarships@bellevue.edu](mailto:scholarships@bellevue.edu) or call 402-293-2000 and press option 0 or toll free 1-800-756-7920 and press option 0 for assistance.

#### **5. What types of attachments can be uploaded into my scholarship application ?**

Formats accepted for attachments include doc, docx, pdf, jpg, bmp, xls, or xlsx. Any attachment with a .zip, .exe, .bat, .scr or .ps1 file extension will be blocked and automatically deleted because these types of attachments are seen as threats to Bellevue University security.



## **6. Where can I get help with writing the essay question answers?**

Unfortunately, we are not able to assist you in the completion of the actual scholarship application or to assist in writing any scholarship essays since this could cause bias. If you need assistance with scholarship essay writing, you are strongly encouraged to contact the Bellevue University Writing Center at <http://www.bellevue.edu/student-support/writing-center/writing-center>. The Writing Center's services are free to students. If you cannot attend a face-to-face session, you can schedule an appointment for an online eTutoring Consultation. It is strongly suggested that you have another individual review your application prior to submission. This is to ensure all spelling and grammatical mistakes are caught and corrected before it is read by the review committee.

*\*Due to a large volume of applications, minor writing mistakes can cause you to not be selected. Ensure your application has been thoroughly checked before submitting.*

## **7. Can I use Chat GPT or other AI tools to help me with my essays?**

Applicants can certainly use AI tools to help them edit and refine their essays after the student has already written them. On the other hand, using Chat GPT or AI to initially and fully write the essay answer(s) is prohibited and will cause the applicant to be disqualified from scholarship consideration altogether.

## **8. Who should I use as a recommender?**

Unless otherwise stated in the requirements, recommendations should come from non-family members. Additionally, friends and roommates should not be asked to provide a scholarship recommendation either. For merit or academic related scholarships, you should ask a current or former instructor, teacher, or an academic advisor/student coach. For general or financial need related scholarships, you can ask a co-worker, supervisor, community advocate, financial counselor, coach, or instructor. Please choose individuals who know you well and are able to express your qualifications to the Bellevue University Scholarship Committee (i.e. character, academic achievements, financial need, and/or experiences) for such award(s).

Selecting someone who does not know you well enough to provide a thorough recommendation based on the areas in the online recommendation form could negatively affect your chances of receiving a scholarship. Be sure to always give your recommender enough time to complete the online recommendation and advance notice that you are sending him/her a recommendation request. This will help him/her to plan his/her time accordingly and will only benefit you in the long run.

## **9. There are many scholarships listed when I complete the “Search by Scholarship Eligibility” fields on the Search page, yet when I check the Fund Eligibility in my application, I only qualified for a few. Why is that?**

The Search by Scholarship Eligibility feature displays a comprehensive list of scholarships offered through Bellevue University, some of which may not be available during the current application cycle. The Fund Eligibility section is used to determine which scholarship opportunities you are truly eligible to apply for during the current cycle based on the information that has been gathered in your application.

## Post-Submission Questions

### **1. What is the status of my application? How do I know if I was awarded or denied a scholarship?**

If you have been awarded a scholarship, you will be notified via email on the specified notification dates listed on the main scholarship webpage. If you were not selected, you will not receive an email.

You can check the status of scholarships for which you applied by logging into your CommunityForce scholarship application. The email address used will either be your my365.bellevue.edu email account assigned to you by the University, or the email address you provided when you first logged into your CommunityForce application, if you have not yet been assigned a my365.bellevue.edu account.

Be sure to check your “spam” folder or “junk” mail as some email servers do try to block these emails. The email address from which you will receive award letters is admin@communityforce.com. Please add this email address to your trusted contacts so you can easily receive the emails.

### **2. How much is the award I am receiving?**

You are selected as a prospective recipient for the scholarship in question until you confirm acceptance of it. Scholarship award amounts vary by scholarship. The individual award letters indicate the award amount. To verify how this will be split and applied to your account, email scholarships@bellevue.edu.

Once you fulfill the requirement(s) for acceptance of your scholarship(s), the awards will be added to your other financial aid (so you do not have to report it).

### **3. Will my scholarship be taxed?**

Bellevue University complies with all tax reporting requirements for scholarships, grants and other financial assistance. Therefore, the receipt of some scholarships or grants may have tax consequences. As a recipient of a scholarship or grant, students are responsible for complying with all tax requirements related to the receipt of such funds. For questions, please contact your tax accountant or tax attorney.

### **4. What steps do I need to take to accept my award?**

The acceptance process varies by individual scholarship. You should reference your award letter regarding what steps need to be taken and follow all instructions accordingly. Feel free to utilize the CommunityForce How to Guide at <https://www.bellevue.edu/admissions-tuition/scholarships/pdfs/communityforce-how-to-guide.pdf>.

**5. Can the scholarship money I was just awarded pay towards a previous term's balance within the same academic year?**

Unfortunately, no, current scholarship awards cannot be used toward past due balances even if they were accrued within the same academic year as the award. Scholarships are awarded for the current term and/or moving forward.

**6. Can the scholarship money for this academic year be applied to cover last academic year's balance?**

Unfortunately, no, scholarship awards cannot be used to pay toward a previous academic year's balance.

**7. Will my scholarship be awarded to me again next year?**

No, this is not an automatic process. The only way you will receive the same scholarship is if you apply for it and are selected again.

*\*If awarded a renewable scholarship and all conditions and programmatic requirements listed on the Acknowledgment Form are met, and the renewable scholarship form is completed, these scholarships will auto-renew.*

**8. To whom do I address the donor thank you?**

You will address the donor as it is written in your award letter.

**9. Where do I submit my thank you/acknowledgement form/picture?**

All acceptances are completed in CommunityForce. If you are selected as a prospective recipient for the scholarship(s), you will have a total of seven (7) days to complete the acceptance process. If you are unable to meet the deadline, please contact [scholarships@bellevue.edu](mailto:scholarships@bellevue.edu) right away; otherwise there may be a delay in processing and/or award(s) may be cancelled. The scholarship award letter(s) outline all the details surrounding award acceptance.

**10. I was awarded a scholarship and do not see it listed in my Financial Aid, when will this award be listed? When will the award disburse?**

Once you complete the acceptance process and all documentation required is submitted or completed within CommunityForce, Financial Aid will be notified of your award and will list it with your other Financial Aid within one to two weeks. (During peak times, this may take anywhere from two to four weeks). You can view your award(s) by logging into the Financial Aid portal.

Disbursements will not take place until you are enrolled and participation verification in all classes has taken place (usually 7-14 days after the start of classes).

## Other Related Questions

### 1. What is Prior Prior Year (PPY)?

Prior Prior Year (PPY) refers to a federal policy enabling students and families to file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) using tax and income information from two years previous to the aid year.

### 2. How does Prior Prior Year (PPY) work?

Beginning with the 2017/18 Aid Year, students will use the income and tax information from an earlier tax year to fill out the FAFSA as early as October 1, rather than beginning on January 1 of the following calendar year. The earlier submission date and use of prior prior year (PPY) tax and income data is a permanent change enabling students to complete and submit a FAFSA as early as October 1 every year thereafter.

### 3. How does Prior Prior Year (PPY) relate to applying for scholarships at Bellevue University?

Using tax and income data from two years ago in order to complete and submit the FAFSA for the next academic year will provide Bellevue University the information needed to award needs-based scholarship funds earlier, thus allowing students to be more financially prepared for the following academic year months in advance.

### 4. Can you tell me if my FAFSA has been received and/or reviewed? Can you tell me the amount of Pell Grant I am receiving?

Your Admissions Counselor/Student Coach is a great resource! They can inform you if your FAFSA has been received by Bellevue University and if it has been processed. They may also be able to provide you with some insight into the types of federal and state funding available but will not be able to quote you exact amounts of any type of funding before your financial aid is packaged, accepted, and any verification requirements are satisfied.

### 5. Besides scholarships, what other grants or aid is there for me?

- Title IV grants are determined based upon the results of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). You must complete a FAFSA application every year to determine this eligibility as it could change based on your family's financial situation.
- Institutional grants are typically awarded on the front end from the Enrollment Office. Your Admissions Counselor should discuss with you any institutional grants that you may qualify for; and if so, he/she can submit for the processing and awarding of those. Not all students are eligible for institutional grants, as they are very specific.

## 6. What is a book waiver?

A book waiver allows eligible students to purchase all or a portion of their books from the Bellevue University Bookstore using their excess financial aid funds. The amount spent is then added to the student's account to be paid when their aid is disbursed.

If you have submitted the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), you may be eligible for a book waiver after your financial aid award is complete. If the combined funding sources (i.e. Federal Direct Student Loans, Pell, SEOG, Nebraska Opportunity Grants, scholarships, etc.) exceed the cost of tuition, fees, and other direct expenses, you may qualify for a book waiver to help with the cost of books.

You can request a book waiver no earlier than 30 days prior to your class start, and no later than the end of the first week, by contacting the Bruin Support Services at 800-756-7920, press option 0, or [BruinSupportServices@bellevue.edu](mailto:BruinSupportServices@bellevue.edu). If interested in finding out if a book grant could be an option, you should contact your Admissions Counselor.

## 7. What is a book grant? Is a book grant the same as a book waiver?

A book grant is not the same as a book waiver. A book grant is not based on a cumulative total of funding that exceeds the cost of direct expenses. Instead, book grants are additional funding awarded to you that can be used towards the purchase of books.

## 8. If an external scholarship asks for proof of enrollment, what should I do?

You can request enrollment verification certificates to be sent to an external scholarship organization or committee, by logging into BRUIN and accessing the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) Self-Service Tools:

Step	Action
1.	Go to <b>BRUIN</b> at <a href="http://bruin.bellevue.edu">bruin.bellevue.edu</a> .
2.	Go to the <b>ACADEMIC RECORDS</b> tile.
3.	Click on the <b>ENROLLMENT VERIFICATION</b> option.
4.	Complete all applicable the fields under the <b>NEW REQUEST</b> page.
5.	Click on the <b>SUBMIT</b> button.
	<b>End of Procedure</b>

**9. I have received a scholarship from an organization outside Bellevue University, what should I do?**

You need to be sure to follow up with any external organizations that have selected and awarded you a scholarship to ensure the check has been sent to the Financial Aid Office at Bellevue University. Provide the scholarship donor with the following information to ensure it is properly routed in order for the money to be applied to your financial aid package:

Bellevue University  
Attn: Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships      OR      [scholarships@bellevue.edu](mailto:scholarships@bellevue.edu)  
1000 Galvin Road South  
Bellevue, NE, 68005

**10. Are there other scholarships I can apply for outside of Bellevue University to help pay towards my expenses?**

Yes, there are a multitude of outside resources, databases and sites you can check to apply for outside scholarships. To get started, take a look at the Outside Scholarships page on the Bellevue University website <https://www.bellevue.edu/admissions-tuition/scholarships/outside-scholarships> for recommendations of where to start.

Remember, you should NEVER have to pay money, disclose your Social Security Number or bank account information in order to apply for a scholarship. If in doubt, reach out to [scholarships@bellevue.edu](mailto:scholarships@bellevue.edu) and ask for assistance.

**11. How can I order my official transcripts or print an unofficial transcript?**

You can find this information on the Student Records-Transcripts page at <http://www.bellevue.edu/student-support/registrar/transcripts>.

**12. I am interested in studying abroad. How can I apply?**

Email [studyabroad@bellevue.edu](mailto:studyabroad@bellevue.edu) or contact your Student Coach.

**13. Are there scholarships to assist with Study Abroad expenses? I was awarded a scholarship from Bellevue University; can I use it towards Study Abroad courses or expenses?**

We do not have any scholarship opportunities solely available for Study Abroad programs; however, some scholarship awards may be used to fund tuition and fee expenses for Study Abroad programs. If you are receiving a scholarship and interested in a Study Abroad program, please contact [scholarships@bellevue.edu](mailto:scholarships@bellevue.edu) for more information. These requests are considered on a case-by-case basis within our general scholarship guidelines.

**14. Who selects the scholarship recipients?**

Scholarship recipients are reviewed by committees consisting of faculty and staff from various offices across Bellevue University. The committee scores and recommendations highly influence the final selection of candidates.

**15. Who do I contact if I have additional questions?**

Please contact your Student Coach or call 402-293-2000 and press option 0, or toll free 1-800-756-7920 press option 0.

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