

Applying for Scholarships – Podcast Transcripts

Opening:

Hello! My name is Allison O’Hanlon from the Oregon Student Access Commission, also called OSAC for short.

Today, I am going to talk about the process of applying for scholarships.

Body:

Most would agree with me that college is an investment. There are many ways to help supplement the cost of college. Today, we’re going to focus on student scholarships. There are many scholarships for a diverse population of students. They come in all different shapes and sizes varying in award amount, eligibility criteria, application requirements, and other components.

The first step to getting scholarships is finding them. The best place to start is locally because you have less competition in number of applications. Contact your place of employment, your parents’ place of employment, your high school (if applicable), your place of worship, local service organizations and the colleges you are applying to. Many local businesses and organizations have scholarships as well. You may want to spend more of your time applying for local scholarships. After local, you would want to spend your time searching for in-state scholarships. Check the OSAC website and apply for Oregon scholarships. Lastly, you want to search for national scholarships.

There are many credible websites that offer scholarship search engines such as Fastweb , Bigfuture, and Mach25. Check the ASPIRE website for more scholarship links. Online scholarship databases are a great place to start because of the wide variety of scholarships for students. Begin making a spreadsheet that lists scholarships that interest you and that you are eligible for. Write down their application requirements, due dates and other important information. Start writing scholarship essays during your freshman year. By the time you are a high school senior, you will have perfected your essays and saved time during your busy senior year.

Beware of scholarship scams. The main warning signs are charging application fees, no phone number listed for the organization, and/or requests for your personal financial information. When a scholarship asks for a fee, it is always a scam. Legitimate scholarships do not require a fee. Avoid scholarship sources that do not supply a phone number posted for you to call. Often, you can search for scam reports on specific scholarships in a search engine to learn if a scholarship is legitimate. Be on high alert if a scholarship asks for your personal financial information such as a credit card number or a bank account number. Be cautious when giving out your social security number. However, some scholarship providers do need this information to match data to the FASFA data. When a scholarship says it is open to everyone, there’s a chance it could be a scam because usually scholarships have a set criteria. There are many other characteristics of a scholarship scam that can be found by a simple internet search.

After finding scholarships that fit your interests and qualifications, it's time to get started on applying for them. The application requirements can vary, from a resume, multiple essays, letters of recommendations, and even interviews. Spend time being thorough and put your best foot forward in submitting scholarship applications by staying on top of deadlines. If you receive a scholarship, be sure to write a thoughtful thank you card.

Conclusion:

Scholarships can be a great way to help pay for the cost of college. Research scholarships, stay alert for scams, and put time aside for completing the applications.

Closing:

Thank you for taking the time to learn about this important topic. For more podcast topics, please visit our website at www.oregonstudentaid.gov. From all of us here at the Oregon Student Access Commission, this is Allison O'Hanlon. We look forward to helping you again soon.