



Top Ten Tips for a Great Scholarship Application

1. **Start early.** Send the application as early as possible. This will allow extra time to make sure any missing information can be caught and submitted before the final deadline. We want you to have every chance to qualify for an award so we check over the applications as they are received and try to give you an opportunity to send in missing documents, such as a reference letter or a transcript. You have a much better chance of getting help from us if the application is received early.
2. **Be relevant.** You are applying for an agriculture scholarship specific to the potato industry, please refer to the industry throughout your essays and how your education will be relevant to that industry.
3. **Proofread – proofread...and proofread again!** Though we are accustomed to spell check, please don't forget to read for grammar errors too. Make sure it is complete (you answered all the questions) when you proof-read.
4. **Get a second opinion.** Pass on your completed application to another person---another set of competent eyes such as a family friend, counselor or parent is a great start. This person should not change the content of your essay or application but they should look for proper grammar, sentence structure, proper use of tenses, and, of course, misspelled words.
5. **Write a unique essay pertinent to the industry.** Please don't cut and paste from other applications. The committee has much experience in looking at applications and can tell when shortcuts have been taken. Please don't reduce your chance of an award by trying to take the easy way out. (This represents 30% of your score)
6. **Make references count.** Be sure they know you personally and can attest to your qualifications. Give them specific things that you would like them to emphasize. Counselors and "favorite" teachers get asked to write many letters each year and some use a "standardized" reference letter. Because they are an integral part of the application (20% of your score), encourage them to make you stand out by giving them a list of the things you are exceptionally proud of..
7. **Don't take shortcuts with applications or references.** Many organizations (including WSPF) keep old applications so whitening out dates or submitting the same references/application does not send a positive message. The committee is very good at spotting old work, and noticing dates that are "whited out" and it decreases your chance of getting an award.
8. **Have personal (and polite) contact with us.** Please don't use your mom's e-mail address or have her call and ask questions. This is your scholarship and your initiative is what we are interested in.
9. **Do submit the application as requested.** Please no fancy binders, report covers, crazy fonts or extra attachments. The committee is not dazzled by the extras.
10. **Include enough postage on your application.** You would be surprised how many applications arrive postage due! This is a reflection on your understanding of personal responsibilities.

The goal of the Scholarship Committee is to help as many students as possible. Please help us make good decisions, by submitting quality packets.