

# 2026 SCHOLARSHIP CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES



## Independent Order of Odd Fellows

**EXCELSIOR LODGE No. 1**  
1134 First Avenue  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96816-5802  
(Effective March 2026)

### Mission:

The Excelsior Lodge No. 1 (“The Lodge”) merit-based scholarship was established as a member benefit to provide financial assistance for the intended use towards educational expenses which includes but is not limited to tuition, computers, books or other expenses related in pursuit of a higher education.

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### Who can Apply:

- An Excelsior Member-In-Good-Standing of the third degree (MIGS) of The Lodge.
- A legal spouse of a MIGS of The Lodge.
- A child, grandchild or legally adopted child of a MIGS of The Lodge.
  - Please note “Hanai” or extended “Ohana family” members are not legal dependents and are therefore not eligible.

### Qualifying Institutions and Requirements:

The applicant must be accepted to or currently enrolled in one of the following institutions for higher education:

1. College or University
2. Junior or Community College
3. Vocational or Trade School
  - a. To qualify, applicants must demonstrate that their selected program provides a clear and direct pathway to employment within a defined field. Programs should be skills-based, industry-recognized, and aligned with current workforce demands. The intent is to invest in practical education that results in job placement, career progression, or measurable income opportunity upon completion.
4. Certificate Programs (Note: Max Scholarship is \$500)
  - a. Certificate programs are eligible for scholarship consideration when they provide a direct pathway to employment through practical, job-ready skills aligned with workforce demand. Programs must be industry-recognized and offered by an accredited or reputable provider, with a defined curriculum, duration, and clear credential outcome. Applicants must demonstrate that the certification leads to specific job opportunities or career advancement, supported by documentation such as course outlines and expected roles.

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Priority will be given to programs that result in licensure or widely accepted credentials, demonstrate strong job placement potential.

### Student Requirements:

- Minimum overall grade point average **2.50** or equivalent.
- The applicant must be enrolled as a full-time student as defined by the following:
  - Undergraduate/Vocational/Trade: Twelve (12) credit hours minimum per semester.
  - Graduate: Nine (9) credit hours minimum per semester or depending on the institutions' full-time status.
    - Applicants pursuing a graduate program must provide proof of enrollment or acceptance verified by the Dean or an equivalent academic authority (e.g., Program Director or Registrar). Documentation should be issued on official institutional letterhead and include the applicant's name, program of study, and confirmation of active or intended participation in the program.
- See section MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS, Student/Sponsor community service requirement (\*) below.
- Complete application submitted by the due date (See checklist for further clarification).
- In-person discussion with the Scholarship Committee at the lodge.
  - Time will be posted - please check with your Lodge Sponsor.

### Lodge Sponsor (Sponsor) Requirements:

- The Excelsior Lodge No. 1 member must be of the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree for a minimum of one (1) year prior to May 30<sup>th</sup> of the current year, and a Member-In-Good-Standing (MIGS).
- Ensure all lodge member dues for the current year have been paid in full.
- Must have, at a minimum, attended a combination of ten (10) Excelsior Lodge No. 1 meetings **and** two (2) official Independent Order of Odd Fellow (IOOF) Lodge sponsored community service projects starting in **June** of the prior year through **May 31st** of the current year.
  - Fill out Section 'Lodge Sponsor' in the scholarship application, sign and date it.
  - Provide proof of current year's membership by indicating your current year membership number and year.
- Obtain the secretary's signature **prior** to submission to the scholarship committee; by the third Tuesday in May (May 19, 2026). Before the Lodge secretary will sign this application you must **request the Lodge secretary to confirm your listed meetings and/or community service qualifications**. If you need to reach the Lodge secretary please attend a Lodge meeting in person or submit an email to [scholarships@ioofhawaii.org](mailto:scholarships@ioofhawaii.org) addressed to the Excelsior Lodge No 1 secretary.
- If the sponsor is not physically able to comply with this requirement of Excelsior community service, then the applicant will be required to submit three (3) letters of community service performed during the prior year starting in **June** of the prior year through **May 31<sup>st</sup>** of the current year. The letters of community service must be printed on the official letterhead of the organization, dated and signed by the person responsible.

The following are mandatory requirements to qualify for a scholarship:

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS	
MIGS or Sponsor:	Member in Good Standing (MIGS) - See Lodge Sponsor (Sponsor) Requirements:
Student/Sponsor:	<i>Exception to Sponsor Requirements:</i> If the Sponsor is not physically able to complete the community

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	service requirement, then the applicant may perform three (3) community service projects in its place <b>which may include</b> community service with IOOF. Submit letters of confirmation of community service projects with application.
Current GPA:	2.50 or equivalent minimum grade point average
Deadline:	Submit completed application by the <b>due date</b> along with all required documentation. <b>No late applications will be accepted.</b>
Student enrollment status:	Full-time student, less than a full-time student is considered a certificate awardee status.

After meeting the Mandatory Requirements, A point system will be used to determine the amount of scholarship awarded:

Criteria	Points Given	Note:
MIGS (Member in Good Standing)	1	Member benefit (free point)
Community Service	1	Complete at least one community service project. To qualify for this point, submit the Organization endorsed letter as described above. Lodge community service is acceptable.  A student who submitted three letters as a mandatory requirement because the Sponsor was not physically able to perform, may receive the full point.
In-Person Discussion	1	On-time then full points given, if late or not present then 0.5 to 0 points at the Scholarship Committees discretion.
Attendance of Lodge Sponsor	1	Attendance of Lodge Sponsor during the presentation, if not present then .5 to 0 points at the Scholarship Committees discretion
Answering the questions of Friendship, Love, and Truth (See attached) during the presentation	1	Scholarship Committees discretion of points given.
Scholarship Committee member can give (1) discretionary point	1	Note: Scholarship Committee member can not award sponsored applicant
<b>Total possible points</b>	<b>6</b>	

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### Checklist requirements for New Applicants:

Checklist	Requirements	Criteria:
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Proof of Acceptance	An official letter or email from an educational or vocational institution.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Proof of Academic Ability	Recent High School Graduates or College Students; need transcripts either sent to the lodge (at the address above), or emailed from a transcript service. <b>Note: Please send at the end of the semester, or an unofficial transcript is acceptable as long as it has current information. Please follow up with an official transcript when applicable.</b> Scholarship checks will be dispersed no later than September 30, so there will be time to send in information.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Letters of Recommendation	Two (2) letters of recommendation are required. A third letter of recommendation is optional. <b>Letter Specifications</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Authors of the letter can be any of the following but must have thorough knowledge of the applicant and must not be a family relative:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A High School Teacher or Counselor/Advisor</li> <li>b. A College or University Professor or Advisor</li> <li>c. A Responsible Leader Within the Community</li> <li>d. A Current Instructor or Coach</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Must be typed and dated within the same scholarship application year as well as signed by the author.</li> <li>3. Limited to one side of a single, letter-size sheet of paper (8.5 x 11 inches).</li> <li>4. Should include the applicant's ability, work habits, leadership skills and participation in the community, work service, outstanding recognition, personality, and integrity.</li> </ol>
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Digital Self Portrait	Provide an electronic color self-portrait and submit via email to <b>scholarships@ioofhawaii.org</b> specifying "2026 IOOF Scholarship Application" in the email subject line.
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. In-Person Interview The presentation is scheduled at the lodge (1134 First Avenue).	See 2026 Odd Fellows Scholarship Presentation: <b>In person presentation or video presentation (for candidates who have lived off island consecutively for the last 6 months) to introduce applicants and what their background is, their field of study and explain a little of their interests. Required to answer presentation questions (See 'Presentation').</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Vocational, Trade Schools, and Certification Program Applicants.	Official documentation which demonstrates acceptable completion of and continuation of educational path. Please include the length of time of the program required for completion and certification.

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### Returning Applicant Requirements:

Subsequent scholarships are awarded to individuals who have previously received a scholarship from The Lodge and are continuing their educational path. However, if more than five (5) years has passed since the last scholarship award the applicant will be considered to be a new applicant and must submit all information required for a new applicant. In addition to a completed scholarship application the applicant must provide the following which can be submitted separately:

Checklist	Requirements	Criteria:
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Proof of Continuing Enrollment	Graduate or Undergraduate Applicants: Applicant must provide evidence of registration or continuing enrollment for the upcoming school year.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Proof of Academic Ability	Graduate or Undergraduate Applicants: Transcripts either mailed or via email from the school that bears the original signature of the proper school authority. <i>Unofficial transcripts are acceptable at time of submission to save resources.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Digital Self Portrait	Provide an electronic color self-portrait and submit via email to <b>scholarships@ioofhawaii.org</b> specifying "2026 IOOF Scholarship Application" in the email subject line.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. In-Person Interview The presentation is at the lodge (1134 First Avenue).	See 2026 Odd Fellows Scholarship Presentation: <b>In person presentation or video presentation (for candidates who have lived off island consecutively for the last 6 months) to introduce applicants and what their background is, their field of study and explain a little of their interests. Required to answer presentation questions (See 'Presentation').</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Vocational, Trade Schools, and Certification Program Applicants.	Official documentation which demonstrates acceptable completion of (certificate) and continuation of educational path. Please include the length of time of the program required for completion and certification.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. (Optional) Letters of Recommendation:	Letter Specifications: 1. Authors of the letter can be any of the following but must have thorough knowledge of the applicant and must not be a family relative: a. A college or university professor or advisor b. A responsible leader within the community c. A current instructor or coach 2. Must be typed and dated within the same scholarship application year as well as signed by the author. 3. Limited to one side of a single, letter-size sheet of paper (8.5 x 11 inches). 4. Should include the applicant's ability, work habits, leadership skills and participation in the community, work service, outstanding recognition, personality, and integrity.

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### Additional Information:

- a. The student is solely responsible for properly executing and forwarding the completed application to the Independent Order of Odd Fellows as indicated in this Guidelines.
- b. To avoid delays please ensure the year stated in the title of the scholarship application and the criteria & guidelines corresponds to the current scholarship year.
- b. Annual funds are available at the Lodge's discretion. Awardees will be notified by mail postmarked no later than **September 30th, 2026**. To avoid any additional delays please ensure the applicant's mailing address is current and clearly legible.
- c. The scholarship is in effect for a one (1) year period and is not automatically renewable. Applicants must submit a new application every year to be considered.
- d. The scholarship check will be paid directly to the recipient no later than **September 30<sup>th</sup>** of the current application year.
- e. Applications should **NOT** be sent **via Certified or Express mail requiring a signature**.
- f. The following scholarship award maximums are as indicated:
  - Undergraduate College or University no more than **5** years
  - Junior or Community College no more than **3** years
  - Vocational, Trade School, or Certificate programs no more than **2** years
  - Graduate School no more than **3** years
  - Special consideration will be granted on a case by case basis but will require an additional letter explaining the circumstances.
- g. Scholarship submission opens on **May 1st** of the current application year and must either be postmarked or received by The Lodge **no later than May 31<sup>st</sup>** (excluding final grade transmittals) of the current year of application. Any applications received prior to the acceptance date or received after the deadline will not be considered.
  - **Email application and all supporting materials to [scholarships@ioofhawaii.org](mailto:scholarships@ioofhawaii.org)**
  - **If your Sponsor has dropped off your application at the lodge, email [scholarships@ioofhawaii.org](mailto:scholarships@ioofhawaii.org) to confirm that you have submitted an application. Your email needs to be submitted prior to the application deadline with the proper subject title.**
- h. For additional questions in regards to either the application itself or the scholarship qualifications please send an email to [scholarships@ioofhawaii.org](mailto:scholarships@ioofhawaii.org) specifying "**2026 IOOF Scholarship Application**" in the email subject line and someone from the committee will get back to you. Otherwise, please feel free to contact any of the current scholarship committee members. See the current Noble Grand or the Lodge Secretary if you need further contact information.

- i. The 2026 Scholarship Committee consists of the following individuals:

Gwyn Hirasa

Cathy Ehia

Ted Cheong

Melvina Nakao

Frieda Mendez

Jon Hosaka

David Murai

Craig Lee

Richard Bartlett

Jana Paz – Chairperson

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**THIS DIRECTIVE SUPERSEDES ALL PRIOR EXCELSIOR LODGE NO. 1 SCHOLARSHIP CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES, COPIES OF WHICH SHOULD BE DESTROYED.**

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IMPORTANT NOTICES

The scholarship application for the current year will be posted on the IOOF website no later than April 15th of the current year.

The scholarship committee annually reviews the Scholarship Criteria & Guidelines, which includes the scholarship qualifications, so please check the IOOF website at [www.ioofhawaii.org](http://www.ioofhawaii.org) for future updates or ask any scholarship committee member for more information.

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