

FRIENDS OF ZAINAB SECONDARY SCHOLARSHIPS

The Public Education Foundation's Friends of Zainab Secondary Scholarships help support refugee students through the critical years of their High School Certificate. The scholarship was established in 2002 by Dorothy Hoddinott AO, the Principal of Holroyd High School in Sydney's South West. In its first year the scholarship enabled a young refugee, Zainab Kaabi, to complete her schooling and enter university.

There are two scholarships for Secondary students:

- **Senior Secondary Scholarship, Year 10** for students currently enrolled in Year 10 2026 - an annual bursary of \$1,000 will be provided for each of Years 11 and 12.
- **Senior Secondary Scholarship, Year 11** for students currently enrolled in Year 11 in 2026 – a one-off payment of \$1,000 will be provided for Year 12.

The scholarship is to cover educational expenses such as:

- Laptop, iPad or another similar device
- Subject or study related software
- Uniforms and school shoes (including school sports clothing)
- Stationery
- Textbooks
- Incidental fees (e.g. Textbook hiring, costs associated with a specialised subject etc)
- Printer
- Internet connection for study at home
- School excursions and school camps
- Costs associated with work experience linked to VET subjects
- Furniture for study such as desk, chair, lamp etc
- Face to face or online tutoring

If a student leaves public school before the end of Year 12, the scholarship will lapse. ***Please note - if a student's attendance rate falls below an acceptable level at any time during the duration of the scholarship, the scholarship may be withdrawn.*** Any unspent monies at the end of the scholarship period must be refunded to the Public Education Foundation scholarship fund.

Before applying for this scholarship, please ensure that you read the [scholarship terms and conditions available on our website](#).

Basic Eligibility

- A refugee
- Attends an Australian Public School
- Currently in either Year 10 or 11 (in 2026)
- Australian citizen or permanent resident

Note: Students who have applied for protection but do not currently have either permanent residence or Australian Citizenship will be considered on a case-by-case basis

Selection Criteria

To be considered for this scholarship the applicant should demonstrate the following criteria:

- Experiencing personal or socioeconomic disadvantage
- Have a positive attitude towards schooling
- Have made academic progress whilst at school and demonstrated motivation to achieve academically and professionally with an intention to carry on to tertiary education
- Demonstrate they participate in school life
- Demonstrate they contribute to the community and/or in extracurricular activities

Selection Process

A selection panel will review all scholarship applications and assess them against the selection criteria. The selection panel will include representatives of the Public Education Foundation and independent experts. After considering all applications, the selection panel will recommend the selected applicants for the approval of the Public Education Foundation's Board. Successful applicants will be notified in December 2026.

Applicants will be notified of the outcome via email. If successful, the scholarship recipient's school will receive notification.

How To Apply

All applications for the Friends of Zainab Scholarship must be submitted via the Foundation's online portal. You will need to sign up for a [PEF-Apply](#) account to access the form. ***Note – ALL sections of the application, INCLUDING the Principals Supporting Statement must be completed before the application can be submitted.***

Prior to starting your application, you should compile the following information ready to submit:

- Applicant details including:
 - full name
 - gender
 - date of birth
 - phone number
 - address
 - email (***please ensure you nominate an email account you regularly access***)
- Residence status (***copy of a VEVO check, residency Visa, or Citizenship certificate is a requirement. An IMMICARD is NOT proof of residency and will NOT be accepted***) when you came to Australia
- Number of years in formal education before coming to Australia

- Parent/guardian details (at least one but up to two)
- School details:
 - name of school
 - address
 - principal name
 - email
- School Point of Contact – the person at the school who you would like correspondence sent to – name, phone number and email
- Basic information about you / your family:
 - whether you are Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or Pacific or South Sea Islander
 - your mob/family/traditional owner/language group
 - if you are from a Non-English-Speaking Background
 - country of origin of your parents and yourself
 - which languages you speak and are spoken at home
 - how many adults live on your home
 - how many of those adults are working
 - who is the primary caregiver at home
 - how many other school aged (or younger) children live in your house
 - highest education qualification of your immediate family
 - if you have a diagnosed disability or learning difficulty
 - whether you have been in out-of-home care
 - socio-economic background
 - how you found out about the scholarship
- A statement outlining why you are a suitable candidate for this scholarship and how you meet each of the selection criteria. (maximum 400 words)
- A brief outline of your plans after you have completed your HSC/NTCE/QCE/SACE/TCE/VCE/WACE (maximum 150 words)
- A brief explanation of how your Year 11 or Year 12 subject selection and/or work experience will assist you in your future study and/or work goals (maximum 250 words)
- A brief statement on how the scholarship funds would be used (maximum 150 words)
- A copy of **all pages** of your most recent school report ready to upload
- A personal reference from someone who knows you. It could be a teacher, coach, family friend or an employer. (PDF or Word format, maximum 400 words) ***Please advise your referee that our Panels are not in a position to contact them for additional information. The reference should provide all information they feel is relevant.***
- A supporting statement from your Principal which addresses the selection criteria (the applicant must initiate a request ***via the online application*** to the Principal. This will result in an email being sent to the Principal asking them to ***complete a statement of support online***). ***This statement must be completed by your Principal before the application can be submitted.***

Note for Principals: Please be aware that your statement is a critical component of the application form and your feedback is given considerable weight in the process of panel deliberations. The panels are looking for feedback that goes well beyond simple confirmation that the student is enrolled in your school, or that you endorse the application. Generic responses, or copy/paste responses from the applicants or referees' statements WILL disadvantage the applicant.

Draft Paper Application Form

Our online applications are a mandatory part of the PEF process; however, we are aware that this can cause additional challenges for schools assisting with scholarship applications. We have developed a paper application form which will hopefully assist with this process. Please note that the application must still be completed online but some students might like to complete the paper version at home before finalising the online application at school.

If you require a paper version of this application, please contact PEF on scholarships@publiceducationfoundation.org.au

Submitting Your Application

Once you have finalised your application and all elements are complete (including references and supporting statements as required) you can submit it for review.

Applications must be submitted by 5pm on Friday 25th September 2026.

For Further Information

Call the Public Education Foundation on 02 7814 2806 or email us at scholarships@publiceducationfoundation.org.au.

We also encourage you to visit our website to learn more about the Foundation and the work that we do - www.publiceducationfoundation.org.au