

UNA MAY SMITH SCHOLARSHIP

The Public Education Foundation's Una May Smith Scholarship aims to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to participate in and successfully complete schooling and progress to tertiary education and/or training.

The scholarship is named in honour of Una May Smith of Coogee. Miss Una May Smith had a career in education and was involved with La Perouse Public School over a number of years. Miss Smith generously bequeathed part of her estate for the establishment of this scholarship.

There are six scholarships available, one for each Stage group (Stages 1 – 6) in public school. The scholarship will provide financial support of \$1,000 per year for two years (total scholarship value is \$2,000 per student).

The scholarship is to cover educational expenses such as:

- Laptop, iPad or another similar device
- Subject or study related software
- Incidental fees (e.g. textbook hire, costs associated with a specialised subject etc)
- Uniforms and school shoes (including school sports clothing)
- Textbooks
- Stationery and general office items and equipment
- Printer
- Internet connection for study at home
- School excursions and school camps
- Costs associated with work experience linked to VET subjects
- Furniture for studying 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rate falls below an acceptable level at any time during the duration of the scholarship, the scholarship may be withdrawn.*** Any unspent monies at the end of the scholarship period must be refunded to the Public Education Foundation scholarship fund.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

- Attends a NSW Public School
- Currently in Years K - 11 (in 2025)
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- Australian citizen or permanent resident

Selection Criteria

- Potential to succeed at school/University/TAFE
- Positive attitude towards school and high attendance rates
- Disadvantages currently preventing the student from realising potential and/or successfully completing their studies
- Demonstrate they participate in school life
- Demonstrate they contribute to the community and/or in extracurricular activities
- Indigenous community links

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. The successful applicant will be notified in December 2025.

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

How to Apply

All applications for the Una May Smith 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 Principal's 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
- Parent/guardian details (at least one but up to two)
 - name
 - phone number
 - relationship to student
 - email address

- 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 in 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
- **For Primary School Students**
 - A statement from the applicant's parent/carer regarding why the applicant is a suitable candidate for this scholarship and how they meet each of the selection criteria.
 - A brief statement from the applicant's parent/carer on how the scholarship funds would be used.
- **For Secondary School Students**
 - 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 (maximum 150 words)
 - For applicants currently in year 10 - 11, a brief explanation of how your current or proposed 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 your most recent school report ready to upload (PDF or word format)
- A personal reference from an Aboriginal community member which addresses the selection criteria (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 to the Principal ***via the online application***. 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 Community Member references: It is critical that the Aboriginal community member reference is specific and supportive of the student. Generic references will disadvantage an applicant.

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 the following statements may be uploaded as handwritten documents if required:

- Reference from an Aboriginal Community member
- Signed Terms and Conditions

Please make sure they are legible.

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 as required) you can submit it for review.

Applications must be submitted by: **5pm on Friday 9 October 2026 (Primary) and Friday 25 September 2026 (Secondary)**

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