



ACT EDUCATION DIRECTORATE SCHOLARSHIP

Helps students make a strong start to high school,
through Years 7 and 8



Overview of Scholarship

The [ACT Education Directorate](#) is the ACT Government agency responsible for public education across Canberra, from preschool through to college. It supports the Territory's public schools and the students, families, teachers and school leaders who make up that system.

The Directorate has partnered with the Public Education Foundation to offer the ACT Education Directorate Secondary Scholarship. Two scholarships are offered each year to students at ACT public schools. The reason for offering them is a straightforward one. The cost of taking part in school life adds up, and for some families it adds up faster than it should. A device, a uniform, a camp, a set of textbooks, the fees for a sport or a music program – these are the things that quietly decide whether a student gets the full experience of their schooling or only part of it. This scholarship is there to make sure the answer is the full experience.

The Directorate is looking for students who bring a positive attitude to school, who get involved in what their school offers, and who give something back to their community.

Is this scholarship for you? This scholarship is for you if you are enrolled at an ACT public school, you have at least two more years of secondary school ahead of you, you approach your schooling positively, and you take part in school life, your community or extracurricular activities. If that does not describe your situation, the Public Education Foundation offers many other scholarships across Australia. Take the [Eligibility Quiz](#) on PEF-Apply and it will match you to every scholarship that suits you.



Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, the nominee must:

- be enrolled at an ACT public school, which includes ACT public high schools and colleges
- be enrolled full-time, and remain enrolled full-time for the whole of each scholarship year
- have at least two full years of secondary schooling remaining, so that the two-year scholarship can be held to its end. For the 2027 round this means students who will be in Years 7 to 11 in 2027
- show a positive attitude towards their schooling
- take part in school life
- contribute to their community, take part in extracurricular activities, or both
- not currently hold another Public Education Foundation scholarship. A student can only hold one PEF scholarship at a time

The application will also ask for the following, so have them ready before you start:

- an endorsement from the nominee's school principal
- a personal statement from the nominee addressing the eligibility criteria above
- the nominee's school and year level details
- parent or carer consent where the nominee is under 18



Selection Process

All applications are made online through PEF-Apply. Once applications close, they are read and assessed by an independent panel of reviewers. A representative of the ACT Education Directorate is invited to sit on the panel each year. The panel assesses each nominee against the eligibility criteria and against the strength of their personal statement and principal endorsement. It then recommends nominees for the scholarship. Recommendations go to the Public Education Foundation Board for final approval.

Panels meet between October and November. Outcomes are approved by the PEF Board in November, and every applicant is notified in December, whether they have been successful or not.

Once a nominee is recommended for this scholarship, they are no longer available for other PEF scholarships in the same round.



Funding/Assistance

- Each scholar receives \$1,500 per year for two years (a total of \$3,000)
- Two scholarships are awarded each year
- Payments are made by prepaid Visa card in scholar's name and provided to the school
- Before the first payment can be made, the scholar needs to provide the Public Education Foundation with confirmed evidence of full-time enrolment at their public school
- Each payment covers a full scholarship year

At the end of each year, every scholar's progress is reviewed. The review looks at academic progress and confirms continuing full-time enrolment. Where progress is satisfactory and enrolment is confirmed, payments continue into the second year. Where progress is unsatisfactory or the scholar is not enrolled full-time, payments may be paused until PEF is satisfied the scholar can meet these conditions again. Personal, financial or health circumstances are considered, and special consideration can be given so that payments continue.

A scholar can defer their studies for up to twelve months where PEF accepts the circumstances behind the deferment. Personal, financial and health reasons are all accepted grounds.

The scholarship is more than the payment. All PEF scholars have access to Studiosity, an online study support service that connects students with subject specialists for help with their work. Scholars and their families are also invited to the Proudly Public! Awards, PEF's celebration of public education, held annually.

Acceptable Use of Scholarship Funds

Scholarship funds are for costs connected to the scholar's education. That includes:

- a laptop, tablet or other device, and internet access at home
- textbooks, stationery, calculators and course materials
- school uniforms, shoes and sports uniforms
- excursions, camps and school activity fees
- transport to and from school
- tutoring and study support
- fees, equipment and lessons for sport, music, the arts or other extracurricular activities
- specialist equipment or materials for elective subjects

The scholarship is not intended for:

- general household or family expenses not connected to the student's education
- items for another child in the family

The [PEF Scholarship Funds Usage Guidelines](#) will be provided to each scholarship recipient and their school.



Application Form

Applications are completed on PEF-Apply, the Public Education Foundation's online application platform. The person who fills in the form is the applicant. The applicant may be the nominee themselves or someone acting on their behalf, such as a parent, carer or teacher. The person being put forward for the scholarship is the nominee.

The form asks for:

- the nominee's details, including their school and year level
- contact details for the applicant and for a parent or carer where the nominee is under 18
- a personal statement from the nominee addressing the eligibility criteria
- an endorsement from the nominee's school principal

PEF-Apply includes an Eligibility Quiz. Answer its questions and it will match the nominee to every PEF scholarship they are eligible for, not just this one. The answers given in the application form transfer across to each scholarship the nominee applies for, so there is no need to fill in the same information twice. If the nominee does not open the other scholarships, their answers stay with this one.

Notes for referees

- Panels cannot contact referees for additional information, so the reference should include everything the referee feels are relevant
- Give your referee as much notice as you can, and let them know the closing date

Note for principals

Your statement is a critical component of the application and is given considerable weight in panel deliberations. Panels are looking for feedback that goes well beyond confirming that the student is enrolled at your school or that you endorse the application. Generic responses, or text copied from the applicant's or referee's statements, will disadvantage the applicant.

Specific Information

- Personal and school info – your and your parent/guardian's contact details, school name, principal's name and email, and a school contact person for communication
- Background info – cultural background and family details, and disability, care, or language information (if applicable)
- Your most recent school report
- A reference from an Aboriginal community member (max. 400 words)
- A supporting statement from your school principal, requested through the portal

Note for references: avoid generic references, as they will weaken your application.



How to Apply

- Applications must be submitted online via [PEF-Apply](#), the Public Education Foundation's application portal. Register for an account to access the form
- Complete every section of the application form
- Upload the school report, the reference and, if required, proof of residency
- Enter the principal's email address so the system can issue the request for the Principal's Supporting Statement. Do this early – the principal needs time to respond, and your application cannot be submitted without it
- Check that your contact details are correct, as all correspondence about the application is sent by email

Not sure which scholarships you're eligible for? Complete the Eligibility Quiz to see all scholarships that may apply to you. Apply online via [PEF-Apply](#). You will need to sign up before you can access the application form. Make sure all sections are complete before you submit.



Submitting Your Application

- Applications open: July 2026
- Applications close: September 2026

You can save your application in progress and return to it at any time before the closing date. Once you click Submit, your application is sent to the Public Education Foundation and will be reviewed during the Panel assessment period.

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application in December.



Further Information and Contact Details

For further information, please contact the Public Education Foundation Scholarships team:

- Email: scholarships@publiceducationfoundation.org.au
- Phone: 02 7814 2806

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