

# 2025 Evaluation Criteria for Awarding the Sonlight Curriculum Foundation Scholarships

We seek to award scholarships to candidates who are performing well academically AND who demonstrate character in their life. These scholarships are to support those who have purchased from Sonlight Curriculum, used the curriculum and who will further Sonlight's mission in their personal, educational, and professional careers in the Kingdom.

This year, the Sonlight Curriculum Foundation is sponsoring competition for thirteen scholarships: one \$5,000 (\$20,000 total), four \$2,500 (\$10,000 total, each), and eight \$1,000 (\$4,000 total, each) annual four-year scholarships for students who intend to begin college in the Fall of 2024.

## 1. Applicants Information

Please provide the applicants contact information for the purpose of communicating about the scholarships.

## 2. Prerequisites

To be eligible to apply, each family **MUST have purchased** at least five (5) History / Bible / Literature or Core programs (all *purchased from Sonlight Curriculum, Ltd.* in 2000 or later) and each applicant **MUST have used** a minimum of five (5) full History / Bible / Literature or Core programs. Your application should list *all* the Sonlight Curriculum programs you have used to attest to your academic study with Sonlight. We must be able to validate your purchase from our records and/or your proof of purchase.

NOTE: History / Bible / Literature programs have gone by different names over the years. They include Basic, Core, Core Ultra™, Core Plus™, Newcomer, First Time Curriculum, Multi-Subject, and All-Subject Packages. All such programs included a History / Bible / Literature Instructor's Guide, plus Readers/Literature, Read-Alouds, and History programs for the same year or level. Many packages also included Bible programs. At the high school level, this includes both a History/Bible module and a Literature/Language Arts module.

For the purposes of this scholarship competition, History / Bible / Literature purchases may be made either as a single package or in pieces over time. However, if such purchases are made in pieces over time, the entire program must have been purchased in a period of no more than 12 months. If you purchased only pieces of a program and not the whole, or if you purchased the equivalent of a whole, but over a period of more than 12 months, such purchases will NOT count toward qualification for the scholarship competition.

**NOTE:** While we are pleased to accept and evaluate applications for those using any five History / Bible / Literature programs, we **will give significantly added weight** to those applicants that have used our curriculum *most recently* and *at the higher levels*.

### **3. Scholarship Categories**

We are offering these scholarships based upon two different sets of criteria (one called Green and the other Blue). You may apply to either set, but not both. Indicate on the application which scholarship criteria you are seeking to meet.

**Green Criteria:** We will give at most four (4) scholarships in which mission mindedness, acts of kindness, and other factors count more highly than academics. Two \$2,500 (\$10,000 total) and two \$1,000 (\$4,000 total, each) annual four-year scholarships may be awarded in this category based upon the following weighted criteria, in order of the greater weight to the lesser weight:

- mission mindedness or acts of kindness
- spiritual mindedness
- creativity
- leadership
- academic performance
- heart for learning
- activities and interests

**Blue Criteria:** We will give at most nine (9) scholarships in which academics are the greatest weight in our selection. *For at least two of these scholarships, we may give added weight to applications from applicants with math or science backgrounds.* One \$5,000 (\$20,000 total), two \$2,500 (\$10,000 total, each), and six \$1,000 (\$4,000 total, each) annual four-year scholarships may be awarded in this category based upon the following weighted criteria, in order of the greater weight to the lesser weight:

- academic performance
- spiritual mindedness
- leadership
- creativity
- mission mindedness or acts of kindness
- heart for learning
- activities and interests

All applications are also evaluated on their overall presentation. In this regard, we review and evaluate:

- Your spelling
- Your grammar
- Your vigor of expression and your passion for your topic
- Your neatness

**4. Academic Achievement and Performance:** Submit your standardized test scores from the SAT, ACT, CLT, or other standardized test or other measures of your academic performance. We are particularly interested in your overall academic performance, however best measured. Record the final test score and date on the application.

We do not require that official results are sent to us, copies are acceptable. In lieu of paper copies, you may also send a screen shot (or other type of image, like jpeg or pdf) of your test

results. We ask that the image show your full name, the company or administrating board's logo, and complete test scores.

**5. Extracurricular Activities:** Submit a list of your extracurricular activities. We are not looking for the number of activities, but the variety, balance, depth, and overall significance of these activities. You may include any descriptions or details as an attachment of at most one (1) page (may be less), single-spaced, 12 point font.

**6. Reference Letters:** Submit three (3) reference letters with at MOST two (2) pages (may be less), single-spaced, 12 point type that confirm your involvement in the activities you've listed and that, to the extent possible, attest to your unique contributions in these areas. You may submit the letters with your application as attachments or have the writer send them directly to us by mail or email. They do not need to remain confidential.

These letters may be from parents (who better know homeschool students!), pastors, supervisors, leaders in programs you've been involved in [AWANA, Boy Scouts, 4-H, FFA, YFC], etc.

These letters should further attest to your mission mindedness, acts of kindness, or creativity. They ought not to be only "character reference" letters. They should attest to specific contributions you have made, specific activities you have engaged in, specific achievements that have benefited—or that show some promise in the future of benefiting—the Kingdom. In other words, these letters are primarily for the sake of acquiring outside confirmation that you have really done or achieved what you claim to have done or achieved in your scholarship application.

We only need one letter attesting to your contributions in any one activity. For example, if you're going to send us letters from two pastors in your church, make sure they speak about different aspects of your participation.

**7. Personal Essay:** Submit a personal essay with at MOST two (2) pages (may be less), single-spaced, 12 point type about your future plans. The essay MUST cover all of these topics:

- What I want to do with my life
- Why I want to go to college
- Why I want to go to *this* college

Our mission emanates from this desire: "to 'seek God's Kingdom' (Matthew 6:33) by producing and distributing educational materials that will prepare future generations to effectively assert the crown rights of King Jesus among 'every tribe, language, people and nation' (Revelation 5:9) and in every area of human endeavor." Therefore, we want to promote and encourage students who are personally dedicated to a similar goal.

If your essay is to win, we expect it will probably include at least REFERENCES to matters like:

(a) Seeking God's Kingdom (what does that mean to you? what does that look like?);

- (b) Asserting the crown rights of King Jesus (extending His Kingdom); and
- (c) How you think your future plans or purposes will help extend His Kingdom either (or both) among “every tribe, language, people and nation” and/or in your unique area of interest.

Throughout the entire essay, we want you to speak with YOUR words, in YOUR way, about YOUR convictions. Using the words above (like “King Jesus” or “God’s Kingdom”) will not grant you special favor, so do not include them just because you think they will “buy our affection.” This is the place to share with us what motivates you and we want to hear words that are meaningful to you.

**8. Academic Submission:** Submit a paper or project from your academic study to show your skill in completing an assignment in a discipline of interest to you. We are interested in seeing how well you can express your thoughts or share your work in a previous effort, uninfluenced by the pressure of this scholarship competition.

Total submission for this project should not exceed three (3) pages if written (single spaced, 12 point type; may be less than 3 pages) or at most 10 minutes of audio/video. Essays, research papers, and other academic work should include a bibliography, endnotes, etc., of course, but these do not count toward the page limit. If you do not have a pre-existing essay or work of the length we are seeking, then please *edit* one as necessary to meet our length requirements.

NOTHING CAN BE RETURNED, so please do not send any original works, awards, etc. We can accept only two-dimensional submissions (such as photographs of the actual work, reports, written descriptions) or audio/video recordings (such as CD/DVD or private/unlisted YouTube links, etc.).

Regardless of whether you choose the Green or Blue criteria, you must choose to submit either a project or argumentative essay [do NOT submit both] as follows:

(a) **Your best project:** Submit a copy of your best project or paper in the form of a review, paper, report, essay, digest, portfolio, etc. concerning any math, science, humanities, performing or visual arts related discipline of interest or concern to you. We are interested in seeing how well you can share your interest and passion from a previous effort that is less dependent on a written essay. Please make clear the assignment or goal of the project. If you are applying under the Blue criteria, your submission must showcase your academic ability, which is given greater weight in the evaluation process.

**OR**

(b) **Argumentative Essay:** Submit a copy of your best argumentative essay to date concerning any subject of interest or concern to you. Essays will not only be evaluated on the strength of the argument presented but also on how the counter-argument is addressed and refuted. Your essay should include the standard elements of an argumentative essay.

**9. General Comments:** Feel free to include any additional comments you would like to share with the application review board as they evaluate your application. You may include them on the lines provided on the application or as an attachment, but please limit your comments to one (1) page.

**10. Scholarship Photograph:** Submit a photograph with your application. Your photograph will not be given to the application review board and, therefore, will not be used in the application review process for selecting scholarship winners. However, photographs of the scholarship winners only will be used to announce the winners after they have been selected.

**11. Assignment of Rights & Consent to Publish Scholarship Information:** Print, sign and submit the Assignment of Rights and Consent to Publish Scholarship Information form included with the application. By signing this form, you give us the right to publish your photograph(s) and basic information regarding your past accomplishments and future plans in the event you are a scholarship winner as well as any information provided in the future to continue eligibility. By signing, you also certify that all work submitted is your own original work, with all sources of information correctly documented. We cannot accept any work that was not done by the applicant or copied in part or whole.

We must have your actual signature in pen or an image (photo, jpeg, pdf, etc.) of your actual signature, not typed or scripted font. The witness can be any adult, including parents.

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### Additional Notes

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**Deadline:** For scholarships for the school year beginning in the fall of 2025, **all submissions listed above must be *postmarked* and/or emailed NO LATER THAN December 4, 2024.** We will announce winners by February 13, 2025. You will receive a confirmation email within two (2) business days of when we receive your application. *If, after that time, you have not received a confirmation email, please contact us.* If submitting your application by email, please note we are only able to accept emails 10MB and smaller. This may require you to send attachments in multiple emails.

**Continued Eligibility:** Should you win one of the scholarships, you will be required to maintain eligibility each year. You must attend an accredited undergraduate college or university full time and maintain a 3.5 cumulative grade point average. You are also required to keep the Scholarship Committee aware of your coursework, by submitting a completed paper or project, and a personal letter on how your actual college experience is meeting your goals and dreams and how you see it helping you pursue God's purpose for your future.

**Questions:** If you have any questions regarding your submission or criteria, please email [scholarship@sonlight.com](mailto:scholarship@sonlight.com) or call (303) 730-6292 and leave a message for the scholarship coordinator to call back.