

2026 Ecosystems Scholarship

Community Foundation of South Puget Sound

Community Foundation Scholarship Platform Notes and Tips

Tips for using the online scholarships platform:

- Required fields are indicated with an asterisk *.
- Character limits include spaces and punctuation.
- To work on your application in a language other than English, please use the "Select Language" drop down button in the top left corner to activate Google Translate.
- Check Your Work!
 - Double check formatting and character count after copying/pasting from Word, as there are software differences that can cause an error in how your application appears on our scholarship platform.
- Saving Your Application
 - While there is an autosave feature, double check for a "Save" button at the bottom of the page before closing your browser.
- The size of text boxes may be adjusted by dragging the lower right corner.
- Additional Documents
 - To create a PDF version of your completed application that you can save and/or print, click the "Application Packet" button at the top of the application page.
 - Click on the "Questions List" button in the upper right-hand corner of the application page to view the application instructions and questions in PDF form.

A note on using Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT:

Our scholarship program values authenticity, integrity, and lived experience. While tools like AI can be helpful for brainstorming or editing, your responses must represent your own voice, ideas, and journey.

Our reviewers are looking to understand *you*—your community, your goals, and what has shaped you. Please do not submit fully AI-generated responses.

If you have any questions about this form, please feel free to reach out to Tami Mason Lathrop (she/her) at tami@thecommunityfoundation.com or call 360-705-3340.

Student Information

Please fill out the following section with your most up-to-date contact information. While it may feel repetitive, this ensures that Community Foundation staff is able to quickly communicate with you in the event that additional information is needed and to inform you of award decisions.

Applicant Name*

Character Limit: 250

Phone*

Please provide us with the best phone number for which we can reach you.

Character Limit: 10

Personal Email*

Please provide us with an email that you check most frequently.

Character Limit: 254

Post-Secondary Institution Information

Current Class Status*

What is your current class/grade?

Choices

Sophomore (2nd year)

Junior (3rd year)

Senior (4th+ year)

Currently Attending*

Which Washington State post-secondary institution are you currently attending?

Choices

Grays Harbor College

Green River College

Peninsula College

The Evergreen State College

University of Washington

Walla Walla Community College

Washington State University

Western Washington University

Major and/or Studies*

What is your current major and/or course of study?

Character Limit: 250

Cumulative GPA*

What is your current cumulative GPA?

Character Limit: 20

Transcript*

Please upload a copy of your most recent post-secondary institutions' transcript. This can be an official or unofficial copy. *Accepted documentation includes scanned documents, screenshots, and photos (example file types include jpg, docx, pdf, png, etc.).*

Document must include all classes, final grades, and GPA for each quarter/semester of post-secondary schooling you have completed through December 31, 2025.

File Size Limit: 5 MB

Anticipated Graduation Date*

When is your anticipated graduation date?

Note: *If you are unsure of the day, please select the first day of the month you will be graduating.*

Character Limit: 10

Short Essay Questions

Personal Statement*

Using the space provided, please share some of your life experiences that have helped inspire your passion for nature. This may include volunteer or employment involvement with an environmental organization or hands-on work for a natural resources, land use agency, or company.

Character Limit: 1500

Education - Future Plans*

Using the space provided, please write a short statement indicating your reasons for pursuing the natural resources or land use planning major, as well as addressing your future career goals. **(Minimum character count: 750)**

Character Limit: 1500

Declarations

By submitting this scholarship application, you agree to the following:

- I understand that my request may not be funded or may only be partially funded
- The information above is true and correct to the best of my knowledge
- Any false statements may result in denial of consideration

- I give my consent to the Community Foundation of South Puget Sound to use the information provided for the purpose of scholarship award consideration

I agree to the declarations above*

Type your full, legal name below.

Character Limit: 250

Recommendation Instructions

All applicants are required to submit **three** references.

- References can be from a current or former teacher (or other school official) or from a personal contact such as an employer, coach, community member, or religious or spiritual leader (excluding immediate family members).
- Each submission must be from a different person.
- References may use our online recommendation letter prompts; or upload their own letter of recommendation.

Each reference will be asked to complete a short online Reference Questionnaire (or upload their own letter). The Reference Questionnaire must be submitted by each reference no later than **March 27, 2026 at 11:59pm**.

- It is recommended that you send your request for a reference well in advance of the due date. **Frequently, references are not received by the due date if the request has been made less than one week prior to the deadline.**
 - You can check the status of your Reference Questionnaires at any time by logging into your account and viewing the status of "Third Party Responses" on your home page.
- For further details, you can click "Edit Application" or "View Application" and scroll to the "Reference" section of your application.
- **SPECIAL NOTE:** Verify you have provided the correct email address. Sometimes, school district email addresses are often protected with anti-virus/spam software, resulting in the Reference Questionnaire link or your composed email not being received. Make sure your references check their spam/junk folders.
 - If your application is still in DRAFT status, and you have already checked 1) with your reference and asked them to check their spam/junk folder, 2) the email address you provided is correct, and they are still not receiving the email with the Reference Questionnaire link, you can click "Compose Email" again to resend an email and the link.

Click here to learn more about the [Ecosystems Scholarship](#).

Recommendation #1 (you will need 3 total recommendations)

Recommender's Email*

Please follow the instructions below to send an electronic request for a letter of recommendation. You will be unable to see what is written in the recommendation. After submitting your application, you will be able to see if a recommendation has been submitted from your dashboard (this is found by clicking the house button at the top of your screen).

1. Enter the email address in the space below for the person who will write you a recommendation.
2. Click 'Compose Email'.
3. Write an email to the recommender. Be sure to include details, such as the scholarship you're applying for and the due date.
4. Click 'Send'.
5. In addition to your email, the system will automatically send the recommender a second email that contains their link to log on and complete the applicable questions.

Click here for additional instructions on how your recommender will submit their recommendation.

Character Limit: 254

Tips for using the online scholarships platform:

- Required fields are indicated with an asterisk *.
- Character limits include spaces and punctuation.
- To work on your recommendation in a language other than English, please use the "Select Language" drop down button in the top left corner to activate Google Translate.
- Check Your Work!
 - o Double check formatting and character count after copying/pasting from Word, as there are software differences that can cause an error in how your recommendation appears on our scholarship platform.
- Saving Your Recommendation
 - o While there is an autosave feature, double check for a "Save" button at the bottom of the page before closing your browser.
- The size of text boxes may be adjusted by dragging the lower right corner.

If you have any questions or concerns about submitting your responses, please contact Community Foundation staff at info@thecommunityfoundation.com or call 360-705-3340.

Thank you for supporting scholarship opportunities!

Thank you for your willingness to serve as a reference for this student's Ecosystem Scholarship application with Community Foundation of South Puget Sound (CFSPS). We want you to know that your answers to this form are confidential to CFSPS. No one outside of the CFSPS scholarship process, which is comprised of CFSPS staff and scholarship evaluators, will have access to your responses.

You may use our prompts to fill out a recommendation, or you may upload your own using the upload file button at the bottom of this section. In that case, you do not need to fill out the prompts below with the exception of the first question.

Please answer the questions below, providing as much detail as you are able.

IMPORTANT: Please do not leave any questions blank. Forms with unanswered questions will cause the application to be flagged as incomplete. If you do not have enough knowledge to answer a question, simply type "unable to answer" and move forward to the next question. PLEASE CLICK "SUBMIT" once completed to ensure that your response is received.

Answers to each question are automatically saved as you work.

The deadline to provide a response is March 27, 2026, at 11:59pm.

For more details on how to fill out your Recommendation through the Community Foundation of South Puget Sound's Scholarship portal, please visit this LINK.

 In what capacity have you known this student?*

Examples include, but are not limited to, teacher, professor, counselor, coach, religious leader, supervisor (work and/or volunteer), and neighbor.

Character Limit: 250

 Student Strengths

What would you say are this student's 2 greatest strengths and how have you seen them utilize these strengths?

**Strengths can refer to the student's personality, work ethic, passions, lived experiences, or anything else that makes them unique.*

Character Limit: 1000

Student Growth

Describe a time in which this student was passionate about what they were doing OR succeeded in meeting a goal.

How has this passion/success contributed to the student's overall growth? **How can you see it** helping the student in the future?

Character Limit: 1000

Final Comments

Is there anything additional you would like to share about this student? Are there any special circumstances this student has faced, or is facing, of which we should be aware?

Character Limit: 750

Letter of Recommendation (upload)

Please upload your letter of recommendation below if you do not want to use the prompts above.

File Size Limit: 6 MB