

The Winston Churchill Foundation of the United States

Scholarship Application Instructions

These instructions for the Scholarship Application of the Winston Churchill Foundation of the United States are effective April, 2009. The application, the instructions, and the letter of recommendation form supersede all earlier versions.

The next application deadlines for the Churchill Scholarship are

November 10, 2009

November 9, 2010

November 8, 2011

November 13, 2012

These are the dates by which the application must be received at the offices of the Institute of International Education (see address below). They are *not* postmark dates.

Please note that each institution participating in the Churchill Scholarship Program sets its own internal deadline for its local review of the Churchill Scholarship application and nomination of candidates. Please be sure to check with your Campus Representative the campus deadline for review of applications for the Churchill Scholarship.

PROCEDURES FOR APPLYING FOR THE CHURCHILL SCHOLARSHIP – First, applicants must apply separately for admission to the University of Cambridge no later than mid-October; the Foundation has chosen the same deadline as the Gates Scholarship in order to facilitate the process for applicants. It is possible to apply online (with a fee of £25, or approximately \$48) or on paper (for which there is no fee). The directions for the Cambridge application are not pellucid (for example, the deadline for the online application is two weeks before that of the paper application) and you are urged to read those instructions with great care.

The University's Web site <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/gradstud/admissions/> provides all requirements, details, and deadlines. Applicants for the Churchill Scholarship *must* indicate Churchill College as their first choice in Section A(4) "College membership." In Section B(3) they should indicate that they are applying for a Churchill

Scholarship from the Winston Churchill Foundation of the United States: indicate "Yes" as tenable at the University of Cambridge; leave blank the section "Awarded"; indicate one (1) year for Tenure; indicate March of the appropriate year for Date; and indicate £22,000-£25,000 as the value of the scholarship.

Please be aware that if you wish to apply to a Cambridge department for an MPhil or a PhD, you might be required to submit two different (though essentially identical) applications; this is the policy of the University of Cambridge. Sometimes it is possible to have a PhD application converted to an MPhil. It would be prudent to seek additional information from the department to which you are making application.

Next, the Churchill Application Form is available online. First, you must register <http://churchill.uspapplications.org/>. You can then prepare the applications in stages and save your work. You should fill out the form, print it, review it *carefully*, sign it, and submit it to the appropriate individual or committee responsible for reviewing the application and for nominating no more than two students for consideration from your institution. Please note: some Web browsers seem to do weird things to the formatting of the Program of Study and the Personal Statement, so be sure to amend those problems before you submit your application. Do not submit the application for the Churchill Scholarship electronically until you know you have been nominated by your college or university. If you mistakenly submit your application before it is complete or before you have been nominated, please email the Foundation at info@winstonchurchillfoundation.org, and the incorrect submission will be deleted. Your saved application will not be deleted, only the submission.

Please address all technical --- and only technical --- questions regarding the online application to Mr. Vijay Renganathan (vrenganathan@iie.org). All other questions should be directed only to the Foundation (info@winstonchurchillfoundation.org).

After your application has been reviewed locally, your Scholarship Advisor will send the endorsed application to the following address:

The Churchill Scholarship Program
U.S. Student Programs
Institute of International Education
809 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017-3580
Telephone: 212-984-5442

A completed application consists of the following materials, all of which — except for the GRE scores — must be submitted through your Campus Representative to the Churchill Foundation at your institution:

- One (1) completed and signed Churchill Foundation Application Form with one passport-sized photograph attached.
- Four (4) letters of reference — two more than the Cambridge Application. The Foundation requests four *academic* recommendations from teachers, laboratory directors, and others with whom you have pursued your research and studies. Please do not request recommendations from teachers in fields not related to your research in science, engineering, or mathematics (e.g., history, literature, or philosophy), and please do not submit personal recommendations (e.g., from clergy, directors of charitable organizations, etc.). The cover sheet for the Scholarship Recommendation Reports is available in pdf and Word formats on the Foundation's Web site. Those whom you have selected for your recommendation should write their letters on departmental letterhead, and they should send their letters directly to your Scholarship Advisor.
- One (1) official transcript from each institution you have attended. If a transcript from a foreign institution lists grades that are not explained or translated into the American grading system, please attach an explanation. The transcript(s) should be also sent directly to your campus Churchill Foundation Representative.
- Graduate Record Examination Scores on the General Test. Select a test date so that the Churchill Foundation receives the scores no later than the end of November. The Institution Code List number for the Winston Churchill Foundation is **3922**. Scores on the GRE taken in the past two years are acceptable. MCAT scores may be substituted for the GRE; please send a copy of your MCAT directly to the Foundation.

OTHER INSTRUCTIONS AND LOTS OF PICAYUNE DETAILS.

If for some reason, there is insufficient space on the application to complete a line, please feel free to print the additional information in ink on the hard copy. Please do *not* exceed programmed space limits.

Section 1. Please be sure to provide your complete current mailing address.

Please list the names of both your parents, mother first, father second, or your guardian(s).

Section 3. For the Program of Study at Cambridge, please follow the usage of the Cambridge Web site. Do not use the words "Department of..." If a department has a long name (e.g., the Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics), use the department's commonly recognized acronym (DAMTP), and then for the field state Part III, Statistical Science, or Computational Biology. For the Department of Physiology, Development and Neuroscience, "Physiology" alone will suffice. For a large department like Engineering, list Engineering for the department and the title of one of the modules for the field of study (e.g., Photonic Systems, Aerodynamics, Fluid Dynamics, etc.)

Section 4. The list of scholarships and awards is once again part of the online application. If a scholarship or award is nationally known (e.g., the Goldwater Scholarship, Phi Beta Kappa, etc.) list just the award and the date of the award. If a scholarship or award is local to your college or university or is not otherwise well known, please list the award and the date of the award and briefly describe the reason for the award (e.g., junior with the highest GPA, Chemistry major with the highest GPA, outstanding physics student in the sophomore class, best essay in the sciences, best undergraduate engineering project, etc.).

Section 5. Research Experience is once again part of the online application. Use the following format to describe your research experience and internships:

June-August, 2007 - NSF REU - Prof. Louise Smith, Department of Physics,
ABC University - brief description of your work.

Summer 2008 - independent study on Lie algebra using XYZ's textbook.

Spring semester – revised for publication paper written with A, B, and C
on protein assembly mechanisms for the Journal of XYZ Science.

Do not hesitate to include work you have done on your own outside of formal programs.

Section 6. Publications and Presentations – You are not required to have research publications, though many applicants do.

Section 8. Future Career Plans – Briefly describe your vocational aspirations: pursuing a PhD, an MD, or an MD-PhD degree, working at a research institute, teaching in a research university and training graduate students, teaching in a liberal arts college, etc. The Foundation and the Screening Committee do not expect you to have the remainder of your life mapped out!

Section 9. Previous Foreign Travel – Having traveled or not having traveled internationally is neither an advantage nor a disadvantage. The Foundation simply wishes to have a fuller picture of your background. Please be brief in stating the reason: e.g., vacation, family visit, internship, study abroad, etc.

Section 10. Other fellowships – Please use common acronyms like NSF, NDSEG, etc. or short names like Gates, Hertz, Marshall, etc.

Section 11. Graduate programs – While you might not know precisely where you will be applying for graduate school as you complete the application for the Churchill Scholarship, the readers of your application will be interested to know which programs you are considering. Please do not leave this section blank. If you are a Finalist for the Churchill Scholarship, it is likely that you will be asked to discuss your choice of graduate schools.

Please use the following format: university, department, degree. Thus “Harvard, Biological Chemistry, PhD,” or “Stanford, Biophysics, PhD,” or “WashU, MD/PhD,” or “Princeton, Physics, PhD.” Do not hesitate to save space by using commonly recognized acronyms or abbreviations: UCSD, Caltech, JHU, etc.

Section 12. Letters of Reference. Along with the Personal Statement, the letters of reference are the most important part of your application. You should solicit your four letters from teachers and laboratory directors with whom you have worked closely and who know your work well. It is useful for you to share your resume and even a draft of your Research Plan and Personal Statement with these individuals. You should be sure to inform them what the Churchill Scholarship is so that they can write an appropriate letter on your behalf. Generic letters are never useful; indeed, they can weaken an otherwise strong application.

Proposed Program of Study. The most important task for you to accomplish as an applicant is to make your own case for the program you are choosing based upon your previous research and study. The Foundation is not seeking certain kinds of answers and does not favor one field over another. Some recent Churchill Scholars have chosen

to continue without interruption the research they have been doing as undergraduates, while others have moved into closely related or lateral fields; still others have ventured into new areas of research in order to expand the breadth of their research.

In addition to naming the Program and Department for the research degree for which you are applying, you should describe in detail what you would like to accomplish during your year. Please provide whatever information you have about laboratory placement, including the name of the professor who runs the lab. While your plan will necessarily be detailed and even technical, it should be comprehensible to a highly educated reader in another field, especially since it is not possible to represent every aspect of the sciences, engineering, and mathematics on the Screening Committee. You are *very strongly* urged to make contact with a proposed laboratory director well before submitting your application for the Churchill Scholarship. (Indeed, every Churchill Scholar in the past few years has already secured laboratory placement before applying.) If possible, include a letter of invitation to join a laboratory (a copy of an email message is sufficient) in the hard copy of your application. The Foundation strongly suggests early contact so that you can determine whether there is the appropriate fit of interests between you and the laboratory director and whether a place might be available for you in the laboratory. Spring of junior year is not too soon to identify a laboratory director!

Applicants in Engineering need not name a research advisor, since they will be taking two terms of courses and will select a research area in the third term. It is, however, useful to know if you have an interest in a certain professor's work and if you have been in touch with him or her.

Applicants in Pure and Applied Mathematics should indicate their close familiarity with the department's extraordinarily rich offerings, suggest which courses they wish to take, and describe the rationale for that selection (e.g., strike out in new directions, seek a new perspective on previous work, deepen one's knowledge of a certain field, etc.)

The Personal Statement. The Personal Statement is the most important part of your application: it is what distinguishes you from the other exceptional applicants for the Churchill Scholarship. The Foundation does not prescribe what you should include in this statement. It can be an intellectual autobiography in which you have the opportunity to describe perhaps the development of your academic interests, perhaps the importance of research for you, perhaps someone whose work has influenced you, or some other crucial aspect of your work in the sciences, engineering, or mathematics. While the Personal Statement is primarily about your intellectual passions, do not hesitate to discuss other work and activities that provide a picture of who you are and

who you want to be. In your statement you need not describe the University of Cambridge or Churchill College, which members of the Screening Committee know well, nor should you say that you are an ideal candidate for the Churchill Scholarship.

The Review Process. Applications for the Churchill Scholarship are reviewed by an *ad hoc* Screening Committee composed of previous Churchill Scholars, who are, for the most part, academic scientists. The Committee, which convenes early in January, usually includes a mathematician, a physicist, an engineer, a molecular biologist, and a fifth scientist according to the range of applications. All members of the Committee read all the applications. The Committee's grades are averaged, reviewed, argued, and sometimes modified. The Committee then ranks the top twenty-five applicants, who will be named as Finalists. The following week the Foundation's Executive Director will interview all Finalists by telephone, and awards will be offered as soon as possible after the interviews.

Applicants often ask, "What is the Foundation looking for?" There is no formula. Since almost all of the applicants for the Churchill Scholarship are outstanding students, the factors that make an applicant stand out are a certain intellectual spark, a commitment to making a serious contribution to your field of inquiry, the promise of intellectual leadership, a well written application, and less easily defined personal qualities that suggest you will benefit from a year in Cambridge and that Churchill College and the University of Cambridge will also benefit from your year there.

Do not hesitate to get in touch with the Foundation if you have any questions by emailing info@winstonchurchillfoundation.org.

Good luck!