

Ron Smith Scholarships (RSS) Guidelines

Important Application Information

ronsmithscholarships.org

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) serve a diverse and inclusive student body. All eligible HBCU undergraduate seniors and final-year graduate students are encouraged to apply for a Ron Smith Scholarship (RSS).

- RSS is accepting scholarship applications starting on September 1, 2025.
- The deadline to submit all application materials is **October 31, 2025**.
- The scholarship award is based on financial need.
- The RSS award is **\$1,000**.
- Applicants must be currently enrolled at an HBCU and have at least a 2.8 GPA (undergraduate) or 3.0 GPA for graduate students (Master's, Specialist, or Doctorate).
- The scholarship application packet (checklist) consists of the following documents:
 - ❖ **Online Application** (found at ronsmithscholarships.org)
 - ❖ **Resume** that includes the following: education, work experience, community service, and honors/achievements.
 - ❖ **Essay** (500 - 600 words): Include the following:
 - Explain why you should be awarded a Ron Smith Scholarship.
 - Indicate how you plan to use the scholarship award.
 - State how the scholarship would make a difference in your life.
 - Provide details regarding your financial need.
 - Describe obstacles (if any) you have had to overcome in the pursuit of your degree.
 - Describe your community volunteer activities.
 - Include your career and professional goals following graduation.
 - ❖ **Two Letters of Recommendation:** Letters should come from someone who knows you, your scholarship and character. A professor, employer, teacher, mentor, or family friend should write the letter. The letters should include how the writer knows you, for how long they have known you, and why they believe you deserve the scholarship. The letters must be recent and dated after September 1, 2025. Note: Previous letters of recommendation for employment, acceptance into university programs, etc. are not acceptable.
 - ❖ **Transcript** (unofficial or official)
 - ❖ **Proof of Enrollment:** The applicant must be currently enrolled in sufficient semester hours to ensure graduation at the end of the spring 2026 semester (statement verified by the Registrar's Office).

If any document is missing, your application will not be considered for an award.

- All application checklist documents must be uploaded to the online application form and submitted by October 31, 2025, 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Label each attachment with your name and document's name (i.e., John Brown Essay or John Brown Transcript, etc.).
- Expected notification of award selection is November 15, 2025.
- Scholarship winner(s) will be listed on the Ron Smith Scholarships website.
- If you are selected for an award, be prepared to submit a one paragraph biography and a professional photo by December 1, 2025. Email your photo and biography to: brenda.thompson@ronsmithscholarships.org
- Scholarship check(s) will be mailed to RSS recipient(s) during January 2026.