Scholarship motivation letter template

Write a one-page motivation letter for a scholarship, paragraph by paragraph. Replace each bracketed part with your own words, then delete the guidance boxes.

The full page on our website
scholarmena.com/resources/templates/motivation-letter-template/

Statement of purpose or motivation letter?

A statement of purpose explains your academic plan to a university. A scholarship motivation letter explains why a funder should invest in you, and what you will do with that investment. If a scholarship asks for both, write two documents.

- **The scholarship's instructions come first.** Its questions, length and format replace this template.
- **Read the funder's aims on its official page:** leadership, the development of your home country, a field it funds. Link each paragraph to one of them.
- **Our advice:** if no length is given, keep the letter to one page, about 450-600 words.

Three formats funders use

Funders ask for your motivation in one of three ways. Check the scholarship's own page before you write.

- **A free letter**, often one page: use this template.
- **Set questions in an online form**, each with a word or character limit: answer each question on its own; do not paste a letter. Chevening is an example. Its guidance says applicants are assessed on four areas: leadership and influencing; building professional relationships; how your chosen course addresses challenges linked to UK priority areas; and how your career plan will drive positive change. It also states: "The use of AI software to generate answers in Chevening applications is strictly prohibited." Write every answer yourself.
- **A short video**: a few programmes ask for one. Use the same structure, spoken: who you are, why this scholarship, your plan.

For Erasmus Mundus master's, each programme sets its own documents, because you apply to the programme itself (European Commission, Erasmus+ page). Our 4-step guide: scholarmena.com/guides/erasmus-mundus-how-to-apply/

Letter layout

[Full name]

[Email] · [Phone with country code] · [City, country]

[Date, e.g. 15 January 2027]

[Selection committee name, or Selection Committee]

[Scholarship name]

[Organisation and address, if the scholarship gives one]

Subject: Application for the [scholarship name], [degree and programme], [intake]

Dear [name or title of the committee chair, or Members of the Selection Committee],

1. Who you are and what you are applying for (60-90 words)

Guidance: Name the scholarship, the programme and the university in the first sentence. Add one line on who you are: your degree, your current role, your country.

I am applying for the [scholarship name] to study [degree and programme] at [university], starting [intake]. I am a [current role, or graduate in field] from [country], and I [one fact that sets you apart].

2. Why this scholarship (100-150 words)

Guidance: Name one or two of the funder's aims from its official page, and show how your plan serves them.

Guidance: General praise of the scholarship fits every applicant, so it tells the committee nothing about you.

The [scholarship name] aims to [aim, from the official page]. My plan to [goal] serves this aim because [reason, with evidence].

3. Achievements and impact (120-170 words)

Guidance: Choose two or three achievements that match the funder's selection criteria: academic results, leadership, service, work.

Guidance: For each one, give what you did and the result, with a number where you can.

As [role] in [organisation or community], I [action]. As a result, [outcome, with a number]. In [year], I also [second achievement], which [result].

4. Circumstances or financial need (optional, 50-100 words)

Guidance: Include this paragraph only if the scholarship asks about need or circumstances, or if they affected your record.

Guidance: State the facts plainly, then say what you did about them.

[Fact about your circumstances]. Despite this, I [what you did], and [result]. Without this funding, I could not [what the scholarship makes possible].

5. Plan after graduation (100-150 words)

Guidance: Give a specific plan: a role, a sector, a country, and your first step in the two years after you finish.

Guidance: If the scholarship requires you to return home or work in a country for a set period, show that your plan fits that rule.

After I graduate, I will return to [country] to work as [role] in [sector]. In the first two years, I plan to [first step]. Later, I aim to [longer goal], and I will give back by [mentoring, teaching or a project].

6. Closing (40-60 words)

Guidance: Thank the committee in one line, say you are available for an interview, and list your attachments if the portal asks for them.

Thank you for considering my application. I am available for an interview at any time, and I attach [list of documents].

Yours sincerely,

[Full name]

[Signature, if the scholarship asks for a signed letter]

A complete example (fictional)

Read it for structure. Do not copy it. Lina Karim, the Larkfield Global Scholarship, its aim and the details are invented. The letter is shortened to show structure; yours can use the full length the scholarship allows. The letter is addressed to a committee with no name, so it ends "Yours faithfully"; use "Yours sincerely" when you write to a named person.

Dear Selection Committee,

I am applying for the Larkfield Global Scholarship to study the MSc in Water Engineering at Larkfield University, starting in September 2027. I am a civil engineering graduate from Westmere University and a research assistant in water quality, and I want to design treatment systems that work in hot climates. *(Note: scholarship, programme and university in the first sentence.)*

The Larkfield Global Scholarship aims to "develop professionals who will improve public services in their home countries". My plan serves this aim because water utilities in my country lose treatment capacity

in the summer months, and the work needs engineers who can redesign plants for heat. *(Note: one aim of the funder, linked to a real need.)*

During a 10-month study in our university lab, I ran weekly water-quality tests and kept the sampling log for about 400 samples. My final-year project showed that a cheaper filter design met the discharge limit on 11 of 12 test days. In 2023 I also led a student river clean-up team of 60 volunteers across two sites over one term, and two of those volunteers now run the project. *(Note: achievements that match the funder's criteria, each with a number; leadership shown, not claimed.)*

After I graduate, I will return to work as a process engineer for a water utility. In my first two years I plan to run a heat-stress review of one treatment line. Later, I aim to lead its redesign and to mentor junior engineers in our lab. *(Note: a role, a sector and a first step.)*

Thank you for considering my application. I am available for an interview at any time.

Yours faithfully,

Lina Karim

Do and don't

- Use the funder's own words for its aims, once. · Don't: Copy whole sentences from the scholarship's website.
- Give one result or number for each achievement. · Don't: List adjectives: passionate, hard-working, dedicated.

- Write a new letter for each scholarship. · Don't: Send one letter with only the names changed.
- Explain need with facts, if the scholarship asks about it. · Don't: Ask for sympathy or describe hardship at length.
- Keep to the length the scholarship sets. · Don't: Go over the limit, or attach pages it did not ask for.
- Address the committee by name if the scholarship gives one. · Don't: Open with "To whom it may concern".

Checklist before you submit

- [ ] The first sentence names the scholarship, the programme and the university.
- [ ] Each paragraph links you to at least one of the funder's aims or selection criteria.
- [ ] Each achievement has a result you can prove.
- [ ] Your plan after graduation names a role, a sector and a country, and fits any return rule.
- [ ] The letter is within the length the scholarship sets.
- [ ] The scholarship name, committee name and date are correct, with nothing left from another letter.
- [ ] The file is a PDF named as the portal asks, or "Surname-Firstname-Motivation-Letter.pdf".
- [ ] Someone else has read it and can say in one sentence why you deserve the funding.

Free on ScholarMENA

- Statement of Purpose template: scholarmena.com/resources/templates/sop-template/
- Writing tool: scholarmena.com/tools/sop-motivation-letter/
- Chevening: prepare before the next cycle (free checklist): scholarmena.com/guides/chevening-next-cycle-preparation/

Sources

Our editors read these official pages on 10 Nov 2026. If anything differs, the official page is the reference.

1. Chevening: four assessment areas; AI-generated answers strictly prohibited https://www.chevening.org/resource-hub/guidance/application-criteria/
2. Erasmus Mundus: apply directly to the institution running the programme https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/opportunities/individuals/students/erasmus-mundus-joint-masters