

GATES CAMBRIDGE SCHOLARSHIP

APPLICATION PROCESS OVERVIEW

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All Big 10 candidates work with Scholarship Opportunities Program (SOP) staff, who run the campus advising processes. Read this document while you complete the [Pre-Application](#) and refer to it throughout the application process.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

BE A UCI UNDERGRADUATE

The SOP is funded to advise current UCI undergraduates only. Students at other universities must work with representatives on their campuses.

UCI ALUMNI EXCEPTIONS

In some cases, SOP staff may coach highly motivated recent UCI alumni IF they meet all eligibility requirements and intend to take/are taking a gap year (i.e. year off) before enrolling in a graduate program.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Gates candidates may be international students (do not need to be U.S. citizens).

SUBMIT A PRE-APPLICATION BY 4/3/17 (NOON)

You must complete and submit a [Pre-App](#) to continue the [application process](#).

BE A JUNIOR, SENIOR, OR RECENT ALUMNUS

Submit a [Pre-Application](#) the spring before your final year on campus. **The full application process lasts six months**, so by the time you complete it you'll be in your final year of study at UCI. If you win a scholarship, you will travel shortly after graduating.

You may also submit a Pre-Application in the spring of your final year if you plan to take a gap year after graduating.

BE GOAL-FOCUSED

The Gates Cambridge Scholarship funds graduate study at Cambridge University only.

BE DEADLINE-ORIENTED

You are responsible for ensuring SOP staff receives all application components -- including [letters of recommendation](#) written on behalf of your application(s) -- by SOP deadlines.

BE WILLING TO WORK HARD

You will submit a series of application drafts to SOP staff and receive advising and editing suggestions. You will also [share drafts of application essays](#) with the faculty who will write your [letters of recommendation](#).

Be ready to devote a minimum of 10 hours/week to the process; the commitment is equivalent to that of a part-time job.

COMMUNICATE WITH SOP STAFF

Maintain regular communication with SOP staff and with recommendation letter writers. [Email ALL staff](#) to submit drafts or ask questions

APPLYING FOR MULTIPLE AWARDS

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Candidates may apply for multiple scholarships simultaneously. However, consider the work required to apply for each, the variances in application components, letters of recommendation and interview scheduling and the time constraints you'll face this summer.

IS THE GATES SCHOLARSHIP RIGHT FOR YOU?

SELECTING A PROGRAM AND INSTITUTION

Ask your faculty which institutions/programs are considered competitive.

FACTORS TO WEIGH

Consider location preference, strength of particular overseas programs and institutions, field of study, long-term academic focus, and eligibility requirements relating to GPA and age.

UNITED KINGDOM

Research strong programs and universities specializing in your field.

Check the most recent (2014) edition of the [Research Assessment Exercise \(RAE\)](#), which rates the quality and competitiveness of specific programs at U.K. universities.

Read *The Guardian* newspaper's [guide to interpreting results](#).

U. OF CAMBRIDGE ONLY, ANY FIELD OF STUDY = GATES

Funds full-cost of graduate study, research and living expenses.

Candidates do not need to be U.S. citizens.

Approximately 40 annual winners.

Trustees award scholarships on the basis of a person's intellectual ability, leadership capacity and desire to use their knowledge to contribute to society throughout the world by providing service to their communities and applying their talents and knowledge to reduce inequities and improve the lives of others.

Eligible degrees include PhD, MPhil, MLitt, MSc, LLM, MAST MBA, and Diploma.

Scholarship candidates must apply for admission to U. of Cambridge, as well.

Requires 3 letters. All must emphasize your suitability for the selected Cambridge degree program. Two letters, must be from faculty who have taught you and can address your academic abilities. The third letter is a personal reference, generally written by a faculty member who can comment on your leadership potential and social commitment and who is aware of the strong competition for places at Cambridge. The writer should complete a [Personal Reference Form](#). If necessary, one of your academic referees may also write the personal reference.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Academic excellence and fitness of qualifications and aspirations with Cambridge's opportunities

Evidence of leadership potential

Commitment to improving the lives of others.

APPLICATION COMPONENTS

- [Cambridge GRADSAF application form](#) (part A is for admission to the course and a College, part B is for consideration for a Gates Scholarship and other awards—this section includes a 500 word personal statement)
- [Letters of recommendation](#): 2 academic references, 1 personal reference (see above)
- Official undergraduate transcripts
- [Letter of affiliation](#)

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- [Any other documents required by the Board of Graduate Studies](#) (e.g. proof of English ability if English is not your first language) or the Department to which you are applying (e.g. some Departments require examples of written work or a GRE test score).

WINNER CHARACTERISTICS

Successful applicants will have the ability to make a significant contribution to their discipline while in Cambridge, with a strong aptitude for research, analysis and a creative approach to defining and solving problems. The Gates seeks to support change agents: young people with strength of vision for a better future; a passion for improving the lives of others through their work, no matter what field they may be in; and the ability to engender change. Change agents are typically self-motivated, lead by example, ask tough questions, utilize strong analytical skills, and build strong relationships with others to achieve important goals. They inspire and enable others to embrace positive change.

NEXT STEPS?

SUBMIT A PRE-APPLICATION BY 4/3/17 (NOON)

You must complete and submit a [Pre-App](#) to begin the campus application process.

ATTEND BIG 10 INFORMATION SESSION

All students who have submitted pre-applications are required to attend one of three information sessions regarding the application process. (Students who are abroad or have scheduling conflicts with the information sessions will watch a video of the presentation and pass a quiz.)

At this meeting, you will receive your Student Deadline Table and crucial information about the scholarship process.

REVIEW PRE-APPLICATION FEEDBACK

You will select a personalized advising appointment time to discuss your plan for crafting a strong application. If you will be abroad, [email SOP staff](#) in advance to make arrangements for a virtual meeting.

SUBMIT SIGNED LETTER OF INTENT AND CONSENT FORM TO SOP

You will be provided a letter of intent and consent form to return with signature and must also register for an appointment to view past winning scholarship applications in EEE.

READ PAST WINNING APPLICATIONS

On file in the SOP office, past winning applications demonstrate successful methods used by past UCI winners to produce compelling and concise research/study proposal and personal statement essays. They also showcase successful formatting amid each application's unique space constraints. **You must request an appointment in advance to view these files**, as we will select the most closely related applications from our extensive archive and have them ready for you.

MEET WITH YOUR FACULTY

After submitting your Pre-Application, meet in person with at least three faculty members.

DISCUSS YOUR PLANS/PROJECT IDEAS

Explain that you'll [furnish him/her with drafts of your application essays](#) as they evolve, and let him/her know when to expect these. Detail your ideas for potential study/research proposals. Ask for advice in narrowing your topic.

REQUEST LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

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Faculty will [send SOP staff](#) two drafts of unique letters for each relevant scholarship. This enables the SOP to complete the process of application evaluation. **Candidates are responsible for ensuring faculty have submitted their letter drafts to SOP staff by the deadlines.** Ask if s/he is willing to write a comprehensive letter of recommendation on your behalf and participate in the letter draft process. State that SOP staff will follow up with award-specific content and formatting information.

For more information, please see our handout on [letters of recommendation](#).

SUBMIT FACULTY SUMMER CONTACT INFO TO SOP

In your [email to SOP staff](#), include full names, positions, departments, emails & phone numbers for each faculty letter writer. If you are applying for multiple scholarships, identify to SOP which faculty will write on behalf of which of your application(s). After you submit this information, SOP staff will email a packet to your faculty about the program(s) to which you are applying, deadlines & formatting requirements for letter drafts, and examples of letters written for past scholarship winners.

RECOMMENDED: PROVIDE COPY OF EMAIL TO POTENTIAL LETTER OF AFFILIATION WRITERS

Letters of Affiliation (LOAs) are brief, informal invitations from a faculty member or official at your overseas institution of choice to study in a particular department, lab, etc. *should you receive the scholarship.*

Provide a copy of your initial email to at least one potential letter of affiliation writer. For more information, please see our handout on [letters of affiliation](#).

CONFIRM SCHOLARSHIPS & PROVIDE ROUGH DRAFTS

Confirm scholarships to which applying; list proposed program(s) & institution(s) for each.

[Email essay rough drafts and updated CV](#) to SOP staff, your faculty, and your assigned Writing Specialist.

SUBMIT 1ST APPLICATION DRAFT(S)

To produce a competitive application, email at least one complete draft of your application to [SOP staff](#), your faculty, and your Writing Specialist for review and feedback by the deadline. Please note that the Gates does not require university endorsement and thus does not require a screening committee interview at the UCI level.

Confirm that your recommenders have submitted letter drafts.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

You'll receive feedback from SOP staff, faculty and your Writing Specialist. Incorporate this feedback into your second draft.

SUBMIT FINAL DRAFT(S)

Ensure all supplementary Cambridge application documents (Part A for college admission, Part B including personal statement for scholarship consideration); official transcript(s); GRE test score (if applicable) have been uploaded.

[Email pdf of finalized full application including forms, essays and all supplementary materials to SOP.](#)

EXTERNAL DEADLINE 10/14/17 [PROJECTED]

E-submit complete application via electronic system by **October 14, 2017 [projected]**. TIP: Submit several days earlier to avoid last-minute technical difficulties from heavy server traffic.

ENSURE FACULTY HAVE SUBMITTED LETTERS

Faculty must upload letters within 14 days of your application submission.

CAMBRIDGE ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT REVIEWS YOUR APPLICATION

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Your GRADSAF form, 2 academic references, and supporting documents are forwarded to the academic department; admitted candidates will be notified in November. **Please forward the status update to [SOP staff](#).** The academic department then sends your application to Gates for funding consideration.

GATES CAMBRIDGE REVIEWS YOUR APPLICATION

The Gates Cambridge Trust creates a shortlist of finalists in mid-December and sends invitations to interview. **Please forward the status update to [SOP staff](#).** Interviews are held in late January, and winners are notified in early February.