

2024 Board of Regents Student Excellence Scholarships

**The application portal opens on Tuesday, January 16, 2024.
Do not submit any documentation before Tuesday, January 16, 2024.**

Background & Purpose: The University System of Maryland (USM) is the state's public higher education system consisting of 12 institutions and 3 regional higher education centers spread across the state of Maryland. Consistently ranked as one of the most premier university systems in the country, the USM prides itself on its ability to inspire the next generation of leaders that go on to shape policy, science, technology, business, education, art, and culture.

Keeping in line with that mission and vision of the USM, the Board of Regents and the University System of Maryland Student Council (USMSC) present the Board of Regents Student Excellence Scholarships to recognize exceptionally talented students who are making contributions in various aspects of student life.

Eligibility:

The applicant must meet the following criteria:

- Current undergraduate students (taking 9 credits or more) or graduate students (no credit minimum, student must meet continuous registration requirements of student's respective graduate school) who are enrolled at a USM institution (even via a Regional Higher Education Center) in Spring 2024
- Be in good academic standing (3.0 GPA or above and/or as verified by the nominee's institution)
- Be in good conduct/disciplinary standing (as determined by the nominee's institution)
- Apply to the Leadership and Advocacy, Outreach and Engagement, or Innovation and Creative Activity category based on work/service that is **not** part of course or internship requirements or a job. The fact that your work/service is not part of a course, internship, or job requirements must be clear in your materials
- A student who won a Board of Regents Excellence Scholarship last year is not eligible for a scholarship in the same category

Categories:

Scholarships will be granted to **up to two** undergraduate students (one freshman or sophomore and one junior or senior) and **up to one** graduate student from among the diverse USM student community exhibiting achievements in the following categories: (1) Leadership and Advocacy; (2) Outreach and Engagement; (3) Innovation and Creativity; and (4) Academics, Scholarship, and Research.

Leadership and Advocacy: This category recognizes students' achievements in advocacy and leadership on campus. This may include, but is not limited to, advancing a cause, policy, or program objective that benefits the campus community; leadership within student organizations or athletics; mentoring; and justice and inclusion work. Applications under this category must be based on work/service that is **not** part of course or internship requirements or a job.

Outreach and Engagement: This category recognizes students' achievements in public service, outreach, and engagement in the community outside of their university and beyond. This may include, but is not limited to, community service/volunteer work in civic, social, and/or cultural organizations; civic engagement; and philanthropy. Applications under this category must be based on work/service that is **not** part of course or internship requirements or a job.

Innovation and Creative Activity: This category recognizes students' achievements in the creative and performing arts (music, dance, fine arts, literature) and/or innovations to include entrepreneurship. Applications under this category must be based on work/service that is **not** part of course or internship requirements or a job.

Academics, Scholarship, and Research: This category recognizes students' academic, scholarship, or research achievements as exemplified by one or more of the following: a stellar academic record; extraordinary publications; substantive research; merit awards; competitive selection for presentations at regional and national academic societies and conferences; etc.

Application Process:

The application portal opens on Tuesday, January 16, 2024.

Do not submit any documentation before Tuesday, January 16, 2024.

By Friday, February 9, 2024 at 11:59 PM EST:

- Apply for one (maximum of one application per student) of the aforementioned categories via https://www.usmd.edu/regents/student_excellence_scholarship/.

- Complete all applicable sections of the application including: (1) a 300-350-word essay describing how, during your time at your university, you are displaying excellence in the category of nomination; (2) your Fall 2023 unofficial transcript (only for applicants in the Academics, Scholarship, and Research category; (3) your resume, and (4) a separate, bulleted list of 2-4 experiences that are most compellingly relevant to the category to which you are applying. Each bullet should be no more than 3 sentences.
- Have one letter of recommendation emailed directly to bor-studentexcellencescholarships@usmd.edu by the recommender.
- Incomplete applications may be disregarded before evaluation begins.

Selection Process:**Criteria for Evaluation:**

Each applicant's application packet will be evaluated on:

- Success and excellence within a category during one's matriculation at their USM institution
- Articulated, specific examples of how their experiences relate to the category for which the student is applying
- Evidence of impact and/or long-term commitment to work being evaluated and that the work is **not** part of course or internship requirements or a job for Leadership and Advocacy, Outreach and Engagement, or Innovation and Creative Activity nominees
- A well-written submission
- A strong and compelling letter of recommendation demonstrating knowledge of the applicant and their work as related to the category for which the applicant is applying

Evaluation Committee:

The Board of Regents Student Excellence Scholarship Committee will include three (3) members. Committee members will be the USMSC President, USMSC Vice President for Undergraduate Affairs, and USMSC Vice President for Graduate Affairs. If the USMSC President, USMSC Vice President for Undergraduate Affairs, and/or USMSC Vice President for Graduate Affairs is a nominee or is otherwise unavailable, a member of the current Board of Directors or a former Student Regent will be asked to evaluate nominations in the category in which the officer is a nominee.

A staff member from the USM Office of Academic and Student Affairs and the Chair of the USM Vice President for Student Affairs stakeholder group (or their designee) will serve as liaisons and co-managers (with the USMSC) of the awards process.

Recognition for Awardees:

- Applicants will be informed of their status by May 3, 2024.
- Each awardee will receive a commemorative stole and a \$2,000 scholarship to commemorate their outstanding achievements.
- Awardees will be recognized by the Chancellor and Board of Regents during a ceremony for scholarship recipients.

Important Notes:

- All students are subject to various limits on the total financial aid they can receive from all sources. Your institution will notify you if this additional scholarship triggers any reductions to your other financial aid.
- The scholarship will be used to cover allowable educational expenses.
- The student's tax liability may vary depending on their personal situation. Please refer to the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) Publication 970 or consult tax or legal counsel for additional information.
- Nominees' institutions will be contacted to verify the nominees' academic and conduct/disciplinary status as mentioned in the Eligibility section on page 1.
- This is a one-time scholarship and is not renewable.
- The applicant is responsible for following up with your recommender and ensuring that the letter of recommendation has been submitted.
- Except for technical glitches on the USM portal, all application materials are final when the applicant submits. You will not be allowed to resubmit materials. All applications will be reviewed after the deadline, so there is no advantage to submitting earlier in the application period.

**Your application and letter of recommendation must be received by 11:59.59 on
Friday, February 9, 2024.**

**Your application is incomplete if your letter of recommendation has not been received.
Incomplete applications will not be processed or evaluated.**

Direct Questions to:

Dr. Zakiya Lee
Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
USM Academic and Student Affairs
zlee@usmd.edu or 301-445-1991