



THE TRUMAN SCHOLARSHIP

www.truman.gov

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OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION

Provides \$30,000 for graduate work in public service (policy change)

The Truman Scholarship is an award created by the Truman Foundation, which serves as a tribute to Harry S. Truman, the United States' thirty-third president. This award is meant to support students who are passionate about public service and who are actively pursuing careers in this field. Truman Scholars facilitate progress in their communities, participate as active leaders, and seek challenging experiences with the intention of preparing themselves for their future careers. They intend to become “change agents”: leaders who shape the future.

ELIGIBILITY

- Full-time, undergraduate student with either junior-level standing or senior-level standing (one cannot apply in the senior year in which one is graduating).
- Must be a U.S. citizen (U.S. national) or one who can be expected to be a legal citizen by the date the scholarship is awarded.
- Must be pursuing a graduate degree in a field related to public service.

HOW TO APPLY

The Truman Scholarship application consists of the following:

- A letter of nomination from your institution;
- A completed application including short essays on leadership, service and your future path in public service;
- A policy proposal on a subject that interests you;
- Three letters of recommendation; one each on:
 - Leadership Abilities;
 - Commitment to a Career in Public Service; and,
 - Likelihood of Academic Success.
- A transcript.

Approaching the Application

The Truman application is a lengthy, time-consuming and competitive process. But while the process can be challenging, most applicants report positive outcomes from the process even if they are not successful.

Many candidates report that the application helped them to clarify their path in public service, which graduate degree is best for them, and how they plan to have an impact in public service. Others report that working on the application made them a stronger writer or a better advocate for themselves. Material developed for the application can be helpful for other scholarships as well as graduate school applications.

The strongest applicants approach the Truman with these benefits in mind. The process itself has value and is worth their sincere effort. For these students, there is value in the process beyond the scholarship.

However, there are challenges to approaching the application in this way. Not every applicant or every institution is equipped similarly. Some applicants have access to strong advising and ample opportunities, others do not - still others are in the middle.

We are responsible for addressing some of these issues in our process and in the way we assess materials and train our readers and interviewers. We also strive to provide equitable access to materials regardless of the resources at an institution.

This section includes a number of items designed to help prepare the best application possible. Applicants should take care to assess advice given for their own situation as no two applicants are alike and blanket advice rarely works for everyone.

FOR RECOMMENDERS

- Applicants should have a history of great academic strength.
- Applicants should be extensively engaged in their communities and in roles of leadership.
- Students who have been nominated for the Truman Scholarship by faculty representatives in previous years may not be nominated again this year.
- Applicants must be sure their intended graduate program fulfills the necessary requirements, which can be found on the Truman Foundation website.