

Rhodes Scholarship Guide

Fellowships Advising and Study Abroad
Center for Student Services, RM. 319
FASAOoffice@caltech.edu

Rhodes Scholarship: <https://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/scholarships/the-rhodes-scholarship/>

Eligibility Criteria (U.S. Residency)

For U.S. and U.S.-based Global candidates, key eligibility details include:

- **Age:**
 - Must be aged 18–23 on October 1, 2025 (born after October 1, 2001)
 - Or under 27 on October 1, 2025 and completed first undergraduate degree after October 1, 2024
- **Academic Requirements:**
 - Completed undergraduate degree by July 2026
 - Minimum GPA of 3.70, with most successful applicants closer to 3.9
- **Institutional Endorsement:**
 - Mandatory endorsement from your university or college is required before applying. Applications then proceed via one of the 16 U.S. Rhodes District Committees
 - This should be from the Caltech FASA office, but they will accept nomination letters from the university president or a dean in lieu of the fellowships office director.

Application Timeline & Process

- **U.S. applicants:** campus endorsement deadlines typically fall in August 2025, followed by District interviews in November
- **Global applicants:**
 - Application opens June 2, 2025, and closes July 31, 2025 (GMT)
 - Must complete institutional eligibility confirmation prior to submission (you must begin by July 29 to submit by the deadline)

What the Rhodes Selection Committee Looks For

The selection is holistic and centers on:

- Academic excellence and intellectual curiosity
- Leadership, impact, and service—sustained engagement in extracurricular or community activities
- Character and morality: attributes such as truthfulness, courage, empathy, and concern for others

Approximately 3,000+ U.S. candidates apply each year; only 32 are selected, yielding a pool of approximately 865 endorsed finalists and 238 interviewed across districts

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Materials and Tips for a Strong Application

- **Personal Statement (often $\leq 1,000$ words):**
 - Articulate your intellectual journey, why study at Oxford, and how it aligns with your long-term goals
- **Curriculum Vitae:** Academic credentials, leadership, service, and interests.
- **Letters of Recommendation:**
 - Submit five to eight letters (most recommend seven or eight).
 - At least four should be from professors who taught you as an undergraduate, and letters should complement, not duplicate, each other
- **List of Activities & Honors:** Highlight sustained involvement and impact; achievements in academic, extracurricular, or civic realms.

Advice Checklist

- Verify eligibility and choose constituency (U.S. district or global) early.
- Plan for campus endorsement—identify internal deadlines and specific criteria.
- Craft your essays with clarity, reflecting leadership potential and a plan for Oxford study.
- Select recommenders thoughtfully, ensuring unique perspectives across letters.
- Engage in interview prep, especially if endorsed as a finalist for District-level selection.

Helpful Resources

- Official Rhodes Trust website: Information for candidates, selection criteria, and application instructions
- Information for U.S. Applicants: Guidelines and key dates including district application structure
- FAQs and constituency-specific details depending on your region or global eligibility.

Final Thoughts

Winning a Rhodes Scholarship is exceptionally competitive—but applicants who balance clear academic focus, leadership in action, a grounded moral compass, and a thoughtful fit with Oxford's offerings stand out. Successful candidates are not just high achievers—they are motivated, resilient, and committed to making a difference.