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»» A FREE TOOLKIT

90-Day Scholarship Application *Planner.*

Start with what depends on other people. End with what depends only on you. A day-by-day plan so you submit a competitive application instead of a rushed one.

Days 90 to 60

Days 60 to 30

Days 30 to 0

Fillable trackers

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Why planning backwards works

Professors, university offices and test centres work on their own time, not on your deadline. Your SOP and CV depend only on you, so they can wait. Most students do it the other way round and get stuck in departmental delays.

DAYS 90 TO 60

Lock the slow things

No writing yet. Check eligibility, book the language test, start document attestation and send reference requests.

DAYS 60 TO 30

Write once, properly

Tailor your SOP and CV to this scholarship. Aim to be complete, not perfect, so you have time to improve.

DAYS 30 TO 0

Review, then submit early

Get expert feedback, match every document to the prompt, and submit 3 to 5 days before the deadline.

How to use this planner. Fill in your deadline on the next page, then work through the three phases and tick each checkpoint when it is truly done. **The PDF is fillable:** click the boxes to tick them and type straight into the trackers (Adobe Acrobat/Reader, Chrome, Edge or Preview), or print it. The day counts show the order and rhythm of the work: they are a guide, not a rigid rule. If you have fewer than 90 days, keep the same order and compress each phase. Nobody can guarantee an outcome, but a plan removes the avoidable reasons for rejection.

CONTENTS

0	Set your dates	1 table
1	Days 90 to 60: lock the slow things	7 checkpoints + 3 trackers
2	Days 60 to 30: write once, properly	5 checkpoints
3	Days 30 to 0: review, then submit early	6 checkpoints + final checklist
4	Your master 90-day calendar	1 page

Set your dates

Work backwards from the official deadline (check it on the scholarship's own website, including the time zone).

Scholarship name	
Official deadline (date and time zone)	
Day 90: planning starts (deadline minus 90 days)	
Day 60: slow things must be locked	
Day 30: complete application pack ready	
My submit-by date (3 to 5 days before the deadline)	

Check yourself on Day 60 and Day 30. On Day 60 the four slow items (eligibility, language test, documents, reference requests) should be done or well under way. On Day 30 your SOP, CV and documents should be complete, with reference letters received or confirmed. If not, drop everything else and fix that first.

REFLECT

What is the one slow item most likely to delay me (for example, attestation or a busy professor), and what can I do about it this week?

Lock the slow things

The first 30 days contain no writing. Spend them on everything that is not in your control.

1.1 Check your eligibility on the official page ☐

Confirm degree level, country, CGPA and language requirements. If you do not qualify, do not spend weeks on this application: research which scholarship suits you better instead.

1.2 Read what the grant actually covers ☐

Tuition only, or living costs as well? If it covers tuition only, you may need to show a bank statement for the visa. Understand the whole process before you commit.

1.3 Book a language test that THIS scholarship accepts ☐

Check the accepted tests on the scholarship page. Example: if a scholarship asks for GRE and then TOEFL, IELTS preparation and fees are wasted. Slots fill early and a low band needs retake time, so book with a gap.

1.4 Start document attestation now ☐

In Pakistan, degrees are attested by HEC first and then by MOFA, and MOFA does not attest without HEC. The chain can take weeks and each office works at its own pace.

1.5 Request references now ☐

Email your professors with a short list of your work and projects. Reference letters need at least 2 to 3 weeks if you want them to be good.

1.6 Have a plan B scholarship ☐

If you are not eligible or the terms do not fit, which scholarship is the better match? Shortlist one now.

1.7 Put every slow date in your calendar ☐

Test date, attestation follow-ups, reference reminders. Slow items run on other people's time, so check on them.

Eligibility, documents and referees

ELIGIBILITY CHECK (FILL FROM THE OFFICIAL PAGE)

Requirement	What the scholarship asks	Do I meet it? (yes / no / how)
Degree level and subject		
Country / nationality		
Minimum CGPA		
Accepted language / entry tests		
What the grant covers		
Proof of funds needed?		

DOCUMENTS AND ATTESTATION (PAKISTAN: HEC FIRST, THEN MOFA)

Document	Sent for attestation	HEC done	MOFA done	In my hands
Transcripts				
Degree certificate				
Other (translation, etc.)				

REFEREE TRACKER

Referee	Asked on	Details pack sent	Reminder sent	Letter confirmed

Write once, properly

Now drafting begins. The common mistake is treating the first draft as the final draft.

2.1 Write each essay for THIS scholarship

☐

Prompts differ and each scholarship looks for distinct qualities. Answer exactly what is asked, and avoid recycling one essay everywhere.

2.2 Tailor your CV to the scholarship

☐

Lead with the achievements and projects that connect to this scholarship's mission, not a generic list.

2.3 Aim for complete, not perfect

☐

The goal of this phase is a complete application pack. Finishing early gives you time to improve it in Phase 3.

2.4 Collect and check every required document

☐

Compare the scholarship's document list with what you have. Anything missing goes on a fix-by date.

2.5 Keep your reference letters moving

☐

Remind your referees politely and confirm they know the deadline and how to submit.

MATCH EACH PROMPT TO YOUR STORY

Prompt or question	My example (what, when, result) and status

Need help with the essay itself? The free Detailed Scholarship Application Checkpoints toolkit at aptcon.co/resources.html covers the SOP, reference letters and tailoring in detail.

Review, then submit early

These days are for review, not for writing.

3.1 Get feedback from someone who has seen a scholarship application ☐

A senior, mentor or counsellor, ideally someone who has won the scholarship or helped many students get it. Friends and family usually say “it looks great”.

3.2 Match every document to its prompt ☐

Word limit, format, file size and file naming. A small technical mistake can disqualify an application.

3.3 Submit 3 to 5 days before the deadline ☐

Portals get busy on deadline day and uploads can fail. Nobody gives an extension because your internet was slow.

3.4 Check the confirmation ☐

After submitting, make sure the confirmation email or portal status has arrived. Save a screenshot.

3.5 Keep reading emails from the portal ☐

You may be asked for additional information or a document. Reply promptly.

3.6 Save a copy of everything you submitted ☐

You will need it for interviews and for your next application.

REFLECT

Who will review my application before I submit, and by which date?

What is the weakest part of my application, and what will I do about it this week?

Pre-submit checklist

Do not submit until every box is ticked.

CONTENT

- ☐ I answered every prompt, in the order asked
- ☐ SOP and CV are written for this scholarship
- ☐ Every claim has a concrete example
- ☐ Someone experienced reviewed the final draft
- ☐ No other scholarship or university name left behind

REFERENCES

- ☐ Referees asked 2 to 3 weeks ahead
- ☐ They received my short list of work and projects
- ☐ The portal shows each letter as received

DOCUMENTS AND FORMAT

- ☐ Degree and transcripts attested (HEC, then MOFA) if required
- ☐ Language test score meets the requirement
- ☐ Word limits, file type, size and naming respected
- ☐ Passport and ID details match everywhere
- ☐ Every upload opens correctly after upload

SUBMISSION

- ☐ Submitting 3 to 5 days before the deadline
- ☐ Confirmation email or screenshot saved
- ☐ I know the next date (interview, result, documents)

Master 90-day calendar

Suggested timing. Adjust it to your deadline and add the real dates in the last two columns.

When	What	My date	Done
Day 90 to 85	Check eligibility and what the grant covers; shortlist a plan B		☐
Day 85	Book the accepted language test (leave room for a retake)		☐
Day 85 to 80	Send documents for attestation (HEC, then MOFA); send reference requests with your details pack		☐
Day 60	CHECKPOINT: the four slow items are done or well under way		☐
Day 60 to 35	Draft your SOP and CV for this scholarship (complete, not perfect)		☐
Day 30	CHECKPOINT: complete application pack in hand		☐
Day 30 to 10	Expert feedback, revisions, remind referees		☐
Day 10 to 5	Match every document to the prompt: limits, format, size, naming		☐
Day 5 to 3	SUBMIT. Save the confirmation		☐
After	Check portal emails and respond to any request quickly		☐

»» WHAT NEXT

Want an expert team to review your application?

If you are in the middle of a scholarship application, our team can review it with you. Book a free consultation and we will go through your timeline, SOP and documents.

Book a free consultation at aptcon.co

More free toolkits and the full Scholarship Roadmap at aptcon.co/resources.html