

2021 Duke Rhodes Recommendations

Congratulations! You have been asked to recommend a student for a highly competitive national scholarship. This is both an honor in that you are mentoring an ambitious and promising student, and a responsibility in that you likely wish to write a letter that can help your student stand out from a pool of other highly promising young people.

Please note:

- ❖ You are *never* required to write for a student. Please only write for those students for whom you believe you can make a good case.
- ❖ All students have waived their rights to see your letters.
- ❖ It is against NCS-OUSF policy to accept letters originally authored by students. We need the letter to be from you.

At any time in this process, from brainstorming the first draft to finalizing your letters, we are delighted to help. We are most available during the early part of the summer, but we do our best to prioritize our letter writers.

Please contact ncs-ousf@duke.edu.

Rhodes Scholarship Recommendations Process

Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Literary and Scholastic Achievement ❖ Energy to use talents to fullest (athleticism <i>not</i> required) ❖ Moral force of character and instinct to lead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Truth, courage, devotion to duty ○ Kindliness and unselfishness ❖ Sympathy for and protection of the weak <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ An interest in others and giving back ❖ Propensity to “fight the world’s fight” 		
Endorsement Required	Yes. This is a multi-stage process		
Length	1.5-2 pages; Never more than 3 pages		
Number of Recommenders	8 total—typically 4 who have taught the student, one other academic, and 3 character and leadership recommenders		
Application Stages	Stage	Description	Deadline
	Consultation	In April, we offer to meet with students who are applying for a UK award to discuss their candidacy	April 9
	Endorsement	NCS convenes a faculty committee to decide which applications will go forward in a given year	August 1
	National Foundation Submission	Once endorsed, your student will let you know their status and you will receive a link to upload your letter for the national process	October 4
	Scholars Named		November 21

FAQs

If my student is applying to multiple scholarships, how many letters must I write?

For the Consultation/Endorsement Stages: We only want one letter per student from you. If your student is endorsed, you can use that initial letter as a draft for your other letters, which will speak directly to the criteria of the particular scholarship.

Where do I submit?

For the Consultation/Endorsement Stages: submit to ncs-ousf@duke.edu

For the Foundation Stage: You will receive a link from the Rhodes Foundation (check your spam folder) and **will post the letter online yourself**. It should be a signed PDF on letterhead. NCS does not have access to your portal, and cannot submit the letter on your behalf. [Please let us know if you have technical difficulties].

Who do I address the letters to?

For the Consultation/Endorsement Stages: NCS/Duke Endorsement Committee

For the Foundation Stage: The Chair and members of the Rhodes District to which your student is applying OR “Rhodes Selection Committee Members”

What is the difference between an Endorsement stage letter and my letter for the foundation?

The letter to the Duke committee is essentially a draft of the final letter you will use to send to Rhodes. It should be *explicit* about how this student stands out at Duke. The aim of the letter is to tell us why we should support this student’s application for Rhodes and/or the other scholarships. How do you see their fit? Can you compare them to other great Duke students—undergrads, alumni or grad?

How will I know whether a student is endorsed?

Students will be instructed to let you know as soon as they have been endorsed. Endorsements are usually made by NCS during the end of the second week of class in the fall semester.

Things to keep in mind?

Always remember the adage, “Show don’t Tell.”

Readers at the national level have many letters to read in a short period of time; be sure to highlight your key points early in the letter, if you can.

What should the letters contain?

- ❖ Tell the story of the candidate from YOUR point of view.
- ❖ How do you know the student?
- ❖ What is outstanding about their scholarship, leadership, and/or character?
- ❖ Could you tell us a story about a time the student impressed you?
- ❖ How does their study plan fit into their future ambitions?
- ❖ How does this student compare to other students you know? For instance, is the student in the top 10% of students you have taught, or are even the best in your teaching career?

What details should I add to the foundation letter?

How does the student meet the Rhodes criteria?

Why is Oxford the next best place for them to study?

Further Resources

On Rhodes Recommendations from Penn State: <http://bit.ly/RhodesRecAdvice>

Stronger Recommendations from Inside Higher Ed: <http://bit.ly/stronger-letters>