

2021-22 Duke Beinecke 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 promising young people.

Please note:

- ❖ You are *never* required to write for a student. Please only write for those students for whom you can share details on that adhere to the criteria for the scholarship.
- ❖ All students have waived their rights to see your letters.
- ❖ It is against NCS-OUSF policy to accept letters originally authored by students.

At any time in this process, from brainstorming the first draft to finalizing your letters, we are delighted to help. Please contact ncs-ousf@duke.edu.

Beinecke Scholarship Recommendations Process

Criteria	Nominees must demonstrate intellectual curiosity, character, and potential for advanced graduate study. This study must be for research degree (master's or doctoral) in the humanities and social sciences, or advanced work in the arts. (Professional master's degrees are not competitive, for example: MPP, MPH.)		
Endorsement required?	Yes. This is a multi-stage process and Duke is allowed to nominate one student annually.		
Length	1.5-2 pages; Never more than 3 pages		
Number of Recommenders	3		
Application Stages	Stage	Description	Deadline
	On campus selection	NCS convenes a committee to decide which applications will go forward in a given year.	January 12, 2022
	National Foundation Submission	If your student is endorsed, the student will inform you of next steps the week of February 12. You will send a complete, polished letter signed and on letterhead to ncs-ousf@duke.edu . NCS will submit the letter to the Scholarship Foundation on your behalf.	February 28, 2022
	Scholars Named		Mid-April

FAQs

Where do I submit?

For the Endorsement Stage: Please send a letter to ncs-ousf@duke.edu.

For the Foundation Stage: If your student is endorsed, please send a signed PDF on letterhead to ncs-ousf@duke.edu. NCS is required to upload the letter for you.

To whom should I address the letter?

For the Endorsement Stage: NCS/Duke Endorsement Committee

For the Foundation Stage: Diane Flynn, Director and Beinecke Selection Committee Members

What is the difference between an endorsement stage recommendation and my final letter for the foundation?

The letter to the Duke committee is essentially a draft of the final letter for Beinecke. 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 the Beinecke nomination. Why will they stand out in graduate school? Tell us about the research they may have done with you

The final letter to the Foundation is signed and on letterhead and should give context about Duke if necessary. For example, when speaking about Duke specific opportunities—FOCUS, DukeEngage, or Bass Connections—a sentence about what those programs are should be included. However, a Resident Assistant position would not need context.

How will I know whether a student is endorsed?

Students will be instructed to let you know if they have been endorsed.

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.

What should the letters contain?

- ❖ Tell the story of the candidate from YOUR point of view.
- ❖ How do you know the student?
- ❖ How do they meet the Beinecke Criteria?
- ❖ 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 have taught? For instance, is the student in the top 10% of students you have taught, or are even the best in your teaching career?

Further Resources

Recommendation Letter Advice from Penn State: <http://bit.ly/RhodesRecAdvice>

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



Office of Undergraduate Scholars and Fellows Nationally Competitive Scholarships

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The Beinecke Scholarship Program seeks to encourage and enable highly motivated students to pursue opportunities available to them and to be courageous in the selection of a graduate course of study in the arts, humanities and social sciences at any accredited university. Each scholar receives \$4,000 immediately prior to entering graduate school and an additional \$30,000 while attending graduate school. There are no geographic restrictions on the use of the scholarship, and recipients are allowed to supplement the award with other scholarships, assistantships and research grants.

Duke is allowed to nominate 1 student per year. Nominees must demonstrate intellectual curiosity, character, and potential for advanced graduate study. This study must be for research degree (master's or doctoral) in the humanities and social sciences, or advanced work in the arts. (Professional master's degrees are not competitive, for example: MPP, MPH.) Students must also have demonstrated financial need, but recommenders are not expected to speak to that aspect.