

R&A INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP - FAQs 2024

How much detail should I provide in my project outline?

A programme/project/proposal is your outline of what you intend to do in a year with the funding. This can be anything – past scholars have included medics visiting various indigenous public health programmes, future educators examining different systems of educating young people, someone exploring approaches to sanitation in developing countries, cyclists aiming to break world records or distribute innovative medical devices, a musician exploring the ways that music can help in traumatic situations, a poet interviewing grassroots activists and writing of their struggles, a pair of scholars developing a roaming podcast exploring approaches to food sustainability... the list is long and varied. Project options are endless, and a real opportunity for creativity.

Your programme/proposal should outline where you will go, who you will visit, what narrative theme draws all your various destinations/activities/organisations together, and what you hope to gain from such a project.

In your application it is a good idea to have settled on some target organisations who are doing work you are interested in finding out more about, especially if they have ways of sponsoring/supporting your project. If you have indications of provisional commitment from them by the time you are invited to interview (*should that be the case*), then that also strengthens your case, though there is flexibility after an award offer has been made, to revise the organisations/target destinations. Further information about the application requirements can be found in the [guidelines online](#).

I am aiming to work with people in vulnerable situations – what evidence do I need to provide of my safety/compliance for those situations?

Additional budget is being offered this year to ensure that any background checks you are required to undertake can be factored into your project costings.

What costs are covered by the scholarship? Does it include insurance or visa costs?

The maximum budget has been set to allow for increased compliance/travel/bespoke insurance costs related to Covid and the recently escalating cost of living, and the funding is expected to cover all your travel costs **for one year**. The University travel insurance may cover standard projects, but some scholars have also sought extra cover for more specialised projects, and factored this into their budgets.

This award does not cover any educational courses/fees. Because it is a very generous award, it is not typically made to anyone aiming to travel for less than a year in their initial proposal.

If, in planning, you discover it may be quite costly to carry out your project, it would be a good idea to indicate in your proposal how you plan to make up any shortfall. Scholars have successfully leveraged funding for more ambitious projects from other charitable sources in the past, based on the commitment provided by this scholarship. Bear in mind that any funding

you receive from either this scholarship, or other sources combined, may be treated as taxable for income purposes.

Joint projects should submit one combined budget. The panel has the discretion to consider how the available funding could be applied to your project.

How much detail do I need to put into my budget?

You should aim to cover broad travel costing headings:

- Flights/train fares etc,
- Accommodation,
- Subsistence,
- Equipment,
- Insurance – if required, remember University Travel Insurance may be available and adequate for most projects

This does not have to be provided in forensic detail, but you should have a rough notion of realistic costs in the countr(ies) you intend to visit. Remember that the scholarship is not intended to support additional study and therefore does not typically cover tuition fees.

Does the academic reference need to be a staff member at the University of St Andrews, or can it be someone in an external academic institution/university too?

Since this is a University of St Andrews funding opportunity, an academic referee from the St Andrews community, who knows your current academic capacity well, will potentially hold more weight. However, if you have recently been on a Study Abroad programme, your most recent advisor may be better placed to comment. (Your high school teacher is a bit far removed from your current academic abilities to provide adequate support.)

It's also a good idea to send them a copy of the guidelines when you ask them to write the reference. If the referee does not wish to send you the reference, they may send it on directly to **stewardship@st-andrews.ac.uk** - in which case you should note who your referee will be in a separate document in the upload section of the application.

Who can provide a character reference?

It is conventional for character references to be able to provide some weight to their assessment of whether they think you might be an ideal candidate for the award – considering the qualities outlined in the guidelines. So, someone in a professional/social/community context who is able to comment on your personal qualities is preferable. It's also a good idea to send them a copy of the guidelines when you ask them to write the reference. (A member of your own family is not a suitable character referee.)

Can I defer my offer this year and take it up once I graduate/return from other scholarship opportunities?

No – this award cannot be deferred, so you would need to reapply next year if you did not take the award up in 2024. If you are graduating in 2024, you would only be able to apply again in 2025 if you were registered with the University as a Sabbatical Officer in 2024-25.

Will this award be available again in 2025?

Apart from a hiatus in 2021, due to Covid, this award has been available every year since its inception in 2012, and as long as travel regulations and funding permit, will be available for the foreseeable future. The parameters, level and number of awards may vary.