

The Daniel M. Sachs Class of 1960 Graduating Scholarship

Frequently Asked Questions

Application Process

Q. My interests do not lie in politics, or even in the social sciences. Am I a suitable candidate for the Sachs?

A. Sachs Scholars have been drawn from a wide range of disciplines, including the physical sciences, engineering, humanities, and the arts. Anyone interested public affairs, broadly defined, and in the potential application of their work to enhance the public welfare is a suitable candidate.

Q. I am interested in both the Traveling and the Worcester College, Oxford Options. Can I apply for both?

A. No, you must specify in your letter of application in which one of the two ways you propose to use the Scholarship.

Q. How do I obtain an application form for the Sachs Scholarship?

A. There is no application form. You need only write a letter to the Sachs Selection Committee, setting out how you would propose to use the Scholarship, and why your proposal should command the interest of the Committee. Please read and follow carefully the instructions found in the Fellowship Guide (and on this website) regarding materials you are required to submit with your letter.

Q. Must I be an American citizen or permanent resident to apply for the Sachs Scholarship?

A. No, any graduating senior at Princeton University is eligible.

Q. I am a graduating senior, but I already have other plans for next year. Can I apply for the Scholarship, and defer it for a year if I receive it?

A. No, the Scholarship cannot be deferred. The Scholar is expected to commence his or her proposed activity within six months of graduation.

Q. I graduated last spring. Am I eligible to apply?

A. No, only members of the current senior class are eligible.

Q. How many letters of recommendation may I submit?

A. You may submit up to three letters. Letters will be added to your application file in the order they are received; subsequent letters beyond the third will be discarded. Letters of recommendation are not required, but generally speaking letters are helpful to the Committee in its efforts better to understand you and the context for your proposal.

Q. Must my letters of recommendation accompany my application?

A. Referees should send their letters directly to the Committee. The sooner they arrive, the better, but letters of recommendation do not need to be received by the Committee prior to the application deadline to be considered. Whenever received, letters of recommendation will be included in the candidate's file and considered in the next stage of the selection process.

Q. May I submit samples of my writing, artwork, music, etc. with my application?

A. You are welcome to submit small quantities of such material if it is relevant to your application. If you need to have the material returned, please so indicate and provide suitable return packaging. Please do not submit any valuable or irreplaceable material; while the Committee will endeavor to treat your material with care, it cannot be held responsible for loss or damage.

Q. How long should my proposal be?

A. There is no prescribed length. Your proposal should address with some specificity what you propose to do, and why. If your written materials do not make a compelling case, you will not be invited for an interview. At the same time, bear in mind that each reader must read thirty or more application packages, and may be put off by an unnecessarily wordy proposal.

Q. Will you accept my application after the published application deadline?

A. No, applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

Oxford Option

Q. I am applying for the Sachs Scholarship under the Worcester College, Oxford Option. When should I submit an application to Oxford University and/or Worcester College?

A. You do not need to submit an application to Oxford prior to the conclusion of the Sachs selection process. If you are awarded the Scholarship, you will still have adequate time to apply to Oxford, and the Sachs Scholarship committee will assist you in submitting your application. Of course, if you are considering attending Oxford University (any college) irrespective of whether you are awarded the Sachs Scholarship, you may wish to submit an application to Oxford earlier. The fact of having, or having not, already applied to Oxford will not affect your chances of receiving the Sachs Scholarship.

Q. If selected as the Sachs Scholar, am I assured acceptance into the Oxford graduate degree program of my choice?

A. No. While no Sachs Scholar should have difficulty gaining admission to Oxford University and Worcester College, the relevant departmental faculty controls admission to each graduate degree program, and some programs (such as the M.Phil. in International Relations) have many more applicants than places. If you are aiming to enter such a highly selective program, you should indicate to the Selection Committee in your Sachs application whether a different Oxford degree program would meet your interests should you fail to gain admission to your preferred program. If you aim to read for a second BA (a popular choice), you should have no difficulty irrespective of the subject(s).

Q. May I use the Sachs Scholarship to attend an Oxford college other than Worcester College?

A. Only while attending Worcester College, Oxford, will the Sachs Scholar receive two years of financial support. Attendance at any other institution, including another Oxford College, will be considered under the Traveling Option, which provides one year of support. In this light, it is hard to conceive of a reason why a Scholar would choose to attend an Oxford College other than Worcester. Worcester is an outstanding college, in terms of its faculty, reputation and facilities. (Many consider it one of Oxford's most beautiful colleges.) At Worcester, one may read virtually any subject, and may draw as required on faculty and other resources located elsewhere in the University community.

Traveling Option

Q. I wish to attend a course at a foreign institution. Do I have to gain admission to the course before the Sachs Scholar is selected?

A. No, but it is helpful to your application if you can show that you are easily qualified for the program or, better still, that program faculty have expressed interest in working with you. Depending on deadlines and your alternate plans, you may wish to submit an application for the course prior to the Sachs selection.

Q. Can I propose a two-year project or course at a foreign institution?

A. Under the Traveling Option, the Sachs Scholarship will provide support for only one year. If you propose a longer project or course, you should suggest in your proposal how or where you anticipate finding support for the second year.

Q. Can I propose an independent project, not associated with a foreign university?

A. The Selection Committee welcomes proposals for independent projects abroad. However, you should recognize that an extra burden then falls on you to describe in some detail what you plan to do, and to demonstrate its feasibility, both in terms of access and budget.

Q. Can I propose to return to a country or institution where I have already been?

A. There is no requirement that the proposed experience be wholly new. However, you should endeavor to explain how the return experience will "enlarge [your] view of the world," and not be simply a repetition, however rewarding.

Q. Can I propose to engage in aid or charitable work abroad?

A. The Scholarship is intended as an investment in the development of the Scholar as someone who may, over a lifetime, make a lasting contribution. Your work proposal will be evaluated on that basis as an experience for you, not on its intrinsic humanitarian merit.

Selection Process

Q. How is the Sachs Scholar selected from among the applicants?

A. Four or more readers, drawn from among former Sachs Scholars and advisors to the Scholarship, carefully review all applications and supporting materials. The readers select approximately a dozen applicants to be interviewed by a Selection Committee, similarly composed of five to seven former Scholars and advisors. Applicants will be advised in November by email whether they have been invited to interview, and when and where they should appear. Interviews take place on the Princeton campus in early December on a Friday evening and Saturday. Candidates will be notified of the final outcome within a few days following the interviews.

Q. I cannot be on campus during the interview weekend. Can I meet the Selection Committee at some other time?

A. Unfortunately, no. The Selection Committee comes together only during the interview weekend. A candidate who, for whatever reason, is unable to meet the Committee at that time will not be eligible to receive the Scholarship.

Q. I will be on campus during the interview weekend, but I have certain obligations that would prevent me from meeting the Committee at certain times. Can I be accommodated?

A. To the extent feasible, interview times will be assigned to accommodate conflicts. Candidates facing conflicts must inform the Committee in writing of the potential conflict PRIOR TO the issuance of interview invitations.

Other Information

Q. How do I ask a question not addressed in these FAQ?

A. You should feel free to email David Loevner at dloevner@hlmnet.com with any questions. Please review the instructions in the Fellowship Guide (which also appear on this website) beforehand, to be sure the answer to your question does not already appear.