Thank you for your interest in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Office of Education, Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship Program. The following instructions are provided to assist you with completing and submitting the Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship application.

Enclosed is an application checklist, application instructions, background information on the Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship Program, and program timeline.

If you have questions or require clarification please contact the NOAA Office of Education Scholarship Programs staff at: studentscholarshipprograms@noaa.gov, or (301) 628-2913.

ONLINE APPLICATION CHECKLIST:

GENERAL INFORMATION (Complete Online)

CONTACT INFORMATION (Complete Online)

EDUCATION INFORMATION (Complete Online): Upload OFFICIAL Transcript for each university/college attended. Only OFFICIAL transcript will be accepted. Unofficial transcript will result in disqualification of your application. If coursework, credits, grades, and GPA from previous institutions attended are listed on current institution transcript, one official transcript may be uploaded.

ACADEMIC AWARDS, HONORS, AND ACTIVITIES (Complete Online)

REFERENCES (Complete Online): References should be submitted via the online reference form by January 25, 2021, to ensure they are received prior to the application deadline of February 1, 2021. Applicants must identify the reference's email in their online application. An email will be sent to the reference with a link to the online reference form. The reference form is not available outside of the application system.

- TWO REFERENCES ARE REQUIRED. Applicants must identify the name, title, and email address of two individuals who will receive an email with a link to complete and submit a Reference Form through the application system on your behalf (The Reference Form is not available outside of the application system).
  1. At least one of the reference forms must be from a professor, visiting professor, or lecturer who has taught you at the undergraduate level, or a department chair, dean, or academic advisor.
2. The second reference may also be an academic reference or a character reference that can speak to your capabilities and interests as they relate to the scholarship.

**References from former high school teachers, coaches, family members, or friends will NOT be accepted.**

Recommendations from NOAA staff are acceptable, if that person served in one of the capacities mentioned above. If the NOAA employee providing the reference is a faculty member then he/she must use a school email account when submitting the reference form. If the NOAA employee served as a mentor, then he/she must use their personal email. A @noaa.gov email account will not be allowed through the application system. If you have questions regarding the reference eligibility, please contact studentscholarshipprograms@noaa.gov.

**REFERENCES THAT DO NOT MEET THESE REQUIREMENTS WILL RENDER YOUR APPLICATION INELIGIBLE.**

**NOTE:** A compelling reference will help reviewers understand how you stand out from other applicants. You may want to provide your transcripts and a statement of your accomplishments, experiences or goals to the individuals writing your recommendations to assist them in preparing a solid recommendation.

Click the "Request Recommendation" button to send an email to the associated reference who will receive instructions and a link to the online Reference Form. All Reference Forms should be submitted by **Jan. 25, 2021**, to ensure they are received prior to the application deadline of February 1, 2021.

**ESSAY (Complete Online):** Statement of **Proposed College Education Plan and Career Goals.** Describe your College Education Plan and Career Goals (describe how your education and career interests, talents, and initiatives are related to NOAA’s mission and objectives)

**COMPLETED APPLICATION MUST BE SUBMITTED BY 11:59 p.m. (EST) February 1, 2021**
Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship Program
2021 Applicant Instructions

Below are instructions on how to complete the student scholarship application. Examples of some sections of the application are also provided. **Note that Hollings applicants who are attending Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs)**¹ are also eligible to apply for the EPP/MSI Undergraduate Scholarship Program (see the SUBMIT section).

All sections of the application must be complete prior to clicking <SUBMIT> including references. **Once the application is submitted, the information is grayed out and cannot be modified.** Applicants may check the status of the application at any time by clicking <MyAccount Status>.

The Hollings On-Line Application is designed to time out after 15 minutes of inactivity. We recommend completing the Reference section of the application first to give your academic faculty time to complete and submit the online recommendation forms. We also suggest that essays be created outside of the application in a Word document and copied into the ESSAY sections of the application.

1. Each applicant is required to first login and create a User Account.
   a. Go to: https://oedwebapps.iso.noaa.gov/uspa/. Click on <Create Login Account>. The applicant will be redirected to a page to Setup Login Account.
   b. The applicant is to enter their Name, E-mail account, and Password that will be used to enter the Application System. Confirmation e-mails will be sent to the applicant’s e-mail account.
   c. Enter a Security Question and the Answer. This will be used if the applicant forgets their password. If an applicant forgets their password click <Forgot Password> from the Sign In page. When prompted, enter the correct answer and your password will be sent in an e-mail to the account previously identified when setting up your Login Account.
   d. Select the Undergraduate Scholarship Program that you would like to apply to.
   e. Click <Create Login Account> or you may click <Back to main page> which will redirect you to the program background information where you may log out.

¹ Do you attend a Minority Serving Institution as defined by the U.S. Department of Education to include: Historically Black Colleges and Universities; Hispanic Serving Institutions*; Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian institutions; and, Tribal Colleges and Universities?

* Applicants who attend Hispanic Serving Institutions must submit an official letter from their school verifying the institution is a U.S. Department of Education recognized Hispanic Serving Institution at the time of application. If an applicant transfers to another school during the scholarship period, verification of the institution’s MSI status is also required.

The verification letter from the school must be uploaded to the application as an Adobe .pdf file, along with the transcript, as part of the scholarship application process.
f. The applicant will be redirected to Verify the Login Information, if the
   information is not correct click <Back to Registration Form> to return to Setup
   Login Account. If the information is accurate click <Information Verified>.  
g. The applicant will be redirected to the Login Account Confirmation Notice that
   indicates the applicant successfully setup their account.
h. The applicant should now click <Login page...>.

2. The applicant will be redirected to the login page at:
   https://oedwebapps.iso.noaa.gov/uspa/, enter the E-mail Account and Password
   previously created.

3. The applicant will be redirected to the Eligibility Criteria. Answer each question
   accurately, click <Submit>. The applicant will be redirected to Verify Eligibility
   Information. If the responses are incorrect you may click <Back to Eligibility Form> to
   correct your responses. If the responses are correct click <Eligibility Information
   Verified>.

4. The applicant will be redirected to the Application Status page. Sections of the
   application are at the top page in the header: GENERAL INFO, CONTACT INFO,
   EDUCATION, ACTIVITIES, REFERENCES, ESSAY, SUBMIT. The number of
   days remaining until the application closes is displayed. The applicant may click
   <Next> or select the section along the top header and click.

COMPLETED APPLICATION MUST BE SUBMITTED BY 11:59 p.m. (EST)
February 1, 2021
5. As the applicant completes the application information in each section the applicant must <Save> the data before clicking <Next> or <Previous> at the lower right of each page or click on the next section heading. Either way of moving to the next section of the application, the applicant must first click <Save> or the information entered will not be saved.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

6. When entering **Current Contact Information**, enter current address, telephone number, and e-mail account. When entering Permanent Contact Information, enter your home address, telephone number, and e-mail account.

EDUCATION:

7. In the EDUCATION section, list each university attended and upload an Adobe .pdf version of an **OFFICIAL** transcript for each university. **Only OFFICIAL transcript will be accepted. Unofficial transcript will result in disqualification of your application.**

**Note:** If your official transcript indicates your academic status as anything other than a sophomore, you must submit a letter (official University letterhead) from either your Department Chair or Academic Advisor that this is due to the number of AP credits earned. The Academic Advisor or Department Chair must certify that you are officially in your sophomore year of study, and include the date of graduation.

Applicants who attend Hispanic Serving Institutions must submit an official letter from their school verifying the institution is a U.S. Department of Education recognized Hispanic Serving Institution at the time of application. The verification letter from the school **must be uploaded**
to the application as an Adobe .pdf file, along with the transcript, as part of the scholarship application process.

**How to upload transcript and AP credits explanation letter:** Combine transcript with letter, save as Adobe.pdf file, and upload. Official transcripts must be uploaded as an Adobe.pdf file. The on-line system cannot read a Word document. The applicant must convert the Word document to an Adobe .pdf file before it is uploaded. Once the **OFFICIAL** transcript(s) is uploaded, a graphic of a book and red X will appear. Click the book to view the document that was uploaded or click the red X to delete the document.

**ACTIVITIES:**
8. Include academic awards, honors, activities, lab and research experiences, tutoring, campus activities, technical societies, community service, leadership activities, non-academic volunteer (or paid) and entrepreneurship activities.

**REFERENCES:**
9. In the REFERENCES section enter the name, title, and e-mail account of each reference then click <Save References Information>. Click <Request Recommendation> beside each reference to send the Reference Form to the person submitting a reference on your behalf. The applicant may check the application Status to see the Name of the Reference, and the Date and Time it was received. If the person(s) you identified has not submitted a Reference on your behalf, you may replace that person and enter another person’s name, title, and e-mail account. Click <Save References Information> then <Request Recommendation>. **Click the "Request Recommendation" button to send an email to the associated reference with instructions and a link to the Reference Form.** Reference Forms should be submitted by **January 25, 2021**, to ensure they are received prior to the application deadline. **Completed** applications are due **February 1, 2021, 11:59 p.m. (EST).**

**TWO REFERENCES ARE REQUIRED.** Applicants must identify the name, title, and email address of two individuals who will receive an email with a link to complete and submit a Reference Form through the application system on your behalf (The Reference Form is not available outside of the application system).

- a. At least one of the reference forms must be from a professor, visiting professor, or lecturer who has taught you at the undergraduate level, or a department chair, dean, or academic advisor.
- b. The second reference may also be an academic reference or a character reference that can speak to your capabilities and interests as they relate to the scholarship.

**References from former high school teachers, coaches, family members, or friends will NOT be accepted.**

Recommendations from NOAA staff are acceptable, if that person served in one of the capacities mentioned above. If the NOAA employee providing the reference is a faculty member then he/she must use a school email account when submitting the reference form. If the NOAA employee served as a mentor, then he/she must use their personal email. A @noaa.gov email account will not be allowed through the application system. If
you have questions regarding the reference eligibility, please contact studentscholarshipprograms@noaa.gov.

REFERENCES THAT DO NOT MEET THESE REQUIREMENTS WILL RENDER YOUR APPLICATION INELIGIBLE.

**NOTE:** A compelling reference will help reviewers understand how you stand out from other applicants. You may want to provide your transcripts and a statement of your accomplishments, experiences or goals to the individuals writing your recommendations to assist them in preparing a solid recommendation.

**ESSAY:**

c. The ESSAY section consists of one essay that describes your College Education Plan and Career Goals as they relate to NOAA. If you have conducted any NOAA-mission science experiences such as an internship, research project, or extracurricular club activity, please include that demonstrated experience in your essay. Develop the Essay as a Word document and copy and paste the essay in the appropriate ESSAY section. The essay must contain a minimum of 6,000 characters but not more than 9,000 characters including spaces. There is a character counter that indicates the number of characters remaining at the top right (green) of the essay and another character counter in the bottom left (red) that indicates the number of characters used. The essay accounts for 30% of the application evaluation. The applicant’s organizational and written communication skills will be evaluated along with its relevance to NOAA’s mission.

**COMPLETED APPLICATION MUST BE SUBMITTED BY 11:59 p.m. (EST) February 1, 2021**
SUBMIT (REQUIRED SECTION):

d. Once the applicant has completed the application information sections, the essay, the official transcript(s) has been uploaded, and both references have been received, proceed to the SUBMIT section.  **The applicant is required to read the Certification of Accuracy of Information Provided Clause.** Applicants are required to check the box indicating that they have read the clause.

Click **<Submit Application>** (FAILURE TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION WILL RESULT IN APPLICATION NOT BEING PROCESSED). NOAA strongly recommends you **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL FEBRUARY 1ST** to complete and submit the application.
PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION:

NOAA Office of Education  
Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship Program  
1315 East-West Highway  
Room 10734  
Silver Spring, MD  20910  
Email:  StudentScholarshipPrograms@noaa.gov  
Office:  (301) 628-2913

COMPLETED APPLICATION MUST BE SUBMITTED BY 11:59 p.m. (EST)  
February 1, 2021
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Purpose of the Hollings Scholarship program
The Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship program was established through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005 (PL 108-447) to honor former U.S. senator Ernest F. Hollings (Democrat, South Carolina). The purposes of the program include to: (1) increase undergraduate training in oceanic and atmospheric science, research, technology, and education and foster multidisciplinary training opportunities; (2) increase public understanding and support for stewardship of the ocean and atmosphere and improve environmental literacy; (3) recruit and prepare students for public service careers with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and other natural resource and science agencies at the federal, state and local levels of government; and (4) recruit and prepare students for careers as teachers and educators in oceanic and atmospheric science and to improve scientific and environmental education in the United States.

Hollings Scholarship Award
The Hollings Scholarship program provides selected undergraduate applicants with awards that include academic assistance (up to a maximum of $9,500) per academic year for full-time study; housing assistance for scholars who do not reside at home during the summer internship; a 10-week, full-time internship position ($700/week) during the summer at a NOAA or partner facility. The internship during the summer of 2022 provides “hands-on” multidisciplinary educational training experience involving scholars in NOAA-related science, research, technological, policy, management, and education activities. Awards also include reimbursement for round-trip travel to the internship site, and travel expenses for attendance and participation at a mandatory Hollings Scholarship program orientation, May 31-June 4, 2021, and mandatory science and education symposium at the completion of the internship.

Hollings Scholarship Eligibility
To be eligible to receive a Hollings Scholarship, at the time of application students must:

- Be a U.S. citizen.
- Be currently enrolled or accepted as a full-time 2nd year student in a four-year academic program or as a full-time 3rd year student in a five-year undergraduate program at an accredited college or university within the United States or U.S. territories; Community college or transfer students must provide proof of application to a four-year institution when applying for the scholarship and submit proof of acceptance prior to starting the program.
- Will be a junior-level, full-time student in the fall of 2021 in an accredited college or university within the United States or U.S. territories.
- Have a cumulative 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale (or equivalent on other identified scale) in all completed undergraduate courses each term and cumulative, as well as an overall GPA of 3.0 in their major field of study.
- Have declared a major in a discipline including, but not limited to, oceanic, environmental, biological, and atmospheric sciences, mathematics, engineering, remote sensing technology, physical and social sciences including geography, physics, hydrology, geomatics, or teacher education that supports NOAA’s programs and missions.

Related discipline areas of study may include: biological, social, and physical sciences; mathematics; engineering; computer and information sciences; and teacher education.
### Hollings Scholarship Major Requirements

Awards are limited to the areas of discipline identified, but not limited to the majors listed under those areas of discipline. In their application, the program asked that the applicant select a field of study title that most closely describes their field of study and identify their exact academic program title or select “other”. The program recognizes that the titles of academic programs vary greatly among colleges and universities, and that a wide variety of general undergraduate academic programs can be applicable to NOAA’s mission. Application reviewers will look specifically at the academic plan and career interest essay to assess how their particular course of study relates to NOAA mission-critical sciences and how well their training has prepared them for a NOAA-related career. Please refer to the NOAA website (http://www.noaa.gov/) for additional information.

### How will my application be evaluated?

Evaluation will be based on the following merit criteria:

1. Relevant course work (30%).
2. Education plan and statement of career interest essay (30%).
3. Recommendations and/or endorsements (reference forms) from professors (20%).
4. Additional relevant experience related to extracurricular activities; honors and awards; non-academic and volunteer; entrepreneurship; and writing skills (20%).

### Hollings Scholarship Selection Process

An initial administrative review of applications will be conducted to determine compliance with requirements and completeness of applications. Only complete applications in compliance with the requirements will be considered for review. All complete and eligible applications will be included in a merit review by a panel of experts in the areas of study related to the Hollings Scholarship. The panel members will rate applications based on the evaluation criteria. A numerical score will be assigned to each application based on the average of the panelist’s ratings. The Selecting Official, the Director of Education, will award in rank order unless the application is justified to be selected out of rank order based on one or more of the selection factors.

### The Orientation Program

The Office of Education will host a mandatory orientation program the last week of May/first week of June to welcome the newly selected Student Scholarship recipients from the Ernest F. Hollings and Educational Partnership Program (EPP) Undergraduate Scholarship Programs. The audience will consist of approximately 150 scholarship recipients and NOAA Line Office/Staff Office representatives. The student scholars will meet with NOAA leadership and staff, learn about the programmatic and research objectives of NOAA offices, program support activities, and career options in STEM fields that support NOAA’s mission.

In addition to the comprehensive orientation, students will participate in tours of NOAA laboratories and operational facilities in the Washington, DC metropolitan area and attend a NOAA career fair and participate in professional development training.

### Hollings Summer Internship Requirements

Hollings scholars are provided travel to visit the selected summer internship site during their winter or spring break, and required to complete a 10-week paid internship during the summer of 2022. The purpose of this internship is to provide "hands-on" multidisciplinary educational training experience in NOAA-related scientific, research, technological, policy, management, and education activities. Opportunities to complete the internship are available throughout the United States and U.S. territories. NOAA offices, programs, and laboratories offer a wide variety of options for the internship experience. Hollings Scholars receive information about the various options and assistance to identify or develop an appropriate internship opportunity to help fulfill their academic and career objectives during Fall 2021. If that opportunity requires the scholar to relocate for the summer, they will be eligible to receive travel and housing subsidies under the terms of their scholarship award.
Science and Education Symposium
The program requires that every scholar attend the final presentations week and give an oral or poster presentation of their summer research project at NOAA Headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, during the 10th week of their summer internship.

Hollings Application Selection Process
Submit completed application online no later than February 1, 2021, by 11:59 p.m. (Eastern Time). Two references must be completed online and should be received by NOAA January 25, 2021. Official transcripts from each college and university attended must be uploaded in the application prior to application submission.

Hollings Scholarship Award Notification
Selected applicants can expect to receive e-mail confirmation of their awards the first week of April 2021.

Ernest F. Hollings Scholarship Program Timeline

March 2021: Internal application review process and recipient selections finalized.
April 1, 2021: Scholarship recipients notified
May 31, 2021: Scholarship recipients travel to mandatory NOAA Orientation Program in Silver Spring, MD
June 4, 2021: Scholarship recipients depart Silver Spring, MD
September 2021: Academic stipend payments begin
October 2021: Scholarship recipients begin selection process of summer internship site
Dec. 2021- Mar. 2022: Scholarship recipients travel to visit site of proposed internship to finalize selection
May 31, 2022: Summer internship begins, bi-weekly stipends begin
July 31-Aug. 5, 2022: Scholarship recipients travel to mandatory Presentation Program in Silver Spring
September 2022: Academic stipend payments begin
May 2023: Completion of scholarship program