

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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GENERAL

1. What kind of students does the Davis-Putter Fund support?

We provide need-based grants to students who are able to do academic work at the college level or are enrolled in a trade or technical program and are actively working for peace and justice. Davis-Putter scholars are both graduate and undergraduate students and must be living in the U. S. and planning to enroll in an accredited school. Grantees must receive college credits for the time period covered by their grant. Early recipients fought for civil rights, against McCarthyism, and for peace in Vietnam. More recently, grantees have been active in the struggle against racism, sexism, homophobia, and other forms of oppression; building the movement for economic justice; and creating peace through international, anti-imperialist solidarity.

2. If I tell you about the type of work I am doing or my specific activities, will you tell me if I should apply?

No. You will have to make that judgment yourself. However, after reviewing the website, you will be able to assess whether your activities are similar in nature to those of the current grantees and those who have received scholarships in the past. Just because your specific area of activism is not listed in the material does not mean that you won't be considered. Each year the trustees look for people committed to activism in diverse communities, organizations and fields.

3. What if I am not active in the movement for social change but I hope to become involved soon?

We only support students who are working for social and economic justice and do not consider applicants who are not currently part of those activities. You will want to review the section on our current grantees, since that describes the students who have received grants and illustrates the qualities successful applicants bring to the Fund.

4. I am very involved in the type of activism that you have supported in the past and I am going to school, but I can afford to pay my own way. Am I still qualified for a scholarship?

We look at the applicant's contribution to social justice, ability to perform academically, and relevance of educational program, as well as their financial need. However, applicants who do not need funding will not be selected.

5. Can I still apply for the scholarship, even if I am not involved in any activism? I meet the requirements for everything else, except the activities.

Activism is the most important requirement for a successful application. No application will be seriously considered without it.

6. I am still in high school, but I am taking college courses. Can I apply for a grant for these courses?

Probably not. You must actually be enrolled at an institution of higher education and receiving degree credits from that institution. Advanced placement courses while in high school generally do not meet those requirements.

7. I have not been accepted by a school yet, but I don't want to miss out on applying for a scholarship for this year. How can I fill out the application?

Indicate on the application that you have not been accepted yet and use the costs related to the school that you expect to attend for the tuition and expense figures. If you are accepted at a school not listed on your application form, you may be asked to send us new information on educational and living costs.

8. Can I get a scholarship to help me pay for a research assistant I need for work on my doctoral project?

No. The scholarships are for normal educational and living expenses. The Fund is not a source to fund research or field work.

9. What do you mean by an accredited school?

The school must be eligible to award college credits under the rules and regulations of the state or jurisdiction in which the school operates. The school or program you are interested in should be able to tell you if they are accredited -- by the state and national bodies that create educational standards and evaluate programs -- and whether the program in which you want to enroll will earn you recognized college credits or certification.

10. Can I get a grant to attend a two-year college for an associate degree or for attending a junior or community college?

Yes, if the school is accredited.

11. What is considered a graduate program?

Students who have completed their undergraduate degrees or are in joint degree programs or are in advanced education programs and who are working for a masters, doctorate, or professional degree (medicine, law, architecture, journalism, etc.) are eligible to receive a scholarship from the Fund. Only rarely does the Fund award grants to students seeking multiple or second advanced degrees.

12. I am taking a year off from school to do field work. Can I get a grant for my living expenses for this period?

No. You must be enrolled in an educational program and the scholarship must be used in conjunction with securing college credits for that program.

13. I don't need money for school, but the community organization I am involved with needs money to pay me for organizing. Can my organization or I get a grant for that purpose?

No. The Davis-Putter Scholarship Fund only gives grants to individual students for their educational program at accredited schools.

14. Is US citizenship required?

No, but applicants must have participated in activities in the United States and be planning to enroll in an accredited program in the US in order to apply. There is a strong preference to award grants to students who are planning on staying in the United States and building the progressive movement here.

15. Why can't I apply if I am going to a recognized school abroad?

While an application under those circumstances may not be automatically rejected, it is extremely difficult for the trustees to judge the activism, quality of the educational program, or soundness of the future plans of applicants working and living in another country, and such applications are much less likely to be approved.

16. Are applications open to students registered in a Canadian university? Although I reside in Canada, I am involved with issues that straddle the Canada-US border.

Students whose goals coincide with those of the Fund and who are involved in activism in the United States may apply if they believe they meet the other criteria.

17. Can I apply for a scholarship if I am taking a year to study abroad?

Yes, provided that you will earn credits toward a degree at an accredited program in the United States.

18. How large are Davis-Putter grants?

The maximum grant is \$10,000 and may be considerably smaller depending on the applicant's circumstances and the amount of money available. All of the scholarship funds come from the contributions of individual donors.

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APPLICATIONS

19. When are applications due?

Applications must be submitted by April 1. There are no exceptions. We recommend that you do not wait until the last minute to complete your application. We encourage you to begin your application as soon as you have the current information about the school you will attend, other grants you may receive, your grades, and your projected expenses. Once you register an account, you may log in anytime and your application will be saved.

20. How do I submit my application?

Applications must be completed online at davisputter.awardspring.com

21. What do I need to complete my application?

a. A personal statement, which should not be longer than 1,000 words, describing your current work for social change and your specific role in building the progressive movement.

b. Transcripts of your previous academic work.

c. You will be prompted to send emails to two people able to evaluate your political work and your contribution to the progressive movement requesting a signed letter of support from each. (You are responsible for confirmation that these letters are submitted by April 1).

d. Your Student Aid Report (SAR). If you are not eligible for US federal financial aid, the FAFSA worksheet will be accepted. (See the section on Financial Information — FAQs 40-44).

e. All the information we need in order to reach you by phone or email in May and June if we have any questions about your application.

22. Can I file an application after the April 1 deadline if I have a good reason for being late?

Applications will not be accepted after the deadline date. The Davis-Putter Fund expects applicants to start preparing the application sufficiently in advance to accommodate

unanticipated problems. If you miss the deadline and you are continuing your schooling, you can apply next year if you believe you might qualify then.

23. I just received information about the Fund and I do not have enough time to complete the application before the deadline. Can I get an extension to file?

We cannot extend the filing deadline for any reason. The Fund has been in existence for over fifty years. We are sorry that you only learned of the Fund recently. Now that you know about these scholarships, you will be able to apply before the deadline in future years.

24. Why is the Fund so insistent about the application deadline?

Each year the Fund receives thousands of inquiries and hundreds of completed applications by April 1. In order to make decisions about grants by July, the members of our initial selection committee have to review these applications as promptly as possible. Then, the applications that proceed to the next level have to be sent out for review by additional reviewer trustees. They may want to conduct telephone or in-person interviews with the applicants. Then summaries of the finalist's applications and interview reports have to be prepared before the annual selection meeting. A cutoff date is necessary because it is impossible to restart the process to consider late applications.

25. Can I submit other material to show my work or activities?

Yes. You may upload up to 5 items.

26. I am going to be moving around over the next few months. What mailing address, telephone and email should I put down on the application?

You will want to give us the email address and phone numbers where we can reach you during May or June, since that is when we may need to contact you for an interview or supplemental information. If you are uncertain where you will be during that period, you might give us the phone number and email address of a family member or friend we can contact and who will know your whereabouts. Of course, you will also want to make certain that you give us your permanent address and email so we can reach you in July, as that is when we notify applicants of our decisions.

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PERSONAL STATEMENT

27. Is my personal statement about whatever I choose to tell you?

Your personal statement must describe your activism, including the activities and organizations with which you are or have been involved. We are also interested in learning about your

perspective on social change. As long as you have covered these topics, you can add anything else that you feel would help the trustees in their decisions although we ask that your statement be no longer than approximately 1,000 words.

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TRANSCRIPTS

28. How do you want the transcripts submitted?

We want to see your official transcript. You may scan and upload or save and upload an official online version.

29. Do you want me to submit the transcripts of all of my undergraduate work, even if I am now attending graduate school?

Yes.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

30. Who should I ask to write a letter of support?

The most helpful letters generally come from people who are able to describe your contribution to the progressive movement because they are also involved in that work.

31. Once I request letters from recommenders and submit my application, is it complete?

Your application is not complete until your recommenders upload their letters. You will receive confirmation when they do so, but you are responsible for making sure the letters are submitted by April 1.

32. One of my recommenders is out of the country and won't be back until after the deadline. Can they submit this one late?

We would suggest that you find a different recommender if they are unable to upload their letter by April 1.

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FINANCIAL INFORMATION

33. Can I still get a scholarship even if I have a financial aid package that includes loans to cover my tuition and expenses for the coming year?

Yes. The trustees will consider granting a scholarship that will reduce the amount of loans that a student must take out for the year.

34. I have a full scholarship for this year, but I need a grant to help me pay off the loans I took out last year. Can I get a scholarship for that purpose?

No. Scholarships can only be for education and living expenses for the current period of enrollment.

35. Why are you asking for a 12 month budget, when I will only be attending school for 9 months?

Our scholarship grants are for educational and living expenses only for the period that you will actually be attending school between this July 1 and next June 30. By knowing your living budget for the full year period, we can determine the portion of living expenses you will need for the period in which you are enrolled.

36. I will have car expenses for only six months. How do I handle that?

Even though the number "12" is already showing in the Months column in No. 1 of the financial worksheet, it can be changed to reflect the actual number of months for the expense, and the subtotal will reflect the number you enter. You can also use the three blank lines at the bottom of the living expense section for items that don't fit in to the preprinted categories.

37. How do I enter a one-time expense that won't be repeating?

If it is an extraordinary education expense, such as fees or costs of study abroad or a special project, report it in No. 2 and not in No. 1 of the financial worksheet. If it is a living expense, such as a one-time moving expense, use the blank lines below Medical/Insurance and place a "1" in the Months column. The correct amount of the one-time expense will now be included as part of your total expenses.

38. If I have too many loans, repayments and other grants to fit on the number of lines allowed for those items, what should I do?

If you have more items than the spaces provided Nos. 3, 4, 5 and 6 you can combine the amounts of the excess items as part of the last Amount entry and write "Combined" as the Source. It is extremely important that the totals are correct so that we get an accurate picture of your financial position.

39. Why are you asking for so much information on my parents and family?

We look at the individual financial circumstances of all applicants, and the circumstances of the family of origin are often a major factor – for better or for worse. While we ask all applicants to provide us with a full picture of their families, in general no family contribution is expected if the applicant is 23 years old as of January 1, working on a post-undergraduate degree, married, or supporting dependents. If there are special circumstances that affect your family relationships or contributions, report this in the space provided.

40. What are FAFSA and SAR?

FAFSA is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. It is available at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>. The information you provide on your FAFSA is verified by the US Department of Education which then prepares a Student Aid Report (SAR) that calculates your financial need (including the total cost of your education) by determining your expected family contribution and your eligibility for a federal grant. This report is then forwarded to the schools you indicated for determination of what other financial aid (federal, state and private) you may be eligible to receive.

41. Why do you want to see the FAFSA and SAR?

The information on these forms gives the Fund a uniform way to assess the applicant's financial need. We consider this information, along with the financial information requested on our application form, to determine financial need. Although our primary focus is on the justice work applicants are doing, it is also important that we understand your financial situation.

42. What if I haven't received my SAR yet?

If you filed your FAFSA in January, as they recommend, you should have received the SAR before the April 1 deadline. FAFSA claims that the turn-around time is 4-6 weeks but it is usually much quicker. If you haven't received the SAR by April 1, include your FAFSA with any corrections you made when you returned it. If all other qualifications are met and you proceed the review phase, we will request a copy of the SAR once you receive it.

43. What should I do if FAFSA has sent a SAR but I had to make corrections and send it back to them and I don't receive the corrected SAR until after the deadline?

If you had to make corrections and return the SAR and have not received it back by the deadline, upload copies of your FAFSA and SAR with the corrections.

44. What should I do if I am not eligible for US federal financial aid?

You should go to the FAFSA website and print out the FAFSA and Dependency Worksheets (available at <https://fafsa.ed.gov/fotw1718/pdf/fafsaws17c.pdf>) Fill them out, scan and upload.

Applications that do not include the SAR, or a completed FAFSA worksheet if not eligible for US federal aid, will not be considered.

45. I have just arrived at the line for the “Amount requested from the Davis-Putter Scholarship Fund.” The difference between my expenses and my available funding is \$2,000. I want to ask for \$10,000 because I plan on using my savings for future years in college.

We look at the funding available for only one year because we cannot predict whether a student will get scholarships or funds from other sources in future years. If you enter an amount requested that is greater than the difference between your expenses and available funding, you should include an explanation.

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RENEWALS

46. Are grants renewable?

Yes. However, you must submit a new application by the April 1 deadline. Numerous grantees have been supported for more than one year. However, renewals are not automatic. You must continue to meet the criteria of the Fund and your application will be considered in the same way as the others we receive.

47. I received a grant last year and am applying for a renewal. Do I have to submit new recommendations and a new personal statement?

Yes, the Fund finds the letters from the recommenders very helpful in assessing an application. The letters and personal statements for renewal applicants should focus on the most recent activities and perspectives.

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APPLICATIONS IN ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

48. What if I am in prison, or know someone in prison, who is unable to access the internet?

We provide printed copies of the form and instructions for applying to those who are incarcerated. Please send us the complete address of the prisoner by email or send a stamped envelope addressed to the prisoner:

Davis-Putter Scholarship Fund

Post Office Box 7307

New York, NY 10116-7307

49. What if I am vision impaired and unable to read the PDF form?

Contact us by email about alternative format applications.

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NOTIFICATION OF DECISIONS

50. When will I hear from the Fund about my application?

Applicants will be notified of our decisions by the end of July.

51. Is there someone I can call or who can call me to advise me of your decision?

Award letters are mailed to successful applicants. Others receive notification of the decision by email. We do not accept phone calls about scholarship decisions.

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CHANGING PROGRAMS OR STATUS

52. I have been notified that I have received a Davis-Putter scholarship. If I change my school or program, can I transfer the grant to the new one?

Grants are issued for the school and program listed on your application. If you need to make a change, contact us in advance of making that change by using the contact information you received with your award letter. We will advise you as soon as possible whether the grant can be transferred.

53. What will happen to my grant if I change from full-time to part-time?

The amount of your grant is based upon the enrollment status listed on your application. If you change from full-time to part-time, your grant will be reduced. Unfortunately, we are unable to increase the amount of your grant if you change from part-time to full-time.

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