

# Smart Futures for Small Business Scholarship Program

## Terms and Conditions

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The Smart Futures for Small Business Scholarship Program (the “Scholarship Program”) is subject to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and government-imposed rules and requirements. By submitting an application (the “Application”), each applicant (an “Applicant”) agrees to abide by these Terms and Conditions (“Terms”), the applicable provisions of the Application, and the decisions of Scholarship America® (“Scholarship America”) and the American Express Foundation (“American Express”, and together with Scholarship America, the “Scholarship Program Entities”), which shall be final and binding in all respects relating to this Scholarship Program.

### Eligibility / Requirements

To be eligible to receive a scholarship award (an “Award”), an Applicant must:

- Be a legal resident of the United States (U.S.) and at least 18 years of age
- Be a small business employee in the U.S.
  - “Small business” is defined as an independent company that is for-profit and has 500 or fewer employees.
  - Franchises are not eligible for this program.
- Plan to enroll in a full-time or part-time artificial intelligence (“AI”) certification program in the U.S. by September 1, 2026, and complete it by December 31, 2026
- Plan to incur at least:
  - \$250 in eligible educational costs if enrolling in an AI certification program offered by a vendor other than an accredited two- or four-year college, university, or vocational-technical school; or
  - \$1,000 in eligible educational costs if enrolling in an AI certification program offered by an accredited two- or four-year college, university, or vocational-technical school
- Complete and submit all required components of the Application during the application period, which begins on May 6, 2026, and ends on June 10, 2026 at 3:00 PM Central Time (the “Application Period”)
- Have one (1) required recommendation from their employer, manager, or supervisor submitted on their behalf by June 15, 2026 at 3:00 PM Central Time
- Agree to these Terms and Conditions

Employees, officers, and directors of Scholarship America, American Express, and their respective affiliates, as well as their immediate family members (spouses, parents, children, siblings, and their respective spouses, regardless of where they reside) and individuals living in the same household, whether or not related, are not ineligible to apply.

Each Applicant may submit only one (1) Application. Past recipients of this Scholarship Program are not eligible to reapply.

### Scholarship Awards

Awards will range from \$250 to \$1,000 and will be granted as follows:

- \$250–\$500 for certification programs offered online or in person through a vendor other than an accredited two- or four-year college, university, or vocational-technical school (determined by course invoice and awarded to the nearest \$5)
- \$1,000 for certification programs offered online or in person through an accredited two- or four-year college, university, or vocational-technical school

Awards are one-time only and may be used for eligible education-related expenses associated with the AI certification program, including tuition, books, supplies, or electronic devices. Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to, travel, lodging, or entertainment.

### **Selection of Recipients**

Recipients will be selected by Scholarship America based on the following criteria:

- Financial need (self-reported information – no document uploads required)
- A professional development evaluation
- A recommendation from the applicant's employer (small business owner)

Applications must be complete, including all required materials, by the applicable deadlines to be considered. Incomplete or late Applications will not be considered.

Applications must be true, verifiable, and the original work product of the Applicant. No part of the Application may have been previously published, have received or won any previous grants or contests, or infringe upon the copyrights, trademarks, rights of privacy, publicity, or other intellectual property or other rights of any person or entity.

By submitting an Application, the Applicant represents and warrants that the Application complies with these Terms and understands that the Scholarship Program Entities, in their sole discretion, may disqualify the Application for any reason, including, without limitation, if they determine, in their sole discretion, that the Application fails to comply with these Terms in any way or otherwise contains unacceptable content as determined by the Scholarship Program Entities, in their sole discretion.

All decisions of the Scholarship Program Entities are final and binding. The Scholarship Program Entities will not reveal the details of the deliberations on any Application in any phase, including, without limitation, during or at the conclusion of the Scholarship Program. Not all Applicants will be selected.

### **Notification**

Applicants will be notified of their status in late July 2026 via email.

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their contact information is accurate and up to date and are encouraged to use a personal email address. Scholarship America and the Scholarship Program Entities are not responsible for missed communications due to spam filters or incorrect contact information.

If (a) an Award recipient does not (i) respond to the initial notification within the time period stated, (ii) return any required documents within the specified time period, or (iii) comply with these Terms, or (b) an Award notification is returned as undeliverable, then in any such case, the Award recipient will be deemed to have forfeited the Award and, at Scholarship America's discretion, another Applicant may be selected.

### **Payment of Awards**

Scholarship America administers all Award payments.

- For certificate programs offered through a vendor other than an accredited two- or four-year college, university, or vocational-technical school, award checks are made payable to the recipient and mailed to the recipient's home address.
- For certificate programs offered through an accredited two- or four-year college, university or vocational-technical school, award checks are made payable to the school and mailed to the recipient's home address.

Any and all federal, state, and local taxes are the sole responsibility of the Award recipient. Award recipients may not substitute, assign, or transfer an award. Limit of one award per small business.

### **Publicity / Use of Materials**

The Applicant hereby agrees to grant to the Scholarship Program Entities, and their respective designees, successors, licensees, and assignees a nonexclusive, royalty-free, perpetual and transferable license to use any and all information, documents, photographs and any other materials provided by such Applicant

in connection with the Application and/or Award, and all elements embodied therein, in whole or in part, including, without limitation, the names, logos, cities and states of residence, photos, videos, quotes and statements (in written or recorded oral form), and likenesses, in any manner, in any and all media, now known or hereafter devised, throughout the world, for advertising, promotional, and other purposes, without further compensation, notification, or permission. Applicant agrees that Released Parties (as defined below) are not responsible for any unauthorized use of the Application by third parties. The Scholarship Program Entities do not have any obligation to make use of the rights granted herein.

Each Award recipient consents to the Scholarship Program Entities taking their own photographs or video recordings in connection with the recipient's use of Award funds, and using such photographs and video recordings for advertising, promotional, and other purposes in connection with the Scholarship Program and the objectives of the Scholarship Program, in each case, without any further compensation, notification, or permission from the recipient.

The Scholarship Program Entities may make a public announcement of the recipients and the Scholarship Program. Prior to such public announcement, a recipient must not make any announcement or release any information concerning the Award without prior written approval of the Scholarship Program Entities.

Each Award recipient agrees to sign any documentation required by the Scholarship Program Entities to make use of the rights granted herein.

### **Release of Liability**

By submitting an Application, each Applicant agrees to release, indemnify, discharge, and hold harmless the Scholarship Program Entities, and their respective parents, affiliates, subsidiaries, and advertising and promotion agencies, and the respective officers, directors, shareholders, employees, agents, and representatives of the forgoing (collectively, "Released Parties") from any and all injuries, liability, losses, actions, suits, and direct or indirect damages, consequential damages, incidental damages, punitive or exemplary damages, judgments, claims, and demands of any kind to persons, including, without limitation, death, or property resulting, in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, from Applicant's submission of an Application, Applicant's participation in the Scholarship Program or any Scholarship Program-related activity, Applicant's acceptance of any Award, and/or the Scholarship Program Entities' use of the rights granted herein.

### **General Conditions**

Released Parties are not responsible for lost, late, incomplete, damaged, inaccurate, stolen, delayed, misdirected, undelivered, or garbled Applications, messages, email, or mail; or for lost, interrupted, or unavailable network, server, Internet Service Provider (ISP), website, or other connections, availability, or accessibility, or miscommunications, or failed computer, satellite, telephone, or cable transmissions, lines, or technical failure, or jumbled, scrambled, delayed, or misdirected transmissions, or computer hardware or software malfunctions, failures or difficulties, or other errors or difficulties of any kind whether human, mechanical, electronic, computer, network, typographical, printing, or otherwise relating to or in connection with the Scholarship Program, including, without limitation, errors or difficulties which may occur in connection with the administration of the Scholarship Program, the processing or reviewing of Applications, the announcement of the Award, or in any Scholarship Program-related materials. Released Parties are also not responsible for any incorrect or inaccurate information, whether caused by site users tampering or hacking, or by any equipment or programming associated with or utilized in the Scholarship Program. Released Parties are not responsible for injury or damage to any person's computer related to or resulting from participating in this Scholarship Program. Persons who tamper with or abuse any aspect of the Scholarship Program, who act in an unsportsmanlike or disruptive manner, or who are in violation of these Terms, as solely determined by Scholarship America, will be disqualified, and all associated Applications will be void.

Scholarship America reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to cancel, terminate, modify, or suspend the Scholarship Program at any time, including, but not limited to, if, for any reason, the Scholarship Program is not capable of running as planned. By submitting an Application or by being an Applicant, you understand that there is no joint venture, partnership, employment, or agency relationship between or

among you and any of the Scholarship Program Entities, or other partners arising from any Application or Award.

The decisions of Scholarship America regarding the Scholarship Program and Award recipients thereof are final, and Applicants specifically agree that such decisions are not subject to review or appeal in any forum whatsoever, including courts of law.

If an Award recipient does not comply with these Terms, Scholarship America reserves the right to require repayment of the Award.

CAUTION: ANY ATTEMPT TO DELIBERATELY DAMAGE THE WEBSITE OR UNDERMINE THE LEGITIMATE OPERATION OF THE PROGRAM MAY BE IN VIOLATION OF CRIMINAL AND CIVIL LAWS AND SHOULD SUCH AN ATTEMPT BE MADE, THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM ENTITIES RESERVE THE RIGHT TO SEEK DAMAGES AND OTHER REMEDIES (INCLUDING ATTORNEYS' FEES) FROM ANY SUCH INDIVIDUAL TO THE FULLEST EXTENT OF THE LAW, INCLUDING CRIMINAL PROSECUTION.

### **Data Collection and Use**

Information submitted as part of the Application will be used to administer the Scholarship Program and will be handled in accordance with applicable privacy policies and data protection laws. Scholarship America will process this data in compliance with the [Scholarship America Privacy Policy](#).

Scholarship America may share such personal data with American Express to facilitate the administration of the program, as required by applicable law, or for any other purpose described to me in writing. American Express processes personal data as an independent controller and is committed to processing this information in accordance with its [Online Privacy Statement](#) and applicable data protection laws.

By submitting an Application, Applicants consent to the collection, use, and sharing of their personal information with the Scholarship Program Entities for purposes including program administration, recipient selection, and communications.

Anonymized, non-identifiable data may be used for reporting and research purposes.