

## **Tips for Requesting a Letter of Recommendation for your OC Foundation Scholarship Application**

While a letter of recommendation is not required in order to submit your OC Foundation scholarship application, having a letter of recommendation will factor into the overall application score, so letters of recommendation are strongly encouraged. Having **more than one** letter of recommendation will not impact your application score, but students may wish to request more than one in the event that their recommender doesn't submit their letter.

### Who should I ask?

Letters of recommendation can be from current or previous professors, employers, coaches, mentors, colleagues, etc. They should not be from friends or family members.

### Does my letter of recommendation have to be specific to this scholarship application?

No, letters of recommendation do not have to be specific to this scholarship application. Students may use a previous letter of recommendation, for example from a previous scholarship application, job application, program admission, etc. If using a previous letter of recommendation, we ask that it is from at least the last two years.

### What should my letter of recommendation include?

Your letter of recommendation should highlight your strengths and speak to why you are deserving of an OC Foundation scholarship (if requesting a new letter of recommendation specific to this scholarship application). It's a good idea to give your recommender some information about your academic and career goals so they can speak to those in their letter and connect them with what they have observed of your skillset.

### When should I request my letter of recommendation?

It's best practice to give your recommender at least 3-5 weeks to write their letter. The sooner you request it, the better. Often times, faculty and school administrators receive a lot of requests for letters of recommendation at the same time, so giving them lots of advance notice is helpful. You should also be sure to provide them with the deadline of when you need your letter submitted.

### How should I request my letter of recommendation?

Submit a formal request in writing (for example via email) to your recommender. Give them specifics about what the letter is for, who it should be addressed to, how they should submit it, and what the deadline is. For OC Foundation Scholarships, letters can be address to the "OC Foundation Scholarship Committee." Letters can be provided directly

to the student who can then upload the letter directly into AwardSpring with their scholarship application; or, AwardSpring has an option where you can email your recommender from AwardSpring and they will be provided with a direct link to upload their recommendation letter themselves into your application. In doing this, they will not have access to any other part of your application, this is just a direct-upload link.

Final tips on etiquette:

Be sure to follow-up with your recommender if you haven't heard anything after 2 weeks or so. Checking in periodically ensures they are aware of your deadline approaching and allows them to stay on track with your request.

If you receive a letter of recommendation from someone else and no longer need their recommendation, be sure to let them know. Faculty and school administrators receive a lot of requests for letters of recommendation, and they are time-consuming to complete. Since there are no additional points awarded for having more than one letter of recommendation, once you have one submitted, it's a good idea to let your recommender know that you no longer need their letter of recommendation. Lastly, follow up with gratitude for your recommender's time and support of your academic journey!