



# WRITING TIPS AND TRICKS FOR SCHOLARSHIP APPLICANTS

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# THREE THINGS WE'LL COVER IN THIS COURSE

**1**

How to get started and organize your thoughts

**2**

How PFund scholarship applications are scored

**3**

The nuts and bolts of writing a good scholarship essay



# PRE WRITING

1

What is your purpose for writing?

- To get a scholarship.



# PRE WRITING

2

## How to write about yourself for your essay?

- Questions you can brainstorm with:
  - Who inspires you? Why?
  - What do you want the committee to know about you?
  - When looking ahead 5 or 10 years, where do you see yourself?
  - How are you supporting the LGBTQ+ community?



# PRE WRITING

## 3 Brainstorm

- Take some time and free write answers to your questions.
- Try sketching our writing out a list by hand.
- Pick through all your ideas and pick out a handful that you think could be interesting to write about in your essay.
- Read through OWL's web page about prewriting for more detailed information.



# PRE WRITING

## 4

### Outline and Organize

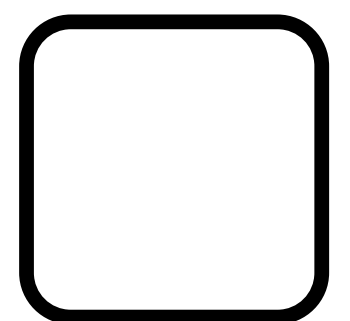
- Read the scholarship application materials on PFund's website.
  - Make sure you're eligible to apply.
  - Up to you how formal/structured you want to make it, but helpful way to organize all the main points you want to make.
    - Feel free to get creative, sketch, whatever helps you organize your thoughts
- Read through OWL's web page about outlining for more detailed information or a good outline example.



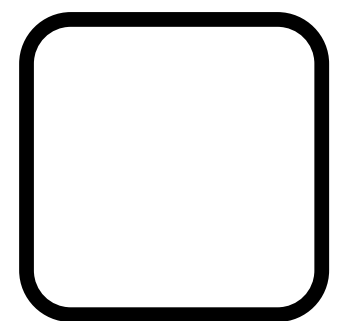
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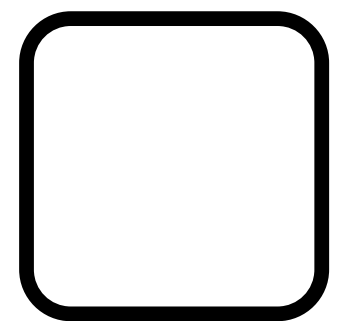
Know why you're writing.



Think about how you want to portray yourself in your essay.



Brainstorm or freewrite.



Outline and organize.



# SCORING

- Every year PFund gets more scholarship applications than it can fund.
- Our reviewers following a scoring rubric that ensures all applications are weighed against a list of standard criteria.
- Reviewers are complete required training on implicit bias.
- PFund never shares any identifying details for applicants of our scholarship programs unless we specifically have been given permission.





# RUBRICS

38 points possible for each application

- Prioritized Communities
  - (3 points total)
- Financial Use and Need
  - (10 points total)
- Essay Questions
  - (25 points total)



# PRIORITIZED COMMUNITIES

- Applicants who are queer people of color are awarded one point.
- Applicants who are gender-expansive are awarded one point.
- Applicants who are queer people studying or living in rural areas or small communities (population under 50,000) are awarded one point.



# FINANCIAL NEED

- **If you were to receive a scholarship, what will you use it to fund? Where will this scholarship fit into your program financing plan?**
  - Does the applicant address all aspects of the prompt and provides concrete examples?
  - To what extent does scholarship fit their financing plan?
  - To what extent has the applicant prepared to finance their education/development program?



# FINANCIAL NEED

- **Please share with us any information regarding your financial need as it pertains to your program of study and how you will use the scholarship if received?**
  - Does the applicant address all aspects of the prompt and provides concrete examples?
  - To what extent does the applicant demonstrate a financial need?



# ESSAY QUESTIONS

- **How have your diverse experiences and identities (cultural heritage, race, gender, socio-economic background, family, work, sexual orientation, first generation status, etc.) contributed to who you are today and your pursuit of a college, career and/or leadership program?**
  - Does the applicant address all aspects of the prompt and provide concrete examples?
  - Have the applicant's experiences and identities contributed to who they are today?
  - Is there a clear connection between their experiences and identities and their educational pursuits?



# ESSAY QUESTIONS

- **What makes you passionate about LGBTQ+ people and issues? How have your personal experiences shaped that passion?**
  - Does the applicant address all aspects of the prompt and provide concrete examples?
  - Does the applicant demonstrate a passion for LGBTQ+ people and issues?
  - Is there a clear and strong connection between the applicant's personal experiences and their passion for LGBTQ+ people and issues?



# ESSAY QUESTIONS

- **PFund Foundation invests in bold leadership. Tell us about a time when you had to advocate for yourself, someone else, or something you believe in. What challenges did you encounter? How did you navigate those challenges?**
  - Does the applicant address all aspects of the prompt and provide concrete examples?
  - To what extent does the candidate demonstrate leadership? (Ex: Ability to make decisions under pressure, trustworthiness, emotional intelligence, compassion, empowerment of others, clear communication, resilience, ability to take/use feedback.)
  - To what extent was the applicant able to advocate for themselves, someone else or something they believed in?
  - Were they able to identify and navigate challenges?



# ESSAY QUESTIONS

- **PFund Foundation advocates for LGBTQ+ communities to thrive. What impact do you want to have on LGBTQ+ people and communities? How will your studies, work, or community involvement help you make that impact?**
  - Does the applicant address all aspects of the prompt and provide concrete examples?
  - To what degree will the candidate have an impact on the community?
  - Is there a clear connection between studies/work and the impact on the community?





# ESSAY QUESTIONS

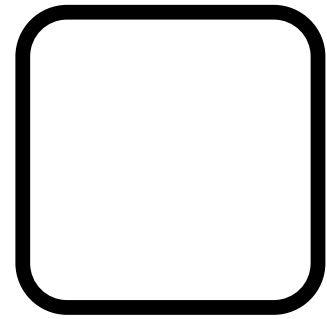
- **What is your long-term vision for yourself? Where do you hope to see yourself 10-years from now?**
  - Does the applicant address all aspects of the prompt and provide concrete examples?
  - To what extent is there a clear connection between studies/work and the applicant's vision for the future?
  - To what extent does the applicant's vision for their future align with PFund's vision for thriving and more equitable queer communities in the Upper Midwest?



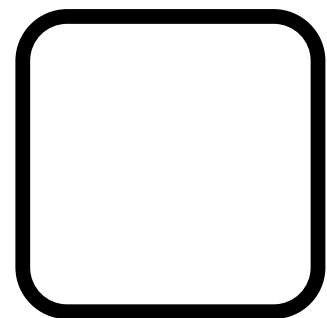
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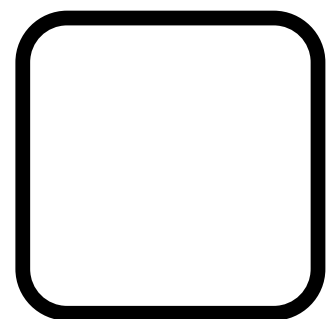
Understand points rubric.



Think about which areas you might score well in. Which areas are challenging?



Review your pre-writing notes and see where you ideas align with application questions.



Use these notes to guide your first draft.



# MECHANICS

- Paragraph and sentence structure
- Clarity
- Proofreading and editing techniques
- Other resources

# PARAGRAPHS

- Structure: one idea per paragraph!
- Topic sentence and supporting sentences.
- Start a new paragraph when:
  - New idea or point.
  - Contrast info/ideas.
  - When your readers need a pause.
  - Ending introduction or starting conclusion.
- Transitions between paragraphs very important!



# SENTENCES

- Short and sweet is fine!
  - Remember that your reviewer have to read dozens of applications. Make it easy for your reader to understand.
- Purdue OWL: sentence structure.
- Purdue OWL: types of sentences.



# EDITING/PROOFING

- Campus writing centers.
- Have a friend or family member read and review your draft.
- Give yourself a break between writing a first draft and reviewing/submitting.



# OTHER TIPS

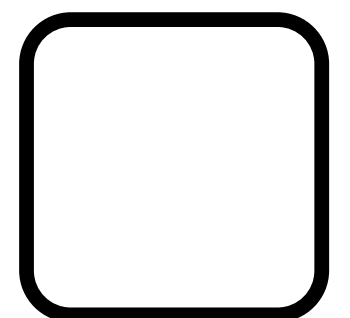
- Read draft aloud to yourself.
  - Pay attention to how it flows from one point to another.
- Grammarly, spellcheck, etc.
  - P Fund's rubric doesn't deduct points for grammar or spelling, but if typos or grammatical errors make it hard for your reviewer to understand your meaning, that can make applications less competitive.
- Know when to quit.
  - Rough, second, and final draft is plenty. Don't obsess.
  - Take breaks if you feel blocked.



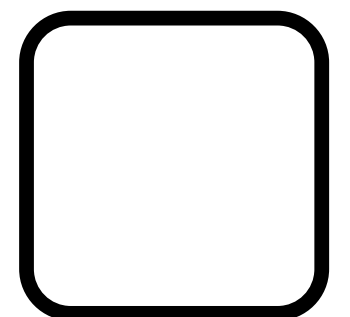
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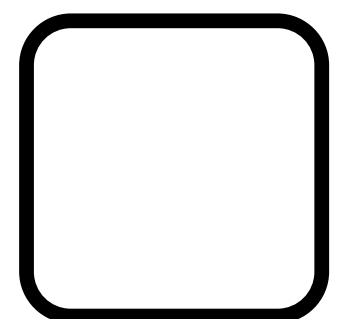
Organize your thoughts.



Write your first draft. Focus on answering the big questions.



Do a second draft. Focus on **\*\*how\*\*** you answer the question. What would make it more interesting?



Final draft. Focus on grammar, punctuation, and spelling.





**APPLY NOW!**



# CONTACT PFUND



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