

Applying for the Saint Mary's University Entrance Awards Program? **Start here!**

What is the Entrance Awards Program?

The Entrance Awards Program was established by Saint Mary's University with the support of alumni, staff, community members and businesses, with the intent of meeting a variety of student needs through scholarships, bursaries and awards. By completing this Entrance Awards Program Application, you will be considered for approximately 75 awards based on a broad range of eligibility criteria, such as community involvement, extra-curricular activities, academic achievement and/or financial need.

Who is eligible?

To be eligible, you must be a new student entering an undergraduate program at Saint Mary's University, directly from high school. You must also have completed an [undergraduate application](#) and be accepted (or admissible) by February 15, 2026.

How do I apply?

To be considered, students must complete the online [Entrance Awards Program Application](#) by **February 15, 2026**.

This guide will go through the Entrance Awards Program Application question-by-question, so you know what to expect and what information to prepare in advance. Part 1 is required of all applicants, while Parts 2 and 3 are only required for students wishing to be considered for specific awards. Keep in mind that not every question will be relevant to every applicant.

Application Instructions & Overview

Part 1 (Required): General Entrance Awards

- No supporting documents are required.

Part 2 (Optional): Financial Need-Based Entrance Awards

- Only required if you wish to be considered for Entrance Awards that take into consideration your financial need.
- Must submit a statement of financial need (no minimum length required, but no more than 500 words).

Part 3 (Optional): Presidential/Presidential International Baccalaureate/Santamarian Scholarships & Sobey National Innovator Scholarships

- Only required if you wish to be considered for these specific awards, which have additional [eligibility criteria](#).
- Must submit a 750-word personal essay based on your community involvement, contribution to school life and plans for the future.
- For the Sobey National Innovator Scholarship only, you must also submit a resume and a letter of recommendation from a high school Principal, Guidance Counsellor, or teacher.

Ready for a preview of the application? Let's go!

Part 1 (Required): Entrance Awards Application

Required of all applicants.

First Name

Last Name

Student ID (A#) *(if known)*

Email Address

Have you applied for admission to Saint Mary's University?

- ☐ I have applied for admission.
- ☐ I have applied for admission and I have been accepted.
- ☐ I have not applied yet.

When do you intend to start your studies at Saint Mary's University?

- ☐ September 2026
- ☐ January 2027
- ☐ Another term (please provide):

What is your citizenship status?

- ☐ Canadian Citizen
- ☐ Permanent Resident of Canada
- ☐ Student Visa
- ☐ Other

Your answer to this question will determine which questions you are asked in Part 2 (Need-Based Entrance Awards).

What is your intended program of study at Saint Mary's University?

- ☐ Arts
- ☐ Sobey School of Business
- ☐ Engineering
- ☐ Environmental Studies
- ☐ Science

Do you intend to pursue Entrepreneurship as a major, take courses in Entrepreneurship, or to start your own business? Check all that apply.

☐ At this time, I am not interested in Entrepreneurship or owning my own business.

✓ ☒ I intend to pursue Entrepreneurship as a major.

✓ ☒ I intend to take courses in Entrepreneurship.

✓ ☒ I intend to start my own business.

☐ I'm not sure.



You have indicated that you intend to pursue Entrepreneurship as a major, take courses in Entrepreneurship, and/or to start your own business. Please use the space below to tell us about your interest in entrepreneurship. If you have your own business, tell us about it, or your future business plans. *(Optional)*

This question will only be visible if you check one of the options indicating an interest in entrepreneurship.

Did you participate or have you participated in any of the following programs? *Check all that apply.*

☐ International Baccalaureate

☐ Advanced Placement

☐ Options and Opportunities (O2) Program

☐ Ontario Specialist High Skills Major

☐ Techsploration

✓ ☒ An equestrian program

This additional question will only be visible if you indicate that you participate(d) in an equestrian program.



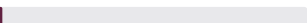
You have indicated that you participate or have participated in an equestrian program. In the space below, please provide the name of the equestrian program(s) and the timeframe of your participation (e.g., 2020-Present):

What is the name of your High School/Secondary School?

Where is your High School/Secondary School located? *If your high school is located in Canada, please provide the city and province/territory. If your high school is located outside of Canada, please provide the city and country.*

What is your high school/secondary school graduation date? *Please provide the month and year.*

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Part 1: Entrance Awards Application – Continued

Some Entrance Awards recognize a student's commitment to extra-curricular activities, such as employment, involvement in clubs, sports, volunteerism and more. If applicable, please provide details about your involvement over the last three years.

For **participation dates**, include the month and year when you started participating and the month and year when you stopped, unless participation is ongoing. For the **time commitment**, please indicate if the number you provide is total hours, or the hours per week or month, etc., as applicable (*example: 1 hour per week*).

If you do not have any activities to report in one or more of the categories below, you can skip the section(s).

Sports (varsity, intramural, recreational, etc.)

Please do not include activities/sports that you stopped playing/participating in more than three years ago.

	Sport		Category/ Level	Participation Dates <i>Include month and year (e.g., Sept 2021). If participation is ongoing, you can leave the end date blank.</i>		Approximate Time Commitment	
	Name of Sport	Position Played		Start Date	End Date	Number of Hours	Per Week, Month or Year?
Sport 1	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="v"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Sport 2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="v"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Sport 3	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="v"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Sport 4	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="v"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Extra-curricular experiences or commitments (e.g., clubs, societies, academic teams, employment)

Please list your top three (3) extra-curricular experiences or commitments in which you have participated in the last three years.

	Activity		Participation Dates <i>Include month and year (e.g., Sept 2021). If participation is ongoing, you can leave the end date blank.</i>		Approximate Time Commitment	
	Name of Activity	Your Role/Position	Start Date	End Date	Number of Hours	Per Week, Month or Year?
Activity 1						
Activity 2						
Activity 3						

Volunteer Experience

Please list your top three (3) volunteer experiences/activities in which you have participated in the last three years.

	Activity		Participation Dates <i>Include month and year (e.g., Sept 2021). If participation is ongoing, you can leave the end date blank.</i>		Approximate Time Commitment		Was participation in this activity a requirement for a class?	
	Activity	Your Role/Position	Start Date	End Date	Number of Hours	Per Week, Month or Year?	Yes	No
Volunteer Activity 1							<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volunteer Activity 2							<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volunteer Activity 3							<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In 250 words or less, please describe how your involvement in sports, volunteerism and/or other extra-curricular activities has contributed to your development as a leader. *(Only required if you reported extra-curricular activities and/or involvement in this section)*

If applicable, what has prevented you from being involved with extra-curricular activities? *(Optional)*

Part 1: Entrance Awards Application – Continued

Some Entrance Awards have been developed to recognize a wide range of non-academic criteria such as personal and cultural identity, family structure and history, and more. The following questions are asked to determine your eligibility for select Entrance Awards. Although these questions are not required, we encourage you to answer them so that you can be considered for more awards.

Did one of your parents/guardians graduate from Saint Mary's University?



☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer not to answer

This additional question will only be visible if you indicate that one of your parents/guardians graduated from SMU.



You have indicated that one or more of your parents/guardians is a Saint Mary's University Alumni member. Please provide the following information:

	Their full name (please include maiden name, if applicable)	Year they graduated from SMU	Their relationship to you (e.g., father, mother, parent, guardian)
Alumni Member 1	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Alumni Member 2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Alumni Member 3	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Are you a first-generation University student? For the purposes of this application, a first-generation student is someone whose parents/guardians did not attend post-secondary studies (i.e., college or university).

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer not to answer

Do you have any children or dependents for whom you are financially responsible?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer not to answer

If you answer "Yes" then the following additional questions will appear:



Please indicate how many children or dependents you have, and their ages:



Are you a single parent?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer not to answer

Have you faced significant personal adversity with the loss of a sibling or parent?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer not to answer

Voluntary Declarations/Self-Identification (Optional)

The Entrance Awards Program features scholarships, bursaries and awards with unique and specific eligibility criteria that celebrate our University community and uphold values of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). In order to select an eligible candidate for these awards, the University requires specific information from the applicant.

Students who self-identify as a member of an equity-deserving group may be eligible for additional awards aimed at supporting underrepresented communities. By voluntarily sharing this information, you can be considered for these awards, in addition to all of the other awards that make up the Entrance Awards Program. **Self-identifying will not exclude you from consideration for any awards.**

If you have any questions on self-identification and how this information will be used, please contact Financial Aid & Awards at financial.aid@smu.ca.

Do you identify as a woman?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer not to answer

Do you consider yourself to be a visible minority/racially visible person?

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer not to answer

This additional question will only be visible if you indicate that you consider yourself to be a visible minority/racially visible person.



Please indicate the group(s) below which best apply to you. Check all that apply.

☐ African Canadian

☐ Historically/ancestrally African Nova Scotian

☐ Person of Black Heritage

☐ East Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, etc.)

☐ South Asian (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, etc.)

☐ South East Asian (Cambodian, Filipino, Thai, Vietnamese, etc.)

☐ West Asian or Arab (Iranian, Lebanese, Afghan, etc.)

☐ Latin, South or Central American

☐ Another

Do you identify as being African Nova Scotian? African Nova Scotians/Indigenous Blacks are a distinct people who descend from free and enslaved Black Planters, Black Loyalists, Black Refugees, Maroons, and other Black people who inhabited the original 52 land-based Black communities in that part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia.

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer not to answer

Are you a resident of the Preston, Nova Scotia area?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer not to answer

Do you identify as an Indigenous Person of Canada? For the purposes of this application, Indigenous Persons are people who identify as First Nations (status, non-status, Treaty), Metis, Inuit or North American Indian.

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer not to answer

Do you consider yourself to be Mi'kmaw?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer not to answer

Do you wish to self-identify as a person with a disability?



☒ Yes

☐ No

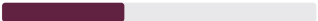
☐ Prefer not to answer



FYI! Saint Mary's University provides accessibility resources, services and accommodations for students registered with [The Fred Smithers Centre for Student Accessibility](#). These supports are available to reduce possible barriers and help students achieve their academic and career goals.

Registration with the Fred Smithers Centre is not required for the Entrance Awards Program Application, but we wanted to take this opportunity to make you aware of their services. Students who wish to register for services with the Fred Smithers Centre are required to submit an [application](#) and supporting documentation from a physician or psychologist. For more information, please visit their [website](#) or e-mail fredsmithers.centre@smu.ca!

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Part 2 (Optional): Financial Need-Based Entrance Awards

Some Entrance Awards are intended to support students who have financial need.

What is Financial Need?

In general terms, “financial need” is defined as the difference between your expenses/costs and your financial resources (the money/funds you will use to cover those costs). Some examples of expenses are: tuition and fees, textbooks and supplies, housing costs such as on campus residence or monthly rent, food/groceries or a cell phone bill. Some examples of financial resources are: employment income, savings, support from family, student loans, RESPs, etc.

A person is considered to have financial need if their financial resources are not enough to cover their costs.

Do you wish to be considered for bursaries and awards which take into consideration a financial-need component?

If you answer **yes**, then you will be asked to provide some information about your household’s financial situation. To skip the financial-related questions and not be considered for need-based awards, answer **no**.

☐ Yes

☐ No

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Part 2: Financial Need-Based Entrance Awards - Continued

To properly assess your eligibility for financial need-based Entrance Awards, it's important for us to have a clear understanding of your household financial information. Using the information currently available to you, please answer the following questions as honestly as possible and take the time to accurately estimate/predict your financial resources to the best of your ability.

Do you intend to apply for government student loans?

The [Canada Student Financial Assistance Program](#) (commonly referred to as Canada Student Loans) provides grants and loans to help eligible students pay for their post-secondary education. As of April 1, 2023, there is no longer interest on Canada Student Loans, which means any funds you borrow can be paid back without the burden of interest. There are also repayment assistance programs to help repay loan funds after you end full-time study.

You can learn more about student loans by visiting [our website](#) or by contacting [Financial Aid & Awards](#). Please note that you need to be a Canadian Citizen or Permanent Resident of Canada to participate in the Canada Student Financial Assistance Program.

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Undecided

This question will only be visible if you indicated you are a Canadian Citizen or Permanent Resident of Canada in Part 1 of the application.

Do you intend to use a bank loan or student line of credit to pay for school next year?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Undecided



Do you intend to work part-time while attending SMU next year?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Undecided

Will you be receiving any form of sponsorship to cover, or partially cover, your tuition next year? Sponsorship could include the cost of tuition, books, program costs, as well as cost of living funds and/or other financial support.

Some examples of Sponsors are: a First Nation Band or Community, the Department of Community Services, Employment Nova Scotia, OHL, or another government department or funding partner.

✓ ☒ Yes, I have applied or been approved for sponsorship funding.

☐ No, I am not receiving any form of sponsorship to attend SMU next year.

If you indicate that you will be receiving sponsorship funding next year, you will be asked to provide the following additional information (if known).



Please indicate the type of sponsorship funding available to you:

Name of Sponsor (e.g., The Department of Community Services)

If known, details about what is covered by your sponsorship/funding
(e.g. full tuition, textbooks, cost of residence, etc.)



Estimated financial resources for the upcoming academic year

Savings	\$	<input type="text"/>
Family contribution	\$	<input type="text"/>
RESPs, Educational/University Trust Fund	\$	<input type="text"/>
Total	\$	<input type="text"/>

Annual Income for Parents/Step-parents/Guardians

Parent/step-parent/guardian #1	\$	<input type="text"/>
Parent/step-parent/guardian #2	\$	<input type="text"/>
Total	\$	<input type="text"/>

How many dependent children are in your family (including yourself)?

How many people in your family will be attending university, college or another post-secondary program next year (including yourself)?



This question will only be visible if you indicated you were a **Canadian Citizen** or **Permanent Resident** of Canada in Part 1 of the application.

Statement of Financial Need – Canadian Citizens / Permanent Residents of Canada

In the space below, please provide details explaining why you should be considered for financial need-based awards and bursaries. If applicable, you can use this section to provide an explanation of any special financial circumstances you and/or your family are facing in relation to housing, debt payments, family care, transportation, medical, or other. There is no minimum length required, however, some questions you may want to keep in mind when completing your statement are:

- What is your current plan to cover your tuition and living costs as a student? Will you be receiving financial support from family, working part-time, using a bank loan, etc.?
- What is your household income situation? This could include how many people in your household are employed, what type of work they do, etc.
- Are you and/or your family facing any special or extenuating financial circumstances? This could include job loss, medical care costs, unexpected expenses, etc.
- What steps are you taking to improve your financial situation?
- How would you benefit from receiving financial aid in the form of a bursary or award?



This question will only be visible if you indicated your citizenship status as “**Student Visa**” in Part 1 of the application.

Statement of Financial Need – International Students

When applying for a study permit in Canada, applicants are normally required to provide valid proof of funds to demonstrate that they have the financial means to cover their tuition, living expenses and other costs. Before coming to Canada, it's important for you to have a realistic and reasonable financial plan to cover your expenses. In the space below, please provide details explaining why you should be considered for financial need-based awards and bursaries. There is no minimum length required, however, some questions you may want to keep in mind when completing your statement are:

- What is your current plan to cover your tuition and living costs as a student for the full length of your degree (not just your first year)? Will you be receiving financial support from family, working part-time, using a bank loan, etc.?
- What is your household income situation? This could include how many people in your household are employed, what type of work they do, etc.
- Are you and/or your family facing any special or extenuating financial circumstances? This could include job loss, medical care costs, unexpected expenses, etc.
- What steps are you taking to improve your financial situation?
- How would you benefit from receiving financial aid in the form of a bursary or award?



Acknowledgment

Please carefully review the following statement and place your initials in the space provided, if you agree and understand.

"I certify that the foregoing information is, to my knowledge, a true, complete, and accurate outline of my financial position and, I hereby request consideration for assistance from the funds made available for this purpose by Saint Mary's University. I am aware that the submission of false information may be subject to proceedings under the Discipline System for students (see the Academic Calendar for the section on Student Discipline) and will result in the disqualification of my application for bursary assistance. I authorize the release by Saint Mary's University of information about any financial assistance that may be awarded to me as a result of this application. I authorize Saint Mary's University to use this application as an assessment tool for other Financial Aid related programs. I understand that the information submitted in this assessment will be verified."

Student Initials:

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Part 3 (Optional): Presidential / Presidential International Baccalaureate / Santamarian Scholarships & Sobey National Innovator Scholarships

The third and final part of the Entrance Awards Application is only required if you wish to be considered for a Presidential / Presidential International Baccalaureate / Santamarian Scholarship, and/or a Sobey National Innovator Scholarship. Descriptions of these scholarships and their eligibility criteria are below.

Presidential / Presidential International Baccalaureate / Santamarian Scholarships

These scholarships are open to domestic and international high school applicants with an average of 95% or higher, or an IB result of 36+. To be considered, the following supporting document is required:

- A 750-word essay that describes your community involvement, contribution to school life and plans for the future. This could include participation in student government, athletic achievement, extra-curricular activities, volunteer and/or paid work.



Psst! Want a few tips for writing your essay? The last page of this guide has what you're looking for!

Part 3 (Optional): Presidential / Presidential International Baccalaureate / Santamarian Scholarships & Sobey National Innovator Scholarships - Continued

Sobey National Innovator Scholarships for Bachelor of Commerce Students

The Sobey National Innovator Scholarship (Sobey Innovator) is presented to exceptional students from across Canada, in recognition of their accomplishments and as encouragement and support for their success in the Sobey School of Business. These scholarships are open to Canadian citizens and Permanent Residents of Canada entering the Bachelor of Commerce program at Saint Mary's University. To be eligible, applicants must demonstrate leadership in extra-curricular activities and have an average of 90% or higher, or an IB Diploma score of 36. To be considered, the following supporting document(s) are required:

- A 750-word essay that describes your community involvement, contribution to school life and plans for the future. This could include participation in student government, athletic achievement, extra-curricular activities, volunteer and/or paid work.
- A copy of your resume.
- A letter of recommendation from a high school Principal, Guidance Counsellor or teacher.



Psst! Want a few tips for writing your essay? The last page of this guide has what you're looking for!

Please note: for applicants wishing to be considered for both the Presidential / Presidential IB / Santamarian Scholarships and the Sobey National Innovator Scholarship, only one essay is required. You will not be asked to submit separate essays for each.

Do you wish to be considered for any of the following scholarships? You can select more than one.

✓ ☐ I wish to be considered for a Presidential Scholarship, Presidential International Baccalaureate Scholarship, and/or a Santamarian Scholarship.

☐ I wish to be considered for a Sobey National Innovator Scholarship.

☐ Neither.

If you check the box to be considered, you will be prompted to upload your essay.



Please upload a **750-word essay** that describes your community involvement, contribution to school life and plans for the future. This could include participation in student government, athletic achievement, extra-curricular activities, volunteer and/or paid work. **A PDF file is preferred.**

Drop files or click here to upload.

Please note: for applicants wishing to be considered for both the Presidential / Presidential IB / Santamarian Scholarships and the Sobey National Innovator Scholarship, only one essay is required. You will not be asked to submit separate essays for each.

Do you wish to be considered for any of the following scholarships? You can select more than one.

☐ I wish to be considered for a Presidential Scholarship, Presidential International Baccalaureate Scholarship, and/or a Santamarian Scholarship.

✓ ☒ I wish to be considered for a Sobey National Innovator Scholarship.

☐ Neither.

If you check the box to be considered, you will be prompted to upload your essay, your resume and your letter of recommendation.



Please upload a **750-word essay** that describes your community involvement, contribution to school life and plans for the future. This could include participation in student government, athletic achievement, extra-curricular activities, volunteer and/or paid work. **A PDF file is preferred.**

Drop files or click here to upload.



Please upload a copy of your **resume**. **A PDF file is preferred.**

Drop files or click here to upload.



Please upload **a letter of recommendation** from a high school principal, guidance counsellor or teacher. **A PDF file is preferred.**

If the individual providing your reference letter would prefer to send it to us directly, they can send it to financial.aid@smu.ca. Please ask that they include your full name and SMU Student ID Number (A#) in their e-mail.

Drop files or click here to upload.

Disclosure Statements

At times, the Financial Aid & Awards staff may require input from various campus partners (e.g., Faculty Departments, the Fred Smithers Centre for Student Accessibility, etc.) when selecting the recipient of an award. Do you consent to the release of pertinent information from your application and academic record to these parties, when required for the purposes of evaluating your application and for work related to student financial assistance and awards?

☐ Yes

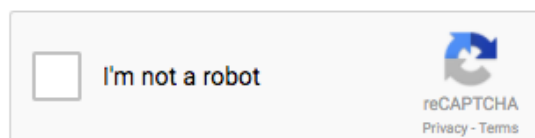
☐ No

If you are a successful recipient of a Saint Mary's University scholarship, bursary or award, the University may wish to use your name, any testimonial or thank you message that you provide to the university for the purposes of reporting to donors and the university community, advertising, fundraising work, and celebrating advancement activities at university events. Do you consent to the use of your personal information for these purposes?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Please complete this captcha.



Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPOP): Saint Mary's University respects your privacy. Your personal information is protected and used in compliance with Nova Scotia's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act 1993, c5, s.1. For more information, please visit our FOIPOP page.

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Submit your application

All done! You've completed the application.

How will I find out if I've been selected for an award?

Awarding decisions are made in the spring, after the application deadline has passed. If you are selected as the recipient of an Entrance Award, you will be notified via our [online application portal](#). Please note that only successful applicants will be contacted.

Your Entrance Awards Program Application will be kept on file for the entire 2026-2027 academic year and as awards become available, all applications received by the February 15, 2026 deadline will continue to be considered.

What if I need to make an update to my Entrance Awards Application?

If you need to make any major updates or changes, it is best to submit a new application. If we receive multiple applications for the same person, we will use the *most recently submitted* application. If you only need to make a small change or update, please contact financial.aid@smu.ca for instructions.

What if I have other questions?

Questions about becoming a Saint Mary's student and applying for entrance-level awards can be sent to the Recruitment Office at recruitment@smu.ca.

I'm applying for the Presidential, Santamarian and/or the Sobey National Innovator Scholarship. What should my essay include?

You are so much more than a grade average or a GPA, and your personal essay is your chance to show us who you really are! Your essay should touch on the following topics:

- **Your education and career goals.** *What do you want to do with your degree after you graduate? Are you planning to continue your education or enter the work force?*
- **Your academic achievements.** *Academic excellence can look different for every student – tell us about an academic achievement you're proud of.*
- **Your involvement within your school or community.** *This could include participation in student government, student societies, athletics, volunteerism, etc.*
- **Your extra-curricular commitments.** *Are you a member of any sports teams, clubs or working part-time? Share how you balance your responsibilities.*
- **Your interests and hobbies.** *Are you an entrepreneur, an artist or a musician? Tell us what you're passionate about and how it shapes your activities and goals.*
- **Any challenges you've overcome and anything that makes you unique.** *Everyone has a story. If you've faced obstacles or experiences that set you apart, we want to hear about them.*

Using AI tools when brainstorming or working on the rough draft is fine, but the final essay should be in your own words. When we read 500 essays, the ones that stand out are those that sound the most human. Your authentic voice is far more engaging than a literary masterpiece with flawless grammar and a thesaurus's worth of synonyms (unless you are a writer or poet, in which case we want to hear all about it in your essay!).

Remember, this is your story – be honest, be thoughtful, and most importantly, be yourself.