



Idealized Science Institute High School Senior Scholarship

Amount/number: up to two scholarships of up to \$1,500/award each

Scholarship Chair: Cole Skuse

Award date: May 2025

The following scholarship is for a **senior high school student** enrolled in a high school in Beaver or Allegheny counties who intends to enroll in an accredited 2-year or 4-year institution following high school. The criteria for this scholarship entail conducting original research, unaided, and presenting it at a science conference where it can be critiqued by members of the Idealized Science Institute.

More specifically, the research should be considered a long-term project, which is similar to conducting open inquiry, where the student carries out every aspect of the investigation, from inception to completion. The goal is making a convincing case to the scientific community that the work completed is viable (i.e., free of errors, logical, scientific, etc.).

It should be noted that long-term projects are the antithesis of science fairs, where the answers are already known. This means that if a simple Google, Wikipedia, or YouTube search can answer the question, then this investigation was probably not necessary. Verifying well-established scientific explanations does not constitute a long-term project.

This scholarship hopes to reward originality, innovation, creativity, frugality, persistence, and quality. The goal of science is not the attainment of a single correct answer as is typical in “school science.” Rather, long-term projects should work towards providing explanations, which are multifaceted, testable, and congruent with scientific theory. Like real scientific work, a long-term project is never fully completed, instead leading to other investigable questions.

There is not a size requirement for long-term projects, only that the investigator engages to the best of their ability and contributes in some meaningful way to our overall understanding. Long-term projects, like real science, are fraught with failure and most projects will require several restarts after missteps are recognized. Resilience, ingenuity, and effort are highly respected attributes in scientific work and in long-term projects. Spending money for the long-term project is highly discouraged, while being resourceful and respectful of resources is.

How to Apply

Any student wishing to participate should apply via this Google form. A complete submission includes:

- A <100-word abstract of your project
- A <250-word summary of current post-graduation aspirations
- A <500-word summary of your project, including motivations for the project, findings, and conclusions
- An in-person presentation of the long-term project at the 2025 Freedom Area Science Conference
- A PDF copy of your presentation and supporting materials (i.e. hand-made charts, apparatuses, etc.)
- A summary recording of the presentation.

Assessment

Judgement will be on the totality of the work completed. Members of the Idealized Science Institute, who have completed long-term projects or authentic scientific work themselves, will judge and award this scholarship. They will use the rubrics found on the www.sciconhs.org website (see Resources) as a guide for assessing features and presentation of long-terms, interaction with the student about their work, and input from supporting staff about the development, growth, and potential of the student presenter. All



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judgements should adhere to the spirit of the Idealized Science Institute's [mission](#) and vision.

Resources

The Idealized Science Institute website (www.idealizedscience.org/our-mission) and the Science Conference at High School Movement website (www.sciconhs.org) are excellent resources for engaging in a long-term project. Students that would like to conduct a long-term project, but do not have a teacher or mentor, can be connected to one through the Idealized Science Institute.

Requirements to Awardees

If a student is awarded the scholarship before their final year of high school, the ISI will hold the award until the month before their expected graduation. All students that are awarded a Scholarship Award are required to complete our Award Summary Form documenting how the money supplied by the Idealized Science Institute was spent within one year of the award being distributed.

Timeline

All submissions must be received by April 18, 2025, at the Google Form above. The Board of Directors of the Idealized Science Institute will deliberate and decide on the awardee(s) within one week of the presentations at the 2025 board approved science conference.

The Idealized Science Institute is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.