

Frequently Asked Questions

ELIGIBILITY for a Cobell Scholarship Opportunity

Q: What is the Cobell Scholarship and who is eligible to apply?

A: The Cobell Scholarship is the result of the Cobell v. Salazar settlement. It is competitive, merit first then need based, non-renewable, and available to any post-secondary (after high school) student who is; an enrolled member of a US Federally-Recognized Tribe, enrolled in full-time study and is degree seeking. Applicants must plan to attend or be attending any nationally, regionally and industry accredited non-profit, public and private, institution. Applicants must be pursuing a vocational certificate or diploma, associate's, bachelors, masters, doctoral or professional degree, or certificate. The most updated information is always available on the Cobell Scholar homepage and Online Application Student Information System (OASIS), or by contacting IEI.

Q: What is the GPA requirement for a Cobell Scholarship?

A: While there is no minimum GPA requirement, IEI considers the following to be general guidelines to be considered "competitive" for funding purposes.

- Graduate and Professional - - 3.5 or higher, either from undergrad or previous coursework
- Undergraduate and post-baccalaureate - - 3.25 or higher, either from high school or previous coursework
- Vocational – 2.0 or higher, either from high school or previous coursework; and, are individually reviewed by staff on a rolling basis.

Applicants with lower GPA's than these should consider applying and stating a case for how they intend to improve it. All completed applications will be reviewed; however, lower GPA's without an explanation or plan for improvement may score and rank low when reviewed by the external review committee.

Q: Do I need to be a Cobell Settlement Class Member to receive a scholarship?

A: No. Cobell Settlement Class membership nor descendency is required, nor does either guarantee Finalist selection. However, this information is collected for research purposes and may be used as a Finalist selection tiebreaker if needed.

Q: Who determines the eligibility and amounts for the scholarship?

A: The Cobell Board of Trustees was established to oversee the invested funds as well as advise the scholarship program administrators regarding eligibility and available scholarship amounts. Each year

they work with the CEO for Indigenous Education, Inc. to evaluate the prior year's processes to determine eligibility and how to make positive changes, if necessary. This includes an assessment of the impact the scholarship award made on each student's financial aid package. Award amounts are conveyed to the selected Finalists in an email offer letter.

Q: How do I know if my tribe is federally recognized?

A: All eligible tribes are listed in a drop down list in the General Application Profile in OASIS. If a tribe is not listed, contact IEI. ***This list is compiled from the US Congressional Record and verified each year.***

Q: Do you fund descendants of tribal members?

A: IEI does not make offers to descendants or members of US Federally-recognized tribes at this time; however, selected Finalists proving $\frac{1}{4}$ or more descent from multiple tribes will be considered by submitting the appropriate documentation(s).

Q: How do I know if I am attending an eligible institution?

A: Without exception, Indigenous Education, Inc.'s scholarship opportunities are only available to students attending public or private non-profit institutions. A list of eligible institutions is located in OASIS; and, if an institution is not listed, it may not be an eligible institution. Also, institutions must be industry and nationally/regionally accredited.

Q: Does IEI fund students who are attending school part-time?

A: It depends. Most applicants must intend to enroll full-time (as determined by the institution), must be degree-seeking, and making progress toward graduation. Selected Finalists will be requested to submit a course registration to verify full-time enrollment when completing the Post-Acceptance process. In specific instances, applicants can be intending to enroll part-time. There is a query in OASIS to provide an explanation of attendance other than full-time. These circumstances are reviewed separately and determinations are made on an individual basis. Determinations are not made via phone call or email; they are made only from completed and submitted applications.

Q: If I apply and meet all eligibility criteria, will I be guaranteed a scholarship?

A: There is no guarantee that everyone who is eligible and completes a General Application Profile and a scholarship opportunity will be offered or awarded a scholarship. Applicants who are selected as Finalists will be awarded after successfully completing the Post-Acceptance process and all other eligibility requirements are verified. Due to a limited amount of available scholarship funds and a high number of qualified applications, all completed and fully qualified submissions are reviewed, scored and ranked for final determinations. Many applicants are placed on a waiting list because IEI intends to

spend all available funds each year. If not selected in the first round of determinations, a status of “Submitted” will indicate an applicant is on a waitlist.

Q: How do I determine if I am eligible for the Cobell Scholarship Vocational Opportunity?

A: The Cobell Scholarship Vocational Opportunity is for any student who has not yet earned a college degree, is enrolled or will be enrolling in a vocational credential, vocational certificate or occupational license program (not including professional level or post-baccalaureate certifications). Vocational degrees typically are one year or less in duration, certify competency in a specific trade, or provide a license to perform certain occupations. If an applicant is uncertain about this degree level they should check with the institution or review the "What is a Credential" Fact Sheet at www.acteonline.org.

Q: By what other means might an applicant be deemed ineligible?

A: There have been several means by which an applicant has been deemed ineligible. Some of the most common include:

- Applicants whose email addresses are invalid may be deemed ineligible until a corrected email address is received.
- Applicants whose email address is not that of the student will be deemed ineligible until a corrected email address is received.
- Applicants attending for-profit institutions will be deemed ineligible.
- Applicants whose tribal enrollment office returns a negative status will be deemed ineligible until additional information is submitted.
- Applicants whose name does not match that of submitted documents or the name listed at the institution of choice may be deemed ineligible. It is not possible to match the thousands of received documents with a file under a different name.
- Applicants who attend a different institution than the one listed on the General Application may be deemed ineligible until new information is submitted.
- Applicants applying for an opportunity that is not a match to their degree level will be deemed ineligible for that opportunity and if time allows, will be directed to the correct opportunity.
- Applicants who do not respond to “next steps” or other communications with the stated deadlines may be deemed ineligible until such time that communications continue. Keep in mind that these individuals’ scholarship funds may be reallocated; therefore, the applicant will be placed on the waiting list until additional funds become available.

NOTE: It should be clear that open and continued communications within the OASIS system and via scholarships@cobellscholar.org are the best way to remain eligible for an opportunity. IEI staff cannot be responsible for undelivered email communications if an applicant has not communicated a change prior to any deadline date.