

# Wallin 4-Year Scholarship FAQ

## General Questions

### What are the eligibility requirements for the 4-Year Wallin scholarship?

To be eligible for the Wallin Education Partners Scholarship, students must:

- Be a graduating senior from one of our 73 high school partners (list available online)
- Attend a four-year college in Fall 2024 in our service area (MN, WI, IA, ND, SD, or any HBCU in the United States)
- Have a GPA of 3.0 (unweighted) or higher by the time they submit their application for the 4-Year Scholarship
- Demonstrate financial need: The student's parents need to have a combined adjusted gross income between \$0-\$95,000 if they live in a household of 1-5 people. If students live in a household of six or more people, then the parent's combined adjusted gross income can get up to \$135,000.

### How much is the scholarship?

- The four-year scholarship is up to \$16,000, which is disbursed over four years (so about \$4,000 a year).

### What is the acceptance rate? How many scholarships are awarded?

- About 40% of students who submit completed applications in the 4-Year scholarship are selected. Last year, we selected 360 high school seniors for the 4-Year Scholarship.

### How do I apply?

- Create an account on Wallin EP's website: <https://scholars.wallinpartners.org/apply/>. We strongly encourage you NOT to complete your application in one sitting, but to work on it over several days/weeks.
- The 4-Year application opens November 1, 2023, and is **due by 11:59pm on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.**

### What do I need to do to apply?

- Complete the online application.
- Provide the names and email addresses for two recommenders (ex. teacher, coach, advisor, supervisor--recommenders cannot be related to you). Both recommendation forms must be submitted to Wallin by 11:59pm pm **Feb 1st, 2024.**
- Upload your parent(s) 2022 tax forms so we can confirm financial need. If your parents don't file taxes, we will also accept W2's.

### I'm having issues getting back into my account, what do I do?

- The most common issue students have with our application is forgetting their password. If this happens to you, you can reset your password by going to the log-in page, entering in the email address you used to create your Wallin account (this will be your school email address or your personal email address) and following the directions to reset your password. The email account with password reset information will come from [wallin@wallinpartners.org](mailto:wallin@wallinpartners.org). If you experience other technical issues, email us at [apply@wallinpartners.org](mailto:apply@wallinpartners.org).

### Are there multiple rounds for the Wallin Scholarship?

- No, there aren't multiple rounds for the Wallin Scholarship. After you complete your application in its entirety and make sure that both of your recommenders have submitted their forms, your application is considered complete. You can log back into your Wallin account to see the status of your recommendations. All students with completed applications will be notified of our decision in mid-April.

#### **Do you require US citizenship to apply?**

- No. Wallin EP also does not ask about the citizenship status of applicants.

#### **Do I need to meet all the eligibility criteria to apply?**

- Yes, you must meet all our eligibility requirements to apply. Some students may improve their GPA over the course of the quarter/term and be eligible by the time the application closes. The financial situation for some students may have changed since taxes were filed 2022, making them now financially eligible for Wallin.

#### **Do I need to take the ACT to be considered for Wallin?**

- Wallin Education Partners will not consider your ACT as a part of the selection process. If you did take the ACT, we'd like you to indicate your scores in the application for research purposes, but the ACT will not have an impact on selection.

#### **What if I am close to the GPA cutoff and I want to enroll in a four-year college?**

- We require students to be at a cumulative unweighted GPA of 3.0 or higher by the time they submit their 4-Year scholarship application. If you are confident, you can get there, then definitely apply. If you aren't at a 3.0 by February 1<sup>st</sup>, then we will not be able to consider your application. In those situations, we encourage you to ask your high school counselors and college and career staff about scholarships that don't have a GPA requirement or apply for the Wallin 2-Year Program.

#### **Do you want official or unofficial transcripts? Do they need to be uploaded or will you get them from our counselors?**

- If you can download your unofficial high school transcript that shows all classes and grades from 9<sup>th</sup> grade until the most current quarter/trimester, we encourage you to upload it. If you can't download your transcript and need to go through high school counselors, then you don't need to upload the transcript. We will reach out to your high school, get that document, and use it to confirm you meet our GPA criteria.

#### **What are the Premier Colleges again? Do I have to attend one of those schools?**

- Our premier colleges are the Beloit, Cornell (in Iowa), and St. Olaf. They are three colleges who have committed to providing additional scholarship funds to students who are selected for the Wallin Scholarship and enroll at their school. We believe they are great college options especially for students who are interested in a small, liberal arts education. However, being selected as a Wallin Scholar does not mean you can only choose from these schools. You can use our 4-Year scholarship funds at any 4-Year college in MN, WI, IA, ND, SD, or any HBCU in the United States.

#### **What if I'm not sure if I want to attend a 4-year school or a 2-year school? Can I apply to both programs?**

- Students are welcome to apply for both the 4yr and 2yr scholarships if they are unclear about their next steps, but they should be aware that one of the criteria for each scholarship is how the chosen pathways fits their long-term plans.

#### **What if I start basic training in the fall of my first year of college? Can I still be a scholar?**

- Wallin EP requires all students to be enrolled in the fall after high school graduation. If you will not be enrolled in classes in Fall 2024 because of basic training, you will not be eligible for the Wallin Scholarship. We have had instances where students started their college classes in the fall and went to basic training in the spring or even their sophomore year of college without it impacting their scholarship or status as a Wallin scholar.

#### **If I want to go into healthcare, is it better to do HealthPartners pathway or attend a four-year?**

- This depends on your own goals and long-term plans. The HealthPartners pathway is great for students who want to get their associates, enter one of the health care fields HealthPartners has outlined, and then start working right away. Whereas a four-year path might be a better fit for students whose long-term goals require a four-year degree or higher. You know yourself best,

and we encourage you to research both paths, and talk with your counselors and college and career staff about your options. For the Wallin Scholarship, you can apply to both our 2-Year and 4-Year pathway, but remember, the students whose applications read strongest are often those who have taken the time to think about and define their short and long-term academic and career goals.

#### Who can I contact if I have more questions?

- You can email us at [apply@wallinpartners.org](mailto:apply@wallinpartners.org). Our Application Help page (<https://www.wallinpartners.org/applicationhelp>) also has a lot of helpful information about the Wallin application.

#### Financial Questions

##### Do I have to complete the FAFSA or MN Dream Act before submitting my Wallin application?

- No. The FAFSA and MN Dream Act will not be available until December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, this year and we don't believe you will be able to have your FAFSA or Dream Act applications done and processed before our application deadline of February 1<sup>st</sup>. So, for this year, we will accept your parent's 2022 tax forms as our income verification and will not require the FAFSA or Dream Act to be completed. While that is our process for this year's scholarship cohort, keep in mind that it is very important to get your FAFSA or MN Dream Act application completed as soon as possible. A college cannot give you an estimate of what your financial aid will look like until those forms are submitted, so set a goal of getting your FAFSA or Dream Act completed before the end of January.

##### Do I have to report both of my parent's income or just one?

- To confirm if students meet our financial need requirement, we expect students to report both of their parents' income and that holds true even if parents are not legally married but culturally married. We do have slightly different requirements for students whose parents are divorced or those who have unique circumstances, which are listed below.
  - If a student's parents are divorced or separated, then they will report the income of the parent they live with more often and upload that parent's 2022 1040 tax form. If the parent they live with has remarried, then the student will report that parent and their stepparent's income. This is consistent with what is required for FAFSA.
  - If a student is a foster youth, unhoused or facing homelessness, not living with their biological or adoptive parents, or has another unique or extenuating circumstance, we will not ask for financial documentation. Rather those students will list an adult at their high school (this can be a guidance counselor, caseworker, social worker, or another adult who is aware of their situation) and we will follow up with that person.

##### My parents don't work, but my older siblings are the ones who pay the bills. Do I report their income?

- Some of our scholars are in households where parents don't work and either they or older siblings help with household bills. In those cases, you'd indicate an income of zero and write a paragraph explaining this situation to use. Don't report your income or those of your siblings because we are most interested in whether parents in the home are employed and how much they earn.

##### Which tax forms are you looking for?

- We will need your parent(s) 2022 1040 tax form. If that isn't available, we can take the 2021 or 2023 tax form, but the 2022 is preferred so we can be consistent with FAFSA and the MN Dream Act.

##### What if my parents don't file taxes?

- If your parents don't file taxes, you will indicate that in the application and upload W2 forms or provide us with a paragraph that will help us more fully understand your financial situation.

### Who do I count in my household size?

- When answering the household size question, you should include yourself, your parents, and any siblings who live with you and rely on your parent's income for food, housing, and other expenses. You can also include any other relatives who financially depend on your parent(s) income to cover 50% or more of their housing/food expenses, even if they don't live with you.

### What if my parents or guardian lost their job recently? Or my family's financial circumstances have changed due to medical bills and other debts?

- Apply! Even if your 2022 taxes indicate you aren't eligible, we'll provide space for you to share more information with us in the application. We may ask you for more detailed follow-up information, but we encourage you to apply.

### My parents make over the Adjusted Gross Income, but they won't help me pay for college. Can I still apply?

- We understand there are many students in this situation, and while we are empathetic to your situation, we must abide by our set eligibility criteria and be consistent with how applications like the FAFSA and MN Dream Act define financial need. It is not about your parents' willingness to pay for college, but rather their ability to help you finance your education. Wallin Education Partners is an organization aimed at helping low to moderate income students access college so applicants must demonstrate financial need to be considered for our scholarship. If your parents make over the financial need cutoff, then you wouldn't be eligible for Wallin. We encourage you talk with your high school counselors and college and career staff about scholarships that don't have financial need criteria.

### If I am selected as a Wallin Scholar and my parents income increases in the future, will I lose the scholarship?

- No. Once you are selected as a Wallin Scholar, you are a Wallin Scholar. We will not take away the scholarship because your parents' income has increased. There is a chance other financial aid may change, so we encourage you to talk with your Wallin Scholar advisor so they can help you anticipate and plan for changes.

### What if I won other scholarships?

- If you have room in your cost of attendance, you can keep your Wallin scholarship and other outside scholarships. The only case where a student is not able to keep Wallin and other scholarships is if their full tuition, housing, meals, and other expenses are covered entirely by scholarships and grants. An example of this is if a student was selected for the Gates scholarship and got Wallin. In that situation, they would need to choose between Gates and Wallin. However, if you are not at cost of attendance, then it is highly likely you can accept Wallin and other scholarships that you have won.

## ***Selection & Support after high school***

### How do you decide who is a Wallin Scholar?

- First, know that each year we review more qualified applications than we can select. We believe Wallin Scholars are motivated leaders who have deep engagement both in and out of school and would benefit from our unique program. We use a robust and holistic review process that ensures every complete application is read by at least two different people. We evaluate potential scholars on academics, involvement (including extracurriculars, work, service, and family support), as well as student essays and recommendations. Ultimately no one factor determines the outcome of an application.

### When do applicants find out if they've received a scholarship?

- Wallin Education Partners shares out four-year scholarship decisions in April each year ahead of the May 1 College Decision deadline. Last year, we notified students by April 16<sup>th</sup>.

#### What if I decide to attend a college that isn't a partner?

- Many scholars apply to non-partner schools (and should!) as a part of their college search. If you choose to attend a college or university not supported by the Wallin Scholarship, you are not eligible to receive the scholarship. However, Wallin Education Partners makes decisions in early spring and will inform students of their selection or non-selection in April before students need to make their final college decision. This should provide enough time for scholars to consider their college options and understand the impact of financial aid on their final college decision.

#### What if I transfer to a non-partner college?

- Before you transfer colleges, we encourage you to work closely with your Wallin advisor so they can fully understand your situation and help you make an informed decision. Since Wallin requires students to be enrolled at a partner college each semester, transferring to a non-partner college will mean that you will be ineligible to keep your scholarship, so we encourage you to fully map out the pros and cons from an academic, financial, and time to graduation standpoint before making any big decisions.

#### What if I did PSEO or plan to graduate early? How does funding work?

- Wallin is a cost of attendance scholarship, so as long as you have room in your financial aid package and can show you will graduate early through a letter from your academic advisor, you can work with your Scholar Advisor to figure out how to use your funding over 3 years.

#### How will you disburse funds?

- Every summer we will confirm the college you will be enrolled at in the following fall. We will then use that information to send the scholarship funds to your college's financial aid or business office. Remember, for us to send funding, you must be enrolled at a partner college, which is any four-year in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, or any Historically Black College or University.

#### Will I get advising if I attend a school not in MN?

- As long as you attend an eligible college (any public or private four-year college in Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, or any HBCU), you will receive advising support from Wallin Education Partners. Most of your advising meetings will be virtual, but if you're in the cities during breaks, you can set up a time to meet with your advisor in-person.

#### How often will students need to meet with their advisors?

- Students will meet with their advisors between 6-8 times in their first year of college to ensure they have a smooth transition, and after that, they will meet around 4-6 times a year. These are general guidelines, but your scholar advisor will outline expectations with you in your first meeting.

#### What if it takes a bit longer for me to get my four-year degree?

- At Wallin, we're aware that every student's college journey looks different. If you require more time to get your college degree, you will still get support and guidance from Wallin EP. We only ask that you stay in communication and are open and transparent with your advisors about your goals and needs so they can tailor their support.

### **Two Year Program**

#### Do you have a 2-year program?

- We do have a two-year program, which will open on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024. Interested students can go our website (<https://www.wallinpartners.org/2-year-program.html>) and sign up to get notified when the program opens.

### Is the 2-Year application similar to the 4-Year application?

- Many parts of the 2-Year and 4-Year application are the same. We do ask a different set of questions in the college information section, ask for applicants to specify which 2-Year pathway they are most interested in, and require students to answer different essay questions.

### Do you have a 2+2 program? What if I want to start at a 2-Year but get a four-year degree?

- Wallin does have a 2+2 program that provides advising support until a student gets their four-year degree. Students in this pathway will also have access to some limited financial support. To qualify for our 2+2 program, students will need to be current Wallin 2-Year scholars who are on track to get their associates. They will apply to our 2+2 pathways the semester before finishing their associate degree.

### Are the essay questions the same for the 2-year application?

- The questions for the 2-year application are a bit different from the four-year. We are in the process of creating those essay questions, but if you want to get a head start, we encourage you to think about why you are interested in your specific major/career plan and how the community college you will be attending will help you meet your goals. Also, think about how having an advisor who works with you 1:1 can help you meet your academic and career goals. Once our 2-Year essay prompts are ready, we will post them in our application help page.