THE WOMEN'S FORUM of NEW YORK
THE FOUNDING FORUM

2027 WOMEN'S FORUM EDUCATION AWARD ELIGIBILITY & INSTRUCTIONS

About the Women's Forum of New York

Preeminent New York women leaders across many fields created the Women's Forum in 1974 to make a difference for each other and take an active leadership role in matters of importance to them. Since 1987, the Women's Forum Education Fund has provided Awards to help mature women—25 and older—pursue educational goals and enhance their capacities to provide leadership and productive and supportive service to their communities and beyond.

About the Award

The award recognizes extraordinary women and their often heroic efforts to overcome adversity as they restructure their lives for success. Unlike financial aid or scholarships, the $15,000 award goes directly to the recipient for whatever needs loom largest for her, whether tuition, childcare, medical bills, elder care, transportation, housing, or any other priority. Applicants and their references should share the narrative of obstacles confronted and overcome, and any demonstrations of leadership and care for their community.

Awardees are expected to act as ambassadors for the Education Fund Awards program and keep the Forum updated on their academic and professional accomplishments. Scholars' stories are highlighted in Forum communications that help to raise the money necessary to continue the legacy of giving, and a willingness to share your education journey is important.

Eligibility

The award is available to women aged 25 and over who have faced and overcome adversity and now have resumed the pursuit of **their first associate or bachelor's** degree. Applicants must demonstrate noteworthy promise and resilience in the face of challenges and must also demonstrate a commitment to helping others and to making a difference in their community, large or small, when their own career goals are achieved. Financial need and academic excellence are not the primary determining factors in the selection of recipients, although true financial need should be evident and the candidate should be in good academic standing. Previous awardees will not be considered.

Applicant must:

- be at least 25 years old by December 31, 2026
- attend college at a two- or four-year institution within New York City
- reside in New York City
- be pursuing her **FIRST** associate or bachelor's degree and have earned at least 12 credits in good standing
- have attended a college in New York City during the 2026 academic year and be enrolled for at least 6 credits in the 2027-2028 academic year
- have at least 9 credits to complete graduation requirements AFTER June 2027
- If completing an associate degree in June 2027, must then provide evidence of admission to a bachelor's degree program
- complete an additional semester of 6 or more credits within twelve months of receiving the first installment of the Award, i.e., by June 2028

Applicants may be asked to submit an official transcript if they are selected as a finalist. The award payment will be given in two installments: $5,000 following notification of the Award in July 2027, and $5,000 in January 2028 or upon successful completion of an additional semester of 6 or more credits. Recipients will be required to submit an official transcript to document the additional semester of 6 or more credits before the second installment is awarded.

Application Instructions/Contents

Applicants must submit **two short essays** of no more than 500 words each. The topics of those essays are as follows:

- Essay #1 - Career Goals and Motivation
  - Please describe your career goals and motivation for seeking this Award. If relevant, please include any meaningful leadership experience or involvement in community service, art, athletics, business, science, or other extracurricular activities.
- Essay #2 - Personal History
  - Please describe your personal history including challenges or obstacles overcome in pursuing an education. Please also discuss your academic record as an indication of noteworthy leadership promise. (Financial need will be addressed separately below.)

Applicants will also be asked to provide a **brief financial statement** as well as listing employment and dependents that will help the committee understand your current and anticipated financial situation, including how receiving this award will impact your ability to achieve your career goals. Please include details on your earned income, any other awards, family support, Federal assistance, etc. (Documentation of these items will not be required at the time of application submission but may be requested later.)

A letter of reference is required from a faculty member or administrator from your current or previous colleges attended, who can speak directly about the quality of your coursework. Once the application is submitted, the application platform sends an automated communication to the contact information the applicant provides. The reference will then submit their letter through a link in that message. One additional letter of reference can also be submitted; it is not required to be from an academic source.

Applicants must upload a student **copy of their transcript** that includes course titles, final grades, and credit information. An official copy may be required to be submitted if the applicant is selected for the award.

Applicants will have the option to upload a copy of their resume, but it is not required. Any additional materials submitted will not be included when presented to the reviewers.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF ALL MATERIALS IS FEBRUARY 1, 2027.

As part of the award selection process, finalists will be required to schedule **a virtual interview** with 2-3 members of the application review committee. This will be a 20-30 minute conversation to allow reviewers to better understand the applicant and their motivation in applying to the award.

Please carefully review ALL the information in this document before contacting the Women's Forum office directly with inquiries. **Applicants will be notified of the awards selection outcome on or before June 30th, 2027**. If you cannot find answers by reviewing the materials here or on the website, email **application@womensforumny.org with specific questions**.

Please NO Phone calls.