

The Nicholas J. De Leonardis Scholarship of The American Sign Language Project

Posted deadline: July 1st, 2026

The goal of the Nicholas J. De Leonardis Scholarship of The American Sign Language Project is to encourage full-time college students to engage in research leading to noninvasive technologies that will improve communication between Deaf and hearing people.

Amount of Award

\$7000

What scholarship funds may cover

Any portion of tuition, fees, or books.

Scholarship program guidelines

To be eligible, applicants must meet all of the following criteria:

- Be a full-time undergraduate or full-time graduate student at an accredited four-year university or college in the United States.
- Be a U.S. citizen or U.S. permanent resident
- Have a minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, or the equivalent
- Complete the entire application packet
- Propose a research project involving non-invasive technology that will improve communication between Deaf and hearing people. The project will be completed by the applicant as a part of the program requirements.

Application materials must include

- Completed application form, typed or printed. **The application form is at the end of this document.**
- Official college transcript
- A signed letter of recommendation (500-1000 words) from a teacher who is familiar with your academic record, skills and abilities. The teacher should send this directly to scholarship@aslproject.com from an email address originating from the teacher's academic institution.
- Proof of U.S. citizenship or U.S. permanent residency. Acceptable evidence includes one of the following:
 - Copy of U.S. passport (current or expired)
 - Copy of U.S. civil issued birth certificate.
 - Copy of alien registration card.
 - Copy of naturalization/citizenship certificate.
- A 3-5 page description of a proposed research project, including project goals and timeline. Explain how the project fills a need not previously addressed. Include an explanation of how the research will create noninvasive technology that will facilitate better communication between Deaf and hearing people. The applicant must propose a scholarship period, which may not exceed one year. The project must be completed by the applicant during the scholarship period.
- A personal statement, no more than one page, that explains how the applicant became interested in non-invasive technology for better Deaf/hearing communication, and how the proposed project fits into the applicant's life plan. This will help the scholarship committee get a better sense of the applicant as a person.

Selection Criteria

Applications are evaluated for the following:

- Academic achievement
- Quality of research proposal, including
 - Organization
 - Writing
 - Feasibility of completing the proposed research within the timeline given
- Potential of the proposed research
- Qualifications to complete the research
- Commitment to facilitating better Deaf / hearing communication

Finalists for the scholarship will be interviewed in person or via a Zoom session to discuss their proposal and submitted documents.

A screening committee established by The American Sign Language Project will choose the scholarship recipient.

The winner agrees to allow The American Sign Language Project to use his or her name and photo, image or likeness on the corporation's website and in public announcements and press releases about the scholarship.

Scheduled distribution

Half of the award will be distributed at the beginning of the agreed-upon scholarship period, as stated in the recipient's project proposal. The first payment to the recipient will be sent once verification of enrollment during the scholarship period is received from the recipient's school. The first payment will go directly to the recipient's account at the school's Financial Aid Office. The remaining portion of the award will be sent once the recipient's final project report is received. The recipient must remain enrolled as a full-time student and maintain a GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale (or equivalent) during the scholarship period.

Final project report

The final project report should be 2-3 pages and describe the outcomes of the research. In the report, the recipient describes how the stated research goals were met.

Application Delivery Method and Address

Application materials can be sent via scholarship@aslproject.com by the posted deadline.

Statement of Non-discrimination

The American Sign Language Project does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, disability, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, religious beliefs, or gender.

Closely Associated Parties are not eligible for the award

Relatives of current or former members of The American Sign Language Project are not eligible for the Nicholas J. De Leonardis Scholarship. Relatives of major contributors to The American Sign Language Project are not eligible for the Nicholas J. De Leonardis Scholarship.

Scholarship winner

The winner of The Nicholas J. De Leonardis Scholarship of The American Sign Language Project will be notified approximately 6-10 weeks after the posted deadline.

The American Sign Language Project reserves the right to choose no winner if none of the applications meet its selection criteria.

Application Checklist

- Completed application form
- Official college transcript
- A signed letter of recommendation (sent separately via recommender's email address)
- Proof of U.S. citizenship or residency
- Description of proposed research project
- Personal statement

Application for the Nicholas J. De Leonardis Scholarship of the American Sign Language Project

Please type or print clearly.

Name _____

First Middle Last

Address _____

Street City State Zip Code

Telephone (_____) _____ Circle: voice TTY

E-Mail address _____

Are you an American citizen? ____ Yes ____ No

Are you a Permanent Resident of the U.S.? ____ Yes ____ No

Year in college (circle) Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Graduate

Expected year of graduation _____ GPA _____ out of _____

College major _____ minor (if applicable) _____

Proposed scholarship period _____(mm/dd/yy) to _____(mm/dd/yy)

Research Project

Write a 3-5 page description of a proposed research project, including project goals and timeline. Explain how the project fills a need not previously addressed. Include an explanation of how the research will create noninvasive technology that will facilitate better communication between Deaf and hearing people.

Letter of Reference

The letter of reference should be written by a teacher who is familiar with your academic record, skills and abilities. The letter must emanate from the teacher's email address at the teacher's academic institution. Please provide the name and address of the person writing the letter on your behalf in the area below:

Name of reference: _____

Title _____

School _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone (required) _____ Circle: voice TTY

E-Mail address _____

To the best of my knowledge, the information that I have provided in my application is accurate and true and may be verified through any means necessary. I authorize The American Sign Language Project to confirm any details in this application by contacting the appropriate persons.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Send your completed packet to scholarship@aslproject.com