Description

The NRF Foundation is the 501(c)(3) nonprofit that supports the National Retail Federation and is shaping retail’s future by building awareness of the industry through statistics and stories; developing talent through education, experiences and scholarships; and fostering career growth among people who work in retail. As a part of National Retail Federation’s overall scholarship initiatives, the NRF Foundation created the Next Generation Scholarship (“Scholarship”) to recognize outstanding students at NRF Member schools (“University Member”) who have the skill, insights and interest to be successful in the retail industry. This scholarship program will be a pinnacle achievement for students who are interested in being recognized by the retail community.

Scholarship Entry and Eligibility Requirements:

1. **Entry.** Each student who fulfills all of the eligibility requirements applies for the Scholarship by having all components of the application—which includes two essays, a visual component, two letters of recommendation, transcript, and head shot—completed and submitted by a University Member as directed by the NRF Foundation. Head shots must be in color, high-resolution at least 300 dpi in jpg or tif format. Photographs will be used for promotional purposes to feature recipients of the Next Generation Scholarship

   University Members must have a current membership in NRF at the time when the student submits their application in order to nominate eligible students and to submit their application. Each University Member through its authorized representative may select up to two students to nominate for the Scholarship.

2. **Course of Study.** To be eligible, one of the students nominated by each University Member must be pursuing a major course of study or concentration in retail such as merchandising, digital retailing, visual merchandising, retailing, etc. The University Member’s other student nominee must be pursuing, alternatively, a major course of study that is relevant to retail such as marketing, business, engineering, communications, information technology, etc.

3. **Appearances.** Eligible students must be available to attend and participate in: (1) the 2017 NRF Annual Convention & EXPO Retail’s BIG Show in New York City January 14-17, 2017 (“Convention”) and (2) an interview with retail executives on Thursday, January 12, 2017.

4. **Age.** Students must be at least eighteen by the time of application submission (or in the case of Alabama, Delaware and Nebraska nineteen (19) years of age or older; or in the case of Mississippi twenty-one (21) years of age or older. Students younger than the ages listed can only enter with verifiable written consent of their parent or legal guardian.

5. **Status.** Any student eligible to earn a scholarship must be a sophomore, junior or senior enrolled full-time at a University Member school at the time when the scholarship is presented in January
2017. Employees of National Retail Federation and their immediate family and household members are ineligible to enter and earn scholarships.

6. One-time Scholarship Recipient. Eligible students must not be previous recipients, neither finalists nor semifinalists, of the Next Generation Scholarship.

7. Citizenship. Eligible students must be U.S. Citizens or legal U.S. residents eligible to work in the United States.

8. Grade Point Average. Eligible students must have a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or above on a 4.0 scale to submit an application.

Any of the student entrants unable to comply with one or more of the eligibility requirements including attendance at the Convention and participating in the interview will result in disqualification and any travel scholarship will be rescinded. In such case, the University Member will promptly return the travel scholarship funds within five business days of the end of the Convention.

Application Submission

Applications for each student nominee must be submitted by their respective University Member via https://nrfscholars.communityforce.com no later than 11:59 p.m. ET on October 14, 2016 to be considered for the Scholarship.

Process of Selection of Scholarship Recipients

The NRF Foundation and a panel of retail executive judges are searching for the high performing students who demonstrate a passion for retail and a unique, innovative perspective on our industry. Specifically, each applicant will be evaluated on their demonstrated thorough understanding of specific events, milestones, announcements or innovations that have influenced the retail industry. In addition, applicants should exhibit original, unexpected and creative ideas.

Process of Selection: A selection committee will review completed applications received by October 14, 2016 and will select up to twenty-five semi-finalists. A panel of retail executive judges will then select five finalists from the semi-finalists. Finalists will receive notice of their selection in December 2016.

Finalists have seven (7) days to notify the NRF Foundation of their acceptance of the selection or the NRF Foundation will select a replacement finalist. These finalists will be interviewed by retail executives in New York on Thursday, January 12, 2017 before the Convention begins. Retail executives will judge the finalists to decide upon recipients of each scholarship. The NRF Foundation will announce the recipient of the $25,000 scholarship during the NRF Foundation Gala. Decisions by the judges are final.

Scholarship Amounts

Travel Scholarships: Each applicant, will receive a travel scholarship of up to $1500 each to defray the costs of each student’s registration for and travel expenses to the Convention provided that s/he satisfies all of the eligibility requirements stated in these Official Rules. Travel scholarships are only available for up to two applicants per University Member, The NRF Foundation will remit travel scholarships directly to each applicant’s University Member. After the University Member pays for
Scholarship applicant’s Convention registration and related expenses, the University Member may use any remaining travel scholarship money to help subsidize the attendance of its students at any Nation Retail Federation conference or educational program that benefits the retail industry.

Top Scholarships: The scholarship amounts available for the five finalists are: One (1) $25,000.00 scholarship for the top-scoring finalist and one (1) $10,000 scholarship for each of the remaining four finalists. These scholarship funds will be distributed in February 2017 to each finalist’s respective University Member on behalf of the finalists. Each University Member will distribute promptly the full scholarship amount to the appropriate Scholarship recipient.

Miscellaneous

By participating in the Scholarship, each applicant agrees to abide by all applicable laws and these Official Rules. All federal, state and local laws apply. Void where prohibited by law and outside the United States. Applications that do not comply with the Official Rules shall be subject to disqualification without notice, and NRF Foundation reserves the right to make substitutions for any disqualified application. NRF Foundation reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to disqualify, to prosecute, and/or to seek damages from any individual undermining or tampering with or attempting to undermine or tamper with the entry process or the legitimate operation of this Sponsorship program; violating the Official Rules or applicable laws; or acting in an unsportsmanlike or disruptive manner or with the intent to annoy, abuse, threaten, or harass any other person. No substitutions or transfers of any scholarship amounts (including travel scholarships) by any applicant will be permitted. NRF Foundation reserves the right to make substitutions at its sole discretion. Only the number of scholarships stated in these Official Rules is available to be won in the 2017 Scholarship. All potential winners are subject to verification by NRF Foundation. Except where prohibited, each finalist (and if under legal age, their parent or guardian) may be required to complete and return an affidavit of eligibility, liability/publicity release (the “Affidavit/Release”) within seven (7) days of being notified.

Each applicant is responsible for any and all costs that may be associated with entering or receiving funds from the Scholarship program, not National Retail Federation or NRF Foundation. NRF Foundation and National Retail Federation and their directors and employees are not responsible for: (1) late, lost, incorrect, damaged, or misdirected applications; (2) lost, misdirected or stolen scholarships or travel allowances regardless of the cause or reason; (3) acts or omissions of University Members; (4) any incorrect or inaccurate information, whether caused by applicants, printing errors or by any of the equipment or programming associated with or utilized as part of the Scholarship operation; (5) technical failures of any kind, including, but not limited to malfunctions, interruptions, or disconnections in phone lines or network hardware or software; (6) unauthorized human intervention in any part of the application process or the Scholarship; (7) technical or human error which may occur in the administration of the Scholarship or the processing of applications; or (8) any injury or damage to persons or property which may be caused, in whole or in part, from any applicant’s participation in Scholarship or from the receipt, use or misuse of any scholarship. NRF Foundation will not replace lost, misdirected or stolen scholarships.

By entering the Scholarship, each applicant agrees to release and hold harmless NRF Foundation, National Retail Federation and their subsidiaries, directors, officers, employees and agents from any and all liability except as restricted by applicable law for injuries, loss, or damage of any kind including, but not limited to, direct, indirect, incidental, consequential, or punitive damages arising from or in connection with: operation of or participation in the Scholarship program and related activities; use of the Scholarship application and the website associated with this Scholarship program; the Summit; travel to and from the Summit; acceptance, use or misuse of scholarship amounts including the travel funds; or any claims including, but not limited to, those based on publicity rights, defamation or invasion of privacy or infringement. NRF Foundation, its affiliates,
directors, officers, employees and agents are not responsible if the Scholarship program is terminated, any travel and/or scholarship amounts cannot be provided due to events beyond NRF Foundation's reasonable control including, but not limited to, acts of god, acts of war, natural disasters, weather, or terrorism.

NRF Foundation reserves the right to revise any Scholarship policies and practices at any time as it deems appropriate. NRF Foundation's failure to enforce any term of these Rules shall not constitute a waiver of that provision. All issues and questions concerning the construction, validity, interpretation and enforceability of these Official Rules, or the rights and obligations of the applicant and NRF Foundation in connection with the Scholarship program, shall be governed by, and construed in accordance with the laws of the District of Columbia without giving effect to any choice of law or conflict of laws rules. Any disputes related to this Scholarship will be resolved in the local and federal courts of Washington D.C. before and after the 2017 Scholarship program concludes. In the event of any conflict between the terms of these Official Rules and any Scholarship-related materials in any format including, but not limited to, the website, the terms of these Official Rules shall prevail and have precedence.

Contact

Contact scholarships@nrf.com with questions related to this scholarship and the submission process.
Certification

Students entering this Scholarship and their University Members submitting the application agree to the terms and operation of the Scholarship and acknowledge that such terms may change as deemed appropriate by and at the discretion of the NRF Foundation. All decisions made by the NRF Foundation concerning the Scholarship are final. Furthermore, student nominees and their University Members certify that the information that each supplies in this application and accompanying documents is true and accurate. Any information in the application found to be false or inaccurate may disqualify students from consideration for any Scholarship amounts, receipt of any Scholarship amounts, and/or may require the return of any Scholarship amounts received.

By entering this Scholarship and signing this certification, student:

1. Certifies that the information provided is true and correct and that the essays submitted are original works written in his or her own words from his or her own concepts and opinions;

2. Authorizes dissemination of the application and its components to individuals having to review it for the Scholarship;

3. Authorizes use of his or her name, portions of the essays and letters of recommendation, photographs and other relevant information (excluding contact information) in any publicity regarding the Scholarship without any compensation now or in the future; and

4. Agrees to abide by the rules of this Scholarship.

The NRF Foundation’s Privacy Policy applies.
2017 Next Generation Scholarship Application Requirements

Application Sections
Each application section should be on its own page and labeled accordingly (e.g., Essay 1 - Career Aspirations) in a header at the top of each page. Each essays and letter of recommendation should be no longer than one page in length, 10-point font and single spaced. Only .doc, .docx, and .pdf files will be accepted for the essays and letters of recommendations. A URL must be submitted for the visual section. The resume, essays and visual component section must be written solely by the applicant.

Section 1: Essay 1 – Career Aspirations (one page maximum):

Work experience allows you to gain a truthful insight into what the industry offers so that career paths can be developed with confidence. Describe an experience (work, internship, etc.) that shaped you and impacted your career aspirations.

- What was the experience and how did it shape you and impact your career aspirations?
- Why did you choose to work for that specific brand or company?
- What did you learn about that company or about retail that you didn’t know before this experience?
- How has your perception of the brand or retail in general changed due to this experience?

Section 2: Visual Component – Retail Timeline:

Create a visual retail timeline. Get creative and think about specific events, milestones, announcements or innovations that have influenced the industry. Be specific – not surface-level – and think outside the box to show us a snapshot of retail history from your perspective.

In your timeline, make sure to highlight the following:

- Important changes or milestones in the industry (no more than 15). This can be related to the industry in general or revolve around a specific topic or theme.
- Who or what impacted those changes?

You are encouraged to experiment to find the right site to help you design an innovative and stimulating timeline. Consider using TimeGlider, Dipity, Tiki-Toki, Wix, Crevado, Weebly, Canva or any other publicly-available site. You will need to submit the URL as part of the application package.
Section 3: Essay 2 – Understanding the Retail Industry (one page maximum):

Part one - Describe in more detail one of the elements featured on your timeline.
- Why do you think this is important?
- How has this impacted retail?
- Who or what influenced this change?

Part two – Based on the topic or theme of your timeline, describe one way you anticipate the retail industry will change in the next five years.
- How will this change impact the industry, and how should leaders or companies respond to that change?
- What role do you anticipate playing in that change?

Section 4: Letters of Recommendation
Two letters of recommendation must be included with the completed application. One must be from the nominated student's employer (previous or current) or an individual (excluding relatives) who can speak to the nominated student’s character, and the second from a faculty member or advisor of the University Member. The letters must be written on a separate sheet of paper (preferably letterhead), addressed to NRF Foundation Board of Directors, reference the Next Generation Scholarship, and be signed.

Each letter of recommendation should include the following (one page maximum):
1. How long have you known the applicant and in what capacity?
2. What skills or abilities does the applicant have that will make him/her successful in the retail industry?
3. What other information about the applicant should be taken into consideration?
4. Why are you recommending that the applicant be selected as NRF Foundation’s Next Generation Scholarship recipient for 2017?

Section 5: Resume
You must upload a current resume as part of the application package.

Section 6: Transcript
You must upload a copy of your college transcript (does not have to be official transcripts) to verify your GPA.

Section 7: Headshot
You must submit a high-resolution color headshot, at least 300 dpi in jpg or tif format.