

Visit the [Rhodes](#), [Marshall](#), or [Gates Cambridge](#) websites, and download the application forms and instructions. Read all materials carefully. (Application materials are not usually available until the preceding May for Marshall, July for Rhodes, and September for Gates but since the forms change little from year to year you can rely on last year's materials as an initial guide.)

Review your academic and other achievements at Bowdoin, as objectively as possible, to see how well you fit the requirements the fellowships describe. If you meet the requirements for one, you are highly likely to do so for the others; you are strongly recommended to apply for all three. A summary of the instructions for these indicates the similarities. Rhodes applicants are expected to show "proven intellectual and academic quality of a high standard; integrity of character; interest in and respect for their fellow beings; the ability to lead; and the energy to use their talents to the full." Marshall selectors assess candidates for "distinction of intellect and character as evidenced by both their scholastic attainments and by their other activities and achievements; adequate preparation for the proposed course of study, particularly in the upper-level course work and real strength in the major field; a cogent argument as to why their studies and proposed career would be best served by spending two years at a British university; the capacity to play an active part in the life of the United Kingdom university to which they go, and the potential to make a significant contribution to their own society." In selecting Gates Cambridge Scholars, the Trust looks for "students of exceptional academic achievement and scholarly

Decide which of your advisors you will ask to write a letter of recommendation on your behalf, and, if they are willing to do so, send them the form and instructions as soon as it is available. Complete and sign any parts of the form that are your responsibility. You will need not fewer than five and no more than eight letters of reference for the Rhodes, at least four of which are from your undergraduate instructors, and four letters for the Marshall, one of which is from a "preferred recommender." The Gates Cambridge requires one referee who can write knowledgeably about you as a person, and who can comment authoritatively on your non-academic attributes and achievements. Give your advisors plenty of notice;

readers to help you if your drafts arrive in sections, or change almost daily, so do not send them anything until you have a first version that is reasonably complete; but it is time to ask for advice if you find that you are stuck, or cannot leave the draft alone. You will very quickly get too close to your own essay, and overlook gaps in the logic and structure that will seem very obvious to your readers. Take their comments seriously, and fix the problems that they point out —

your proposed university and program, you should have done your basic homework on the subject.

Interview candidates for the Rhodes also attend a reception the evening before the interview, at which they meet other candidates as well as committee members. While this reception is by no means as important as the interview itself, it is also not just a social occasion; you may find that one member of the committee is taking a particular interest in you, and probing for a possible first line of questioning the next day!

Scholarships are announced shortly after the interview.