

MacPhail Scholarships

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can musicians who are not currently MacPhail students audition for scholarships in hopes of studying at MacPhail?

A: Yes! Anyone can apply for a MacPhail Scholarship. Applicants can submit a letter of recommendation from their current instructor or if you are not currently taking lessons, you can submit a recommendation from someone who can speak of your musicianship (choir director, orchestra conductor).

Q: My student is a beginning student. Do they have a chance at obtaining a scholarship?

A: Scholarships are given to students who demonstrate performance excellence at their audition, regardless of age. Audition judges base their recommendations solely on the students' performance video or live audition. While there are no scholarships designated for beginning or intermediate-level students, any student who performs well has a chance of receiving a scholarship.

Q: Are any scholarships given based on financial need?

A: Yes! MacPhail has both Scholarships for Students with Financial Need and general Financial Aid. Students who are awarded a Financial Need Scholarship must meet the criteria established by the benefactors as well as demonstrate financial need. Students may also apply to MacPhail's Financial Aid program. Financial aid awards are based on need. The amount of financial aid is determined by a sliding scale, which takes into account household income and number of exemptions. The financial aid application is available at <https://www.macphail.org/financial-aid-scholarships/>

Q: What is meant by "two contrasting pieces?"

A: We recommend that the music a student plays or sings showcases their strengths, interests, and versatility. It is also recommended that the student consults with their instructor about which music showcases their strengths. Contrasting elements could be genre, tempo, composer/arranger, style, etc.

Q: If I play more than one instrument, can I audition more than once?

A: Yes. Applicants can audition on more than one instrument; however, a student can only be awarded one scholarship in an academic year.

Q: Why do you request a letter of recommendation from a teacher? How much bearing does it have on the application process?

A: The teacher's letter of recommendation gives the screening panel insight into a student's work ethic, potential and interest in music. Often teachers can offer information that is not readily apparent in the student's application/resume. Audition judges do not view any portion of the students' written applications, including the letters of recommendation or financial documents. Letters of recommendation and financial documents are reviewed solely by the screening panel.

Q: Will I get to see the judges' comments after the auditions?

A: Yes. All applicants will have the judges' comments emailed to them.

Q: Can Instrument or Voice Lesson Scholarships be applied to class or ensemble tuition?

A: No. Instrument or Voice Lesson Scholarships can only be used towards Individual Instruction or Suzuki lessons. Students must enroll in Individual Instruction or Suzuki for the entire 2023-24 academic year. The scholarship award is divided equally between fall and spring semester tuition.

Q: How competitive are the auditions?

A: This is a challenging question to answer. It is safe to say that students should be well-prepared for their auditions. Typically, awards are given to students with considerable performance experience; however, this does not mean that all Scholarship recipients are advanced students. Our judges will make their determination solely based on the auditions.

Q: Do I need to audition with an accompanist?

A: All performers (with the exception of solo piano) are encouraged to audition with an accompanist. If you are unable to find someone to accompany your recording, you may also use pre-recorded piano accompaniment or a backing track. Please contact SooJin Lee at lee.soojin@macphail.org if you need a recommendation for an accompanist.

If you need assistance, or have any questions about the application process, please contact SooJin Lee, Student Performance Coordinator at lee.soojin@macphail.org