How do I apply for merit-based scholarships?

For incoming freshmen: Your application to the university is used as your application for merit-based scholarships. There is no separate application. Merit-based scholarships are awarded based on high academic achievement and potential for success. Incoming freshmen are considered for all scholarships for which they are eligible at the time they are admitted.

For continuing students: Go to http://engineering.illinois.edu/admissions/cost-and-financial-aid/scholarships-for-continuing-students.html to apply for merit- and need-based scholarships.

How are merit-based scholarships awarded for incoming freshmen?

The evaluation process includes a holistic review of quantitative criteria such as ACTs, high school GPA, and rigor of high school classes as well as other factors such as access to academic resources, leadership, service, etc. The application essays are an important part of the evaluation process and help us determine qualitative factors. The holistic review allows us to match students with scholarships that may have specific criteria from the donor(s) who provide the funds.

How many merit-based scholarships are awarded?

Funds vary from year to year but 100 freshmen will be awarded a College of Engineering Scholarship in a typical year. The Admissions Office and specific departments make additional awards. Engineering at Illinois attracts the very best; we typically have well over 500 applicants with 35 & 36 ACT composite. Average ACT is above 32 for our college.

My ACT is not 35 or 36. Am I still eligible for a merit-based scholarship?

Absolutely! The College of Engineering and all units administering scholarships offer more than 100 scholarships, as more and more students apply to more than one school, and yields are getting lower nationwide. So we typically offer more than what we plan to award.

I am out-of-state. Am I eligible for a scholarship from Illinois?

Yes! Most units offer scholarships to non-Illinois residents.

I am an international student. Am I eligible for a scholarship from Illinois?

The college currently has limited freshmen scholarships for international students. But all students may apply for continuing students' scholarships in the spring of their freshmen year.

I have been admitted to an engineering program, but not in the College of Engineering. Am I eligible for a scholarship?

Yes! The College has a few funds to allocate to any engineering major (and include programs such as Chemical Engineering and Agricultural Engineering).
What about need-based scholarships?

Families are greatly encouraged to fill out the FAFSA as early as possible, so that they can be considered for all financial packages they qualify for. The number of financial packages may vary each year, depending on funds.

How am I notified if I receive a Scholarship?

You will be notified if you received a scholarship at the same time that you are notified about your admission to Illinois, called your Notification of Admission (NOA).

I have received one scholarship offer; does that mean that is all I qualify for?

Not necessarily! Students may qualify for more than one scholarship, and not have been notified in the first letter. As much as we try to package our merit-based scholarships in one offer, and coordinate with all units, some of the scholarships will get awarded later.

When will I be notified if I receive a scholarship?

Merit-based scholarships are offered at the same time that you are notified if you were admitted to Illinois. This happens in mid-February. Need-based scholarship offers are sent Mid-March thru April.

Can I know if I have a chance at getting a merit-based scholarship before mid-February?

You will receive your NOA in mid-February, so unfortunately, we cannot give you a definite answer until you receive your admission letter. We kindly ask you to wait until mid-February.

If I do not receive a merit-based scholarship, what are my options?

Make sure to apply for need-based scholarships by filling out the FAFSA if you believe you may qualify. Also, the College of Engineering has additional merit-based funds to award scholarships to continuing students. You can apply for those at the beginning of your second semester. Additionally, most of our students apply for summer internships. Engineering at Illinois has more alumni than all top Big Ten schools combined; more than 450 companies come to campus twice a semester to recruit our students, either for internships, co-ops, or jobs).

For additional questions, please contact us at engr-scholarship@illinois.edu