



FIRST NATIONS
DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE



Native Agriculture and Food Systems Investments Scholarship 2024-2025

At First Nations Development Institute, we believe reclaiming control over local food systems is a critical step toward ensuring the long-lasting health and economic well-being of Native people and communities. Native-controlled food systems have the potential to increase food production, improve health and nutrition, and eliminate food insecurity in rural and reservation-based communities, while also promoting entrepreneurship and economic development.

First Nations' **Native Agriculture and Food Systems Investments Scholarship program** supports Native American, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian college students who are entering agriculture and food systems fields so that they can better assist their communities with their food systems efforts.

First Nations will award **20 to 25 scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 to \$1,500 each** for the 2024-2025 academic school year to Native college or university students majoring in agriculture and agriculture-related fields. These fields include – but are not limited to – agribusiness management, agri-science technologies, agronomy, animal husbandry, aquaponics, environmental studies, fisheries and wildlife, food production and safety, food-related policy and legislation, food science and technology, horticulture, irrigation science, and sustainable agriculture or food systems programs.

Scholarship Eligibility

- Applicants must be full-time undergraduate or graduate students majoring in an agriculture-related field or must demonstrate how their degree program relates to Native food systems
- Applicants must be tribally affiliated and be able to provide documentation
- Applicants must have at least a 2.75 GPA
- Applicants must demonstrate a commitment to helping their community reclaim local food-system control

Scholarship Application Checklist:

- A personal statement, including:
 - Summary (in 500 or fewer words) of accomplishments, extracurricular activities, and personal interests

- Statement on how the applicant plans to help their community reclaim control of local and/or traditional food systems
- Summary of how the awarded funds will be used
- Proof of tribal affiliation (e.g., enrollment card, CIB, letter from tribe, OHA registry)
- College enrollment verification form (these can be requested from the college or university's administration office)
- Unofficial transcript (entering freshman can submit high school transcripts)
- Letter of recommendation from a tribal or academic mentor (the letter of recommendation must be submitted by the mentor – they will be provided a link to attach their letter).
- One (1) photograph (in JPEG format)
- Resume (*optional*)

Request for Accommodations

If additional accommodations for disabilities are provided to the applicant through the university, college, or tribal college to assist in the completion of the scholarship application, please notify First Nations in advance. The Native Agriculture and Food Systems Scholarship team will work with applicants to reduce any barriers that may prevent submitting the application in a timely manner.

First Nations does not require documentation from applicants or their universities, colleges, or tribal colleges to allow for accommodations. We do recommend that applicants contact the Native Agriculture and Food Systems Investments Scholarship team prior to starting the application so that we are prepared to provide further assistance throughout the open application timeline.

Applicable Tax Information

Applicants should be aware that any awarded funds will be includable in their taxable income unless the use of the scholarship funds meets the criteria outlined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), which excludes scholarship income if:

- The applicant is a candidate for a degree at an educational institution that maintains a regular faculty and curriculum and normally has a regularly enrolled body of students in attendance at the place where it carries on its educational activities; and
- The amounts received are used to pay for tuition and fees required for enrollment or attendance at the educational institution, or for fees, books, supplies, and equipment required for courses at the educational institution.

More information regarding applicable taxes can be found from the [Internal Revenue Service](#) (IRS) and by accessing the IRS [Interactive Tax Assistance Tool](#). Questions regarding taxable income should be directed to a tax professional. Applicants selected to receive scholarship funds will be required to provide a W-9 form and will receive a 1099 document for the tax year awarded, which should be included in their year-end tax return.

Application Submission

Applications must be submitted via the **online application system** by **Thursday, July 11, 2024, at 5 pm Mountain Time**. Applicants must create a portal login to submit their applications. Please allow enough time to complete the online form, including uploading the recommendation letter. Incomplete applications and applications received after the deadline will not be considered. Additional documentation may be required upon award. Please contact us in advance of the deadline if assistance is needed in submitting through the online system.

SUBMIT APPLICATIONS TO THE ONLINE PORTAL ([CLICK HERE](#))

Scholarship Award Timeline

- Application Open – Monday, June 10, 2024
- Application Close - Thursday, July 11, 2024, 5pm Mountain Time
- Applicant Notifications – Early August 2024
- Scholars Awarded – Early September 2024

Questions? Please contact Cetan Christensen, Program Officer, at cchristensen@firstnations.org via email or by phone at (720) 669-4523.