



Roger W. Sanders Memorial Scholarship Fund 2025 Application Guide

Thanks for your interest in the Sanders Scholarship! The Sanders Scholarship Fund supports faculty mentoring of original student research and scholarly activity related to creation and origins. Projects should contribute to the development and understanding of the young-age creationist model of origins. We want to find and support the next generation of creationist scholars!

This guide will help you think through designing your project and give you detailed instructions on how to assemble your application. Read all the directions carefully and use the checklist to make sure you are ready to start the application process at our website. When you're ready to apply, visit coresci.org/sanders and click the APPLICATION button.

Applications for the 2025 Sanders Scholarships are **due on October 4, 2024**.

Contents

Eligibility requirements	2
Designing and describing your project (and what to spend the money on)	3
Application requirements	6
Application checklist	9
After the award	10
Appendix: Core Academy statement of faith	10

Who was Dr. Roger Sanders?

Roger W. Sanders (1950-2018) was a botanist and cofounder of Core Academy of Science. Roger demonstrated his passion for mentoring students by supervising student research at Bryan College and starting a fund to support creationist students from his *alma mater*, College of the Ozarks. After his sudden passing in 2018, Core Academy of Science established the Roger W. Sanders Memorial Scholarship Fund to carry on his legacy of mentoring students.

Eligibility Requirements

Eligible students must be full-time undergraduate or graduate students at the time the research will be carried out. If you expect to graduate soon after the awards are announced, you must complete the research prior to your graduation. If it is not possible to complete your proposed research activities before your graduation (not including publication), you are not eligible for the award.

Students also must work with an established scholar. Typically, an established scholar will have a terminal degree, preferably in the field in which the proposed research will be carried out. For example, a geologist should supervise a geology project. Exceptions will be made for those demonstrating a track record of quality research outside of their primary training. Sanders Scholar mentors can work on as many different research projects as they like, but they may be the mentor of record for only one Sanders Scholar per year.

If you do not have a mentor, in certain cases you may apply to work directly with Core Academy. To do so, you must contact us at info@coresci.org prior to applying to discuss availability and research projects. Under no circumstances should you apply to work at Core Academy without discussing this with us first. Any applications to work at Core Academy that are not cleared beforehand will not be considered.

Because Core Academy does not award funding directly to individuals, all projects must have a non-profit organization that agrees to receive and administer the funding. The administering organization could be the mentor's employer in the case of college faculty. If that is not possible (for whatever reason), Core Academy can act as the administering organization by reimbursement. If that is the case, the project and its budget must be designed with a reimbursement model in mind. Someone on the research team will have to agree to submit receipts to Core Academy for reimbursement.

The Sanders Scholarship Fund nurtures and promotes young-age creationist scholarship. As a result, we ask both applicants (student and mentor) to agree with our organizational doctrinal statement, which is appended at the end of this document.





Designing and Describing your Project (and what to spend the money on)

Although we can't tell you what to do for your research, we do have some basic priorities that we will favor in all research project proposals. First, we're looking for projects that emphasize discovery and expand our understanding of God's creation. We at Core Academy are passionate about understanding the world God has made and through that learning more about the Creator. Knowing God is our ultimate goal. Projects that emphasize original discovery will be favored over projects that have a different emphasis. For example, projects intending to refute someone's false claims will be a lower priority for us than a project focused on original research.

Second, along the same lines, we're interested in *original* research, as defined by the standards of your discipline. In science, original research is recognized by direct laboratory or field investigation. It might involve using museum collections or other publicly-accessible data. In history, original research could require visiting an archive or conducting personal interviews. In theology or biblical studies, original scholarship would involve a larger portion of library study. For any discipline, secondary research involves using scholarly sources or books to discover information that is already known to the scholarly community. While we recognize that secondary research can be valuable, we prefer to sponsor original research.

Third, we're looking for projects that contribute to our understanding of the creation model. The creation model is a gigantic topic that is far beyond the scope of this guide, but a successful Sanders Scholarship proposal should discuss how the work will expand our specific understanding of how things came to be the way they are now. For example, a project on parasites might mention how they relate to the Fall and God's good creation, or a historical survey might focus on how the church fathers understood the Flood. Good books that can help you think about the creation model are Kurt Wise's *Faith, Form, and Time*, Paul Garner's *The New Creationism*, and Todd Wood's *The Quest: Exploring Creation's Hardest Problems*. Those books should give you some great ideas about how your work relates to the creation model.

Fourth, we're hoping to meet a genuine financial need by providing resources that allow students to accomplish work that they would otherwise not be able to do. Research that could or would be done

without our direct support will have a lower funding priority compared to more practical needs. For example, a graduate student looking for support to write a thesis would generally be a lower priority than someone who needs to travel to an archive and spend a week studying there.

Fifth, we hope to see some kind of published product at the end of the research. That product might be a conference presentation or even a full scholarly paper. The product need not be a creationist product. Work that would more appropriately be presented at a secular scientific conference should be. We also do not expect that the product would be immediately available. Papers and presentations often take months to prepare after concluding the research, but we strongly urge our Scholarship recipients to pursue some kind of appropriate publication.

Sixth, we have no preference for what field the research is done in, as long as it relates to creation or origins. Science is obviously associated with creation research, but we encourage students of the Bible, theology, history, or the social sciences to consider applying.

If you have questions about the suitability of your project or you want some ideas or suggestions on how to improve your proposal, we encourage you to contact us prior to submitting. We would be happy to review your ideas and make recommendations.

Once you have a project, you will need to write a project summary in 500 words or less. The summary must describe four things:

1. The background to your research: Why are you doing this, and what does this have to do with creation?
2. The plan for the research: What exactly will you do, and how does the funding relate to this activity?
3. The expected outcome: What do you hope to discover, and what will that tell us about creation?
4. The intended publication product: What practical outcome will result from this project (conference presentation, publication, public data release, etc.)?

The summary should be written in a natural narrative form. Do not simply write down those four numbered items and then answer the questions. Show us that you can formulate your thoughts independently and intelligently by writing a meaningful project summary. Part of good writing is brevity and precision. Please do NOT write more than 500 words.

Your project summary can include references, footnotes, citations, and a full bibliography. These do not count toward the 500 word project summary limit. You may use whatever citation format is customary for your discipline. Citations are not necessary, but they will definitely enhance your application by showing that you are familiar with the relevant literature on your subject.

What can you spend the money on? We are open to many possible uses of the funds. Here are just a few suggestions:

- Travel. Visit a library, archive, or field site and work there.
- Consumable supplies. Get those lab reagents or other supplies to finish your work.
- Contract work. Get samples carbon dated, or have a company sequence a genome.
- Capital purchases. Need a moderately expensive piece of equipment for your work? Get it!
- Publication charges. Your work might not be that expensive, but journal publication fees are.
- Summer stipends. Spend the summer working on this project full time!

Don't consider that list exhaustive. We are open to your creative suggestions on how the funds could be spent, but there are some things that we're less interested in funding.

- Research that would happen anyway. If you're a graduate student who must write your thesis to graduate, and you're just looking for an award for doing that, this is probably not the scholarship for you.
- Personal library acquisitions. We don't want to completely rule out library acquisitions, but this would be a low funding priority. Most libraries can loan you books for nothing. On the other hand, some books are very expensive and regularly useful to your research, and we could consider those "capital equipment." Use your best discretion here, but don't ask us to buy you a bunch of inexpensive books for your personal collection.
- Some salary support. We're happy to consider funding an undergraduate summer stipend, but if you propose a budget that looks like you're padding it with "stipend" to make it total \$4,000, that would be a lower priority.
- Institutional overhead. Because this is such a small award, we do not permit any institutional overhead to be deducted. If this is a problem, Core Academy can act as the sponsoring organization and reimburse expenses. Please contact us if you want us to administer the funding directly for this reason.

Your project budget should total no more than \$4,000; however, do not feel obligated to force the budget to fit that number. If you need only \$3,000 or \$2,000 for your work, please consider asking for less. If enough people ask for lower amounts, we might be able to sponsor additional Sanders Scholars. On the other hand, if your project needs more funding than just \$4,000, consider how it might be divided into smaller, fundable steps. At this point, our scholarship policy does not limit the number of consecutive awards that could be given, so you could apply in the future for another scholarship to continue pursuing your larger research program.



Application Requirements

The application is a single form that must be completed and submitted at one time. Presently, we do not have the ability to save your progress on our server prior to submission. Thus, it is very important to study this guide carefully and follow the directions precisely before beginning the online application. When you are ready to apply, visit coesci.org/sanders and click the APPLICATION button. The following is a list of the information that you will need to upload to our server on the application form.

1. Project title. Give it a catchy name.
2. Project summary. Please upload your 500-word summary as a PDF file.
3. Personal contact information for the student applicant *and* the faculty mentor: mailing address, email, phone number.
4. A description of the student's educational background, including the following information:
 - a. High school name, location, and GPA. List only the high school from which you graduated.
 - b. Undergraduate institution name, website, GPA, and program of study. The form will accept only one undergrad institution, so please list the one from which you graduated or in which you are currently enrolled. If you have more than one bachelor's degree, please list the one that is most relevant to the application. If you are currently working on a second bachelor's degree, please list the institution in which you are currently enrolled.
 - c. Undergraduate transcript. Please upload the transcript from the institution you listed. Note: Most schools will send an official transcript directly to us to guarantee the transcript's accuracy. We trust you to report your transcript accurately. You can obtain the transcript for yourself and upload it with the rest of your application. Doing so will facilitate rapid processing of your application. If your transcripts are delayed for whatever reason, the awards committee may not be able to consider your application. **WARNING:** If you choose to upload your transcript, please examine the transcript to

make sure that your social security number (SSN) is not listed on the transcript. If it is, please print the transcript, mark out your SSN with a black marker, then scan the marked copy and convert to a PDF.

- d. For graduate students, list your current graduate institution, website, GPA, and program of study. You will also be asked for your current graduate transcript, and you should follow the same notes and warnings described in the “Undergraduate Transcript” in point 3.c.
 - e. In addition to these educational details, there is an open section where you may describe any additional educational information you like. You could list an associate’s degree, an extra undergraduate or graduate degree, or special courses or training that you have received. Anything that might make you more prepared to successfully complete your proposed research should be described. Don’t hold back!
5. Mentor’s current CV.
 6. Mentor’s letter of support. If possible, this letter should be printed on institutional letterhead. The letter should say that the mentor approves the applicant’s proposal and agrees to support and supervise the research work. The letter should be printed, signed, then scanned and uploaded to the application form.
 7. Project budget. The project budget is very simplified and does not require extensive descriptions or justification (for example, we don’t need to know how much each pipette tip costs). The form has spaces for each of the following categories:
 - a. Personnel (for the student only) – summer stipends would go here
 - b. Supplies – any consumable materials
 - c. Equipment – capital expenses for anything not consumed in the research
 - d. Travel – add up *all* anticipated travel expenses (mileage, parking fees, flights, hotels, meals, bus/train/Uber/taxi/Lyft expenses, etc.)
 - e. Publication – Page charges, OA publication fees, or in the case of the International Conference on Creationism, submission fees.
 - f. Miscellaneous – anything else
 8. Budget description. If there is anything in the budget that is not described or alluded to in the project summary, please use this space to explain what those items are for. If you listed *anything* as a miscellaneous expense, please explain that expense here also. Please note also: We do not allow *any* institutional overhead to be deducted from the scholarship award. If this is a problem with your institution, please contact us for alternatives.
 9. Name and contact information for the individual at the sponsoring institution that will supervise receipt and dispersal of funds. This would be a CFO or other person in the business office. The application form asks for the person’s name, email, phone number, and mailing address. This information is extremely important, since this is the address the award check will be sent to. Make sure it is accurate!
 10. Institutional letter of support. This letter must come from the person who has agreed to administer the funding. The letter should say that the person has reviewed the project and spoken with the student and mentor about receiving the funds. It must be printed on institutional letterhead and signed, then scanned and uploaded to the application form.
 11. Finally, the student and mentor will need to print and sign the statement of faith (see the Appendix of this document). This signed statement of faith should be scanned and must be uploaded to the application. The statement of faith for the application is available for download at coresci.org/sanders.

Please note that all uploaded files must be in PDF format. The file size limit is 10 Mb.

For students applying to work at Core Academy, please contact us for instructions on filling out the form. We will provide the information you need for each part of the form that the mentor or sponsoring institution are responsible for.



Application Checklist

- Contact information for student
- Contact information for mentor
- High school information
- Undergraduate information
- Graduate information
- PDF of undergraduate transcript
- PDF of graduate transcript
- PDF of mentor's CV
- PDF of mentor's letter of support
- Contact information for financial officer at sponsoring institution
- PDF of letter of support from financial officer at sponsoring institution
- PDF of 500-word project summary
- Project budget
- PDF of signed statement of faith

After the Award

If you receive a Sanders Scholarship, what can you expect? What kind of strings are attached? Very few, actually. First, we will contact you privately to confirm that you are still willing and able to receive the scholarship award. Then, we will work with you to design our public announcement of the award. We understand that some Sanders Scholars might be in delicate positions if they want to pursue graduate studies in the sciences (or even other disciplines), but the Sanders Scholarship Fund is financed through donations. We need to keep our donors aware of how we spend their money, but we will work very carefully and closely with our Sanders Scholars to make sure that our publicity of their award is sufficiently general and anonymous to protect their identity. The last thing we want is a Sanders Scholarship torpedoing your chance to get into graduate school! After the public announcement, you can expect your award check to be mailed at the beginning of January.

We also expect our Sanders Scholars to attend the annual Origins conference in July. The award includes an additional \$1,000 (beyond the \$4,000 award) for travel reimbursement for this conference. Information about the conference is available at creationbiology.org. If you are unable to attend the conference, then we expect you to attend the Smoky Mountain retreat in Pigeon Forge, which you can learn more about at coresci.org/smokies. We'll be in touch about arranging your travel. (You will not be expected to present a paper at the conference.)

Finally, we expect a report to be submitted to us describing how the project went and how the money was spent. We'll have more details about this report next year. Once they are available, any publication products should be shared with us as well, and if possible, the Sanders Scholarship Fund should be acknowledged in these publications.

And that's it. We hope you'll keep in touch and help us raise more awareness about the Sanders Scholarship program!

Appendix: Core Academy Statement of Faith

As a Christian and creationist organization, we believe in the Holy Trinity, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe that all creation originated by a miraculous act of God in the recent past and that human beings were specially created in the image of God. We believe in the fallen sinfulness of humans, and we believe that salvation is only available through faith in the substitutionary death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God's only Son. We believe in the inspiration and authority of the Bible, God's Holy Word, in all realms of faith and practice. We believe that faithful Christians should be known by their love and service for each other and their desire to share the good news of Jesus Christ with everyone.