

ELCA Fund for Leaders

for this church and for our future

Mission Developer Scholarship Guidelines 2026

Application Cycle December 1st, 2025 – February 2nd, 2026

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be selected for an ELCA Fund for Leaders (FFL) Mission Developer Scholarship students must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Must be identified and nominated by their seminary in coordination with their synod bishop and DEM.
- Must be a **current** student (2025-2026 academic year) at an ELCA seminary.
- Must be pursuing a place on the ELCA roster as either a pastor or deacon.

The following types of students ARE eligible:

- Residential or non-residential
- TEEM candidates
- Enrolled in MDiv or MA degree programs
- Students who have been awarded FFL Synod or Congregation Scholarships
- Students currently on full or part-time internship who have some coursework remaining in 2026-2027.

SELECTION PROCESS

Each Seminary nominates up to **two** students each year in agreement with the student's bishop/DEM.

- A selection committee will review application materials and make award decisions. Interviews are required as part of the selection process and will occur during the spring semester of 2026.
- Award amounts will be determined based on both the amount of money available and the number of students selected to receive awards. ***All awards are meant to be additive to other scholarships and tuition assistance a student may already be receiving and can be used for non-tuition expenses associated with their studies.***
Note that scholarship funds used to cover costs beyond tuition, books, and fees (such as room and board, insurance, etc.) will count as taxable income to students.
- Mission Developer Scholarships are automatically renewable for a second year as long as the student remains eligible (*academic probation will be considered on a case-to-case basis after conversations with seminary and synod*) and is moving forward with the ELCA candidacy process. Award amounts vary each year.

2026- 2027 SCHOLARSHIP TIMELINE

Nov. 14, 2025	Seminaries submit nominee names to Fund for Leaders
Dec. 1, 2025	Application process opens in ELCA GrantMaker (elca.fluxx.io). <i>All nominated students must apply!</i>
Feb. 2, 2026	Application process closes in ELCA GrantMaker (all applications must now be complete)
Feb.-Apr. 2026	Applicants will be notified if additional interviews required (scheduled by ELCA staff person)
May 2026	Applicants informed of scholarship decisions no later than
May 2026	May 2026 Synods informed of scholarship decisions
Sept. 2026	FFL makes fall payment to seminaries (1/2 of yearly award)
Jan. 2027	FFL makes spring payment to seminaries (1/2 of yearly award)

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Instructions for students applying through ELCA GrantMaker can be found at [ELCA.org/fundforleaders](https://elca.org/fundforleaders)
- Any questions? Please contact us, or have students contact us, at fundforleaders@elca.org or 773-380-2936

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Instructions for Mission Developer nominees

NOMINEES: Congratulations! You have been nominated by your seminary to apply for a Mission Developer scholarship! You must officially apply for the scholarship through ELCA GrantMaker (elca.fluxx.io). **Your window for applying is Dec. 1, 2025, to Feb 2, 2026.** You will be informed of scholarship decisions no later than May 2026. If you are chosen as a recipient, you will receive half of the total award amount for your fall semester, and the remaining half for spring semester. Fund for Leaders automatically sends payment to your seminary in your name. Scholarships are renewable for a second year if you remain eligible; however, award amounts vary each year.

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TIPS FOR APPLYING FOR YOUR SCHOLARSHIP

1. Applying is a multi-step process! Give yourself enough time!

- a. First, go to elca.fluxx.io to create a new account and register.
 - i. Select Domestically for receiving FFL funds
 - ii. Which ELCA grant class - select Fund for Leaders
 - iii. Select the scholarship type “**Mission Developer Scholarship.**” There will be a drop-down menu – select the name of the specific synod scholarship for which you are nominated.
 - iv. When the application asks, “Are you applying as an individual or on behalf of an organization?” you should select “**Individual.**”
 - v. Submit your registration.
- b. When your registration is approved (generally within two days – please be patient!), you should receive an email from ELCA GrantMaker with the subject “New User Information.”
- c. Set your password by clicking the URL in that email and following the instructions. (*Be sure to use the same email address – and check it regularly!*). You will receive a password reset email with a unique link to finalize your password.
- d. After you set your password, you can log in to the portal using your username (found in the “New User Information” email) and new password. Using Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge, access the portal at <https://elca.fluxx.io>.

2. Now you can complete the application.

- a. Read the instructions first! Then in the menu at the left, click on “Applications.” Go to “**ELCA Scholarships: ELCA Fund for Leaders**” and choose Mission Developer Scholarship. When you complete the application, **remember to save and submit!**

Please contact FundforLeaders@elca.org or 773-380-2936 with any questions. We are happy to help!