

**THE RHODES SCHOLARSHIP 2018 FOR WEST AFRICA**

(Including: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, the island of Saint Helena, Senegal, Sierra Leone, São Tomé and Príncipe and Togo)

**INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES** - for Selection for 2018 only

The Rhodes Scholarship is administered by the Rhodes Trust, Oxford, United Kingdom. Scholarships are awarded in 20 Rhodes constituencies (64 different countries) around the world. Selection Committees for the Rhodes Scholarship are looking for outstanding leaders who are motivated to engage with global challenges, to 'esteem the performance of public duties as their highest aim', and to promote international understanding and peace. In short, Selection Committees seek young women and men of outstanding intellect, character, leadership, and commitment to service, and who demonstrate a strong propensity to emerge as 'leaders for the world's future'.

Please see the Rhodes Trust website for full details : [www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk](http://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk)

*The information below assumes that you have read and familiarised yourself with the basic selection criteria for the Rhodes Scholarships on the Rhodes Trust website. You should also pay close attention to the detailed Conditions of Tenure for the Scholarship, available here: [http://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/files/application\\_conditions-of-tenure](http://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/files/application_conditions-of-tenure)*

**1. Closing date**

- a. Your application must be submitted online by midnight, GMT, 30 September 2017.

**2. Eligibility criteria**

- a. You must be a citizen of one of the following countries:  
Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, the island of Saint Helena, Senegal, Sierra Leone, São Tomé and Príncipe and Togo.
- b. You must have been resident in one or more of the countries listed above for at least five of the last ten years.
- c. You must have completed an undergraduate degree from a college or university (normally a Bachelor's degree) with the highest classification your University awards, eg First Class or Upper Second Class Honours.
- d. You must have reached your 19<sup>th</sup> and not have passed your 26<sup>th</sup> birthday on 1 October 2018. This means candidates must have been born after 30 September 1992 and on or before 1 October 1999.
- e. You must have a sufficiently high standard of English to meet the English language proficiency requirements (at the Higher Level listed) of the [University of Oxford](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate).

**3. Application procedure**

- a. Applicants may apply online at [www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk](http://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk) via the scholarships tab (from 1 June 2017).
- b. All candidates are required to ensure that their completed electronic application is received online by midnight, GMT, 30 September 2017. Candidates are responsible for ensuring that referees submit their references online no later than midnight, GMT, 14 October 2017.
- c. In preparation for making their application, all candidates should read carefully the general information for candidates on the Rhodes website, the [Conditions of Tenure](#) for the Rhodes Scholarship, the information in this document and the graduate admissions pages of the University of Oxford: [www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate).
- d. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview. No candidate will be selected without interview. You must be available to attend the interview, **in person**, as no accommodations can be made on date and time of interview.

The interviews will take the format of a Dinner with the Selection Committee, followed by a Panel Interview the following day, most likely on a Friday evening/Saturday between mid-November/early December. Interviews will be held in Lagos. Overnight accommodation will be provided if necessary. Travel expenses are not normally provided. However, candidates who need to travel to the interview location from their country of origin within the West Africa region, may apply to the National Secretary for financial assistance to travel.

- e. Candidates who do not receive further communication by the end of November should assume that their application has been unsuccessful.

#### **4. Information to be submitted with application**

You must submit a completed application form on-line (please see 3a) with the documents and information detailed below. All documents must be submitted in English, or English translations provided. Please note that, if you are invited to interview, you will be asked to bring the originals of some of these documents with you:

- a. One or more of the following documents to confirm that you meet the citizenship criterion (see 2a above), the residency criterion (see 2b above), and the age criterion (2d above):
  - i. A certified copy of your birth certificate (or an affidavit of birth)
  - ii. A National Identity Card
  - iii. A valid passport (with translation, if necessary)
- b. Evidence of residency within the region for at least five of the last ten years, for example official school records.
- c. An official transcript from the university at which you studied, showing the grades achieved.
- d. A head and shoulders photograph in jpg format. Please note that your photo will not be available to reviewers until after candidates have been shortlisted for interview.
- e. Curriculum vitae, showing details of what you have achieved: any employment or enterprise you have undertaken during your studies or thereafter; your high school career; your college or university career; your involvement in student or community affairs, cultural, sporting or political activities; your leadership roles; and any other significant achievements or involvements. This should not exceed two pages of 12-point Times Roman font and should not include supporting documents.
- f. If English is not your first language, an IELTS or TOEFL certificate as evidence of English language proficiency (see 2e above). (If you have studied at an English-language university, you may apply for a waiver from this language-test requirement. To obtain the waiver, you must demonstrate that by the time your studies at Oxford commence, you will have completed a full-time course of at least nine months, undertaken at a recognised institution where the medium of instruction and assessment throughout the course is entirely in English.)
- g. A signed personal statement of no more than 1,000 words which:
  - i. Addresses your general interests and activities and what you plan to do with your life once you have completed your studies;
  - ii. Discusses your aims and priorities and the contribution you have made and would like to make to your home country and the region;
  - iii. Indicates the course of study and degree you wish to follow at Oxford.

It is very important for you to have considered what course and degree you wish to follow at Oxford before you submit your application. It is a good idea to discuss your proposed course of study with your professors or lecturers in that field, and, if possible, with someone who has knowledge of United Kingdom universities. Additional sources of information are available online at [www.ox.ac.uk/admissions](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions), as well as on individual faculty/departmental websites;

- iv. Demonstrates that you are able to meet the requirements of the specific course you have chosen. Candidates are advised that it is a requirement of many post-graduate courses to submit samples of written work. Some courses also require successful completion of the GRE or GMAT. Please read the Oxford graduate studies prospectus carefully: [www.ox.ac.uk](http://www.ox.ac.uk)
- v. If you wish to undertake a DPhil, you should provide a brief outline of your proposed research area, how it contributes to your future career plans and list one or more researchers under whom you would like to work in Oxford.

Your personal statement must be clearly signed by you and must state under your signature that it is your own work and that no external help was given in its creation or editing.

*Notes on the personal statement:* The personal statement is your chance to tell your story in your own voice: Who are you? What matters to you? What are you hoping to do in the world? Your academic transcript, your curriculum vitae and your reference letters will provide the substantive detail of your commitments and accomplishments, but this essay gives you the opportunity to cast the overarching narrative for the selection committee. You can see current Rhodes Scholars speaking about the personal statement via the link within the 'Have you prepared a personal statement?' section at [www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/scholarship/how-to-apply-for-a-rhodes-scholarship/](http://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/scholarship/how-to-apply-for-a-rhodes-scholarship/)

- g. You will need to provide a list of minimum four people (your referees), and maximum of six who are willing to submit references on your behalf:
  - i. You will need to provide email addresses of all your referees.
  - ii. At least three of your referees should be academics who have taught you in your undergraduate studies and who can comment in detail on your academic ability and how well they think you would fare at Oxford.
  - iii. One or more referees should testify to your character and/or your involvement in extra-curricular/service or leadership activities. These referees should be persons who are able to comment critically on whether you fulfil the extra-curricular, non-academic requirements of the Scholarship and who can speak in detail to your character. A good referee is one who knows you well, rather than a well-known person who only knows you superficially. **Your referees must not be personal friends, relations or contemporaries.**
  - iv. Choose reliable people who are likely to respond to your request for a detailed reference, as their reports will be crucial to your application.
  - v. Ask their permission before listing them as referees.
  - vi. Forward to them the Guidance for Referees available on the final page of this document. They will receive an auto-generated email request for reference once you have completed the referee section of the online form. They will also be asked to provide their business and home (or mobile) telephone and fax numbers as well as their postal address for verification purposes.
  - vii. It is your responsibility to ensure that referees submit their reference in good time (before the application deadline of **23:59 GMT, 14 October 2017**).
- h. Candidates should not include documents, certificates or testimonials other than those required.
- i. All applications must be submitted online. No alternate method of application is accepted.

## 5. Selection Procedure

- a. The Rhodes Trust does not require any financial information from applicants, since selection for the Rhodes Scholarship is made without regard to financial means.
- b. If you have dual citizenship, you may apply to one constituency only.
- c. Selection for the Rhodes Scholarship is made without regard to marital status, race, ethnic origin, colour, gender,

religion, sexual orientation, social background, disability, caste or other irrelevant distinctions.

- d. The Rhodes Scholarship for which you are applying is for entry to Oxford in October 2018 and may not be deferred.
- e. The Rhodes Scholarship is confirmed only upon successful admission to the University of Oxford.
- f. A selection committee will make no nomination if it is of the opinion that there is no sufficiently qualified candidate.
- g. The decision of the Selection Committee is final.

#### **6. Procedure after Selection**

- a. Please note that successful applicants will need to apply to the University of Oxford very soon after selection. Full details will be given upon selection.
- b. The full application of successful candidates will be forwarded to Rhodes House, Oxford, where the Scholarship references will be used as appropriate in support of the candidate's subsequent application to Oxford.
- c. Applicants for a second undergraduate degree with senior status will need to submit an application, provided on selection, which must reach Oxford by Friday, 1 December 2017. Candidates must therefore make a quick submission immediately following election.
- d. Successful candidates will be encouraged to disclose, in confidence, any medical condition or special needs which may require academic or personal support in Oxford. This disclosure is entirely voluntary and is requested only to enable Rhodes House to provide suitable support in Oxford and to make the transition to Oxford as smooth as possible.

For further information about the Rhodes Trust and the Rhodes Scholarships,  
[www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk](http://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk)

**THE RHODES SCHOLARSHIP 2018 FOR WEST AFRICA**

(Including: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, the island of Saint Helena, Senegal, Sierra Leone, São Tomé and Príncipe and Togo)

**GUIDANCE FOR REFEREES**

Thank you for your willingness to serve as a referee for one of the applicants for the Rhodes Scholarship. The following notes are intended to serve as a guide as you write your reference.

The Rhodes Scholarships are administered by the Rhodes Trust. The Rhodes Selection Committees are looking for outstanding young women and men who are motivated to engage with the global challenges facing humankind, to 'esteem the performance of public duties as their highest aim', and to promote international understanding and peace. In short, the Committee seeks young people of **outstanding intellect, character, leadership, and commitment to service**, who demonstrate a strong propensity to emerge as 'leaders for the world's future', wherever their careers might take them, and in any field. For further details, see: <http://www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk/>

The Rhodes Selection Committee will be grateful, therefore, if you would supply a frank and confidential statement regarding the candidate's qualifications. Your prompt response to the auto-generated email request will be of great assistance to the candidate and to the Selection Committee.

The Selection Committee will have available for consideration a copy of the candidate's university academic transcript, curriculum vitae, and personal statement of academic interests, other pursuits, extracurricular activities and reasons for wishing to study at Oxford. Observations which would enhance the Committee's understanding of these records will be especially welcomed. **Your comments should not exceed two A4 pages.**

Proven intellectual and academic quality of a very high standard is the first quality required of candidates. However, and just as important, they will also be required to demonstrate integrity of character, interest in and respect for their fellow human beings, the ability to lead, the energy to use their talents to the full and the desire to make an effective contribution to the world around them as described above.

A Rhodes Scholar will undertake postgraduate study at Oxford, a taught or research degree, or a second undergraduate degree with senior status. Subject to fulfilling the entry criteria for their chosen course, Rhodes Scholars may pursue any full-time postgraduate course offered by the University of Oxford, whether or not in their field of expertise. In all cases, entry to Oxford is very competitive indeed.

Whether you have been asked to provide an academic reference, or a character/extra-curricular reference, it is not expected that you will be able to speak from first-hand knowledge of all the candidate's qualifications.

**Academic referees:** If you are primarily acquainted with the candidate through a teacher/student relationship, it is expected that your appraisal will concentrate first and primarily on academic quality and potential, although your assessment of other qualities will be welcomed by the Committee. Academic referees should note that, in the case of a successful applicant, your letter will be used by Oxford departments and colleges for determining the Rhodes Scholar-elect's academic case for admission to postgraduate study. Consequently, a detailed assessment of the candidate's academic qualifications will be particularly helpful. Since the University of Oxford requires the following information from referees writing in support of graduate applicants, it would help the successful candidate if you can comment on:

a) the applicant's relative academic standing in comparison with other students on the same course at the same institution – eg top 1%, 5%, 10%, 25%, 50%? b) In comparison with how many students in the applicant's year group on their programme of study, ie with how many students are you comparing the applicant? c) on what basis are you making the assessment - personal assessment/official class rank?

**Character referees:** If, on the other hand, you are better acquainted with the candidate through non-academic interests, it is expected that you will concentrate on assessment of character and non-academic qualities, in the knowledge that the Committee is looking for scholars who show promise of outstanding achievement in later life.

Please do not hesitate to speak of the candidate's limitations as well as strong points. Committees tend naturally to be dubious of appraisals that imply a given individual has no limitations. Your reply will, of course, be treated as strictly confidential to the Selection Committee (and to the necessary Oxford authorities in the case of the successful candidate).

All letters of recommendation for applicants should be addressed to the *Rhodes Scholarship Selection Committee*. The Selection Committee asks that your letter of recommendation be on headed paper, signed, and uploaded in pdf format. You will receive an auto-generated email requesting the reference, which will contain instructions for completing and submitting your letter. All letters of reference are expected to be received via the Embark online system.

*Please note that candidates are asked **not** to list personal friends, contemporaries or relatives as referees.*

References **must be received by 23:59, GMT, 14 October 2017.**