The Churchill Scholarship

Instructions and Guidelines for Applicants
Revised March 2015

Application procedure overview

Step 1: Consult with Campus Representative and identify a department
Please consult the Foundation's website (www.winstonchurchillfoundation.org/scholarship.html) for links and resources, including information about eligibility and selection criteria. To apply to the Churchill Scholarship, students must first be one of up to two students nominated by a Participating Institution. Check with your Campus Representative (normally in the scholarship office) to learn about the internal competition to become a nominee. The next step is to identify a department in one of the eligible programs in science, mathematics, or engineering. A guide to Cambridge departments is available at the web page listed above. Students should be aware that Cambridge departments do not correspond exactly with departments at US institutions, and students may need to spend some time finding the right department for their research interests.

Step 2: Preparation of the application
Students should start to prepare their applications early in the fall term at the latest. Each Participating Institution chooses its own internal deadline. Students applying for the MPhil should by this point be in touch with relevant laboratories and Cambridge faculty members about research opportunities to see if their project would be a good fit for the lab. Additionally, they must request letters from their recommenders and prepare their applications on the online portal (see below).

Applicants must apply separately for admission to the University of Cambridge by mid-October (normally October 15th or the Friday preceding it if that date falls on a weekend). The Foundation has chosen the same deadline for the Cambridge application as that for the Gates Scholarship as a convenience for those who are applying to both. Since the various departments at Cambridge have rolling admissions, candidates have a better chance of securing a place by applying early. Note that applicants for the Churchill Scholarship *must* indicate Churchill College as their first choice of college. The Churchill Scholarship is not tenable at any other Cambridge college. (In the Cambridge system, the College provides graduates students with accommodation, dining, and social and extracurricular opportunities, while the academic programs are located entirely within the academic departments.) If you are not accepted by a Cambridge department, then your application for the Churchill Scholarship is ineligible.

The Churchill Scholarship is only for study for a Master's degree, and the application to Cambridge must be for a Master's for the applicant to be eligible for the Churchill Scholarship. If you wish to apply for an MPhil under a Churchill Scholarship and for a PhD under another scholarship, then the University of Cambridge requires that you submit two separate applications. A department will normally accept an application for only one degree program. If you are accepted for the PhD and also win a Churchill Scholarship, then you must ask the department to convert your acceptance to a Master's degree.

Step 3: Internal evaluation of applications and selection of nominees
Applicants submit their application materials to the Campus Representative by the institution's internal deadline. The Campus Representative then proceeds with the selection of nominee(s) through whatever process is established by the institution. If you are chosen, you will be advised by the institutional

representative and told to push the SUBMIT button on your application at the Churchill Foundation website. Your materials are then reviewed for completeness and assembled into a packet as described below.

Step 4: Submit the Churchill Scholarship application packet
The Churchill application is submitted in the form of a PDF, emailed by the Campus Representative to the Executive Director of the Winston Churchill Foundation. The deadline for the submission is **5pm, Eastern Time, on Tuesday November 10, 2015**. Once the PDF is submitted, the Foundation cannot make further alterations to the application. However, if additional information becomes available during the process, such as a new academic publication, then it is possible for that to be added to the packet.

The PDF is comprised of five parts, which must be arranged in the order set out below.

(1) *One copy of the student's printed and signed online application*. Students create an application through our online portal. (Note that incomplete or incorrect online submissions can be unsubmitted by the Foundation for further editing before the deadline.) Nominees must press the SUBMIT button on the online application once selected by their institution. The student prints the submitted application, signs it, and gives it to the Campus Representative, who creates the PDF that comprises the official application packet. Please do not attach a picture to the application PDF. The correct order of the online application is:

> Personal information, education, program of study at Cambridge
> Fellowships, graduate programs, references
> Publications, presentations, etc.
> Scholarships, prizes, awards, and other distinctions (1 page)
> Research/employment experience (1 page)
> Proposed program of study essay (1 page)
> Personal statement (up to 2 pages)

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the online application is in good order. Going beyond the allotted space for different sections will produce illegible text printed on top of other text. It is important for students to pay close attention to the instructions for using abbreviations for the departments and programs to which they are applying.

(2) *A copy of any correspondence (email is acceptable) with the laboratory supervisor at Cambridge indicating a willingness to accept the student into his or her laboratory, pending a successful application*. (Note that this is not necessary for applicants to the MASt in Mathematics or Astrophysics).

(3) *The institutional letter of endorsement*.

(4) T*he four letters of recommendation with the Foundation's cover form.* Recommendation letters must be in disciplines related to the application and by individuals with first-hand experience of the applicant's work. Letters from professors in unrelated fields (e.g., history, literature) or from community leaders (e.g., clergy, politicians) are not accepted. If the applicant has research experience (e.g., an NSF REU or internship), then it is *mandatory* that at least one of the four letters be from the director of that activity. If this is not possible for whatever reason, then the situation must be explained in the institution's endorsement letter.

(5) *Transcript(s)*. The current institution should appear first, other institutions next, followed by study abroad and summer programs. If the transcript from a study abroad program is already indicated on your institution's transcript, you need not include the original transcript.

You should submit GRE scores electronically and MCAT scores (if available) by mail or email and not within your application. For the Graduate Record Examination General Test, you may submit a scanned copy of your scores or ask that your scores be sent directly to the Foundation. Select a test date so that the Churchill Foundation receives the scores no later than the end of December. The Institution Code List number for the Winston Churchill Foundation is 3922. Scores on the GRE taken in the past two years are acceptable. The Foundation accepts MCAT scores in place of the GRE. *Do not* include GRE or MCAT scores in your application.

Step 5: Selection and notification

The Selection Committee, constituted of six former Churchill Scholars (usually including a mathematician, a physicist, a chemist, an engineer, and two people from different areas of biology), meets in early January and selects approximately 20 Finalists, of which they recommend 14 to be Churchill Scholarship winners and the rest as alternates. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email after the meeting. It is not possible for the Foundation to provide individual feedback. All Finalists are then invited to participate in a 20-minute telephone interview. The interview is informal and does not normally play a large role in the selection process. Rather, it serves to ensure that successful applicants will contribute to the life of the College and fulfill Sir Winston Churchill's vision of fruitful academic exchange between the US and UK. Within one week of the interviews, candidates will be notified whether they have been successful in winning a Churchill Scholarship. Usually, candidates accept immediately and withdraw from other competitions, but they may take up to a day to decide.

Instructions for the online application

As an administrative convenience, the Foundation makes the Churchill Application Form available through an online portal (http://churchill.usapplications.org). At that website, you can prepare the application in stages, saving your work. Please note that this is where you generate the main part of your application, but it is not formally submitted through the portal. As part of your internal application process, you will print it, sign it, and give it to your Campus Representative. Only if and when you are selected as one of your Participating Institution's nominees and have finalized your application should you hit SUBMIT.

PERSONAL INFORMATION. Please do not insert a title (e.g., Ms., Mr., etc.) before your name. Provide the full, correct mailing address (usually at your college or university). Please list the first and last names of both your parents or of your guardians (mother first, father second).

EDUCATION. This section should include all institutions of higher education you have attended, including summer school and study abroad programs. Be sure to provide official transcripts for all the programs you list, unless that information already appears on your current transcript. For summer school and study abroad, list the institution, give the month(s) and year(s), leave the space for degree empty, and briefly list the courses in the field titled Major/Minor, Other. Please note that the Churchill Foundation does not state a minimum grade point average, but grades in the major are expected to be consistently at the highest level. If certain course grades require special explanation, please discuss this with your Campus Representative so it can be addressed in the institutional letter of support.

PROGRAM OF STUDY AT CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY. Please follow precisely the convention of usage of the Cambridge website. *Do not* use the words "Department of…" because this will not leave you enough space; simply write Chemistry, Physics, or whatever the case may be. For departments with a long name (e.g., the Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics), use the department's commonly recognized acronym (DAMTP), and then for Field of Study state Part III Applied or

Computational Biology, or whatever the name of your chosen course is. For the Department of Physiology, Development and Neuroscience, please just write Physiology, and then indicate your particular interest (e.g., Neuroscience) under Field of Study. For Engineering, which is a very large department, please write Engineering for the Department and then your area (e.g., Photonic Systems, Aerodynamics, Fluid Dynamics, etc.) for the Field of Study. There will be ample opportunity in your Proposed Program of Study to provide further details. Under degree, you must list MPhil or MASt. Please see the separate document on our website to confirm that your proposed course of study is not ineligible. If you are in doubt, then please get in touch with the Foundation.

OTHER FELLOWSHIPS, OTHER GRADUATE PROGRAMS. For Other Fellowships, please use common acronyms like NSF, NDSEG, etc., or short names like Gates, Hertz, Marshall, etc. For Other Graduate Programs, please do not leave this section blank. While you might not know precisely your graduate school plans beyond a Master's degree, the readers of your application may be interested in what programs you are considering. If you are selected as a Finalist for the Churchill Scholarship, it is likely that you will be asked to discuss your thinking about graduate schools and your current preferences. Please use an abbreviated format to ensure that your entries will fit. For example:

> Berkeley, PhD, Mathematics
> Chicago, PhD, Biological Anthropology
> Stanford, PhD, Biophysics
> WashU, MD/PhD (Neuroscience)

LETTERS OF REFERENCE. The Foundation requires four *academic* recommendations from teachers, laboratory directors, and others with whom you have pursued your research and studies and who know your work well. If you list an NSF REU, internship, or other similar research experience in your application, you *must* ask at least one of your supervisors to write on your behalf. Please do not request recommendations from teachers in fields not related to your research in science, mathematics, or engineering (e.g., history of science, economics, literature, philosophy, etc.), and please do not submit personal recommendations (e.g., from clergy, directors of charitable organizations, coaches, etc.).

It will be useful for you to share your resume and a draft of your Research Plan and Personal Statement with those who will write your recommendations. Be sure to inform them of the particular selection criteria for the Churchill Scholarship, so they can write an appropriate letter on your behalf. The cover sheet for the Scholarship Recommendation is available in PDF format on the Foundation's website. Those who write your recommendations should send their letters directly to your Scholarship Advisor in a stamped, addressed envelope that you provide.

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS. You are not required to have research publications. While it will help, and many applicants over the years do have them, there are also many Churchill Scholars who have not yet published an article. For this section, a publication is a peer-reviewed article that has actually been published or formally accepted for publication. Do not list papers in development, submissions, or articles that appear in student research magazines. Please inform the Foundation if your paper is accepted by a journal after the application deadline. You may list posters under the Presentations section.

NON-ACADEMIC INTERESTS. Please list only the activities that are most important to you. These can be hobbies, organizations, sports, music, volunteering, etc. The purpose of this is for the Foundation to have a broader picture of you beyond your research and study.

FUTURE CAREER PLANS. Briefly describe your vocational aspirations, for example pursuing a PhD, an MD, working in a research university or a technology company, etc. The Foundation does not expect you

to have your career entirely mapped out, and the Screening Committee is not looking for particular answers. Rather, this section helps to paint a fuller picture of your goals and aspirations.

PREVIOUS FOREIGN TRAVEL. Please only state the travel you have undertaken during your college career, or earlier if particularly relevant (e.g., to attend the International Mathematical Olympiad). It is neither an advantage nor a disadvantage to have a history of travel. As with the previous questions, the Foundation wishes to have a fuller picture of your background. Please state *briefly* the reason for your travel under Purpose of Visit (e.g., vacation, family visit, internship, study abroad, orchestra tour).

Additional Pages

The online application has been programmed so that you can upload four word processed documents from your computer directly into your application:

> Scholarships, Prizes, Awards, and Other Distinctions (no more than 1 page)
> Research/Employment Experience (no more than 1 page)
> Proposed Program of Study Essay (no more than 1 page)
> Personal Statement (no more than 2 pages)

The four uploaded documents must strictly adhere to the following guidelines for formatting:

1. They may only be in DOC, DOCX, or PDF format.
2. They must have 1 inch margins on all four sides.
3. They should be single-spaced, except for paragraph and section breaks.
4. They must be in 12pt Times New Roman font.
5. Every page should include a heading in the upper left corner with your name and home institution on the first line and title of the document on the second:

> Mary Jane Smith, University of Northern California
> Personal Statement

SCHOLARSHIPS, PRIZES, AWARDS, AND OTHER DISTINCTIONS. If a scholarship or award is nationally known (e.g., the Beckman, Goldwater, NASA, Phi Beta Kappa, etc.), list just the award and the month and year of the award. If the scholarship or award is local to your college or university or is otherwise not widely known, please list the name and date of the award and a very brief description (e.g., Junior with the highest GPA, Chemistry major with the highest GPA, outstanding physics student, best essay in the sciences, etc.) Do *not* list high school awards.

RESEARCH/EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE. Please list research first and employment second. Use the following format to describe your research experience and internships:

> June-August, 2014 – NSF REU – Prof. Louise Jones, Department of Physics, ABC University. Brief description of your work.

> Summer 2013 – Independent study on Lie algebra using XYZ's textbook.

> Spring semester, 2013 – revised for publication paper written with A, B, and C, on protein assembly mechanisms for the *Journal of XYZ Science*.

Please include research or study that you may have done on your own outside of formal programs.

PROPOSED PROGRAM OF STUDY. Your task here is to *make your own case* for the program you are choosing, based upon your previous research and study. The Foundation does not seek formulaic answers, does not privilege one approach over another, and does not favor any disciplines or fields. It is essential that you present a coherent and personal rationale for your program of study.

This essay is not an opportunity merely to restate the work of the particular laboratory in which you wish to work. It should, instead, describe what you wish to investigate and what you wish to accomplish in the context of that laboratory. Include brief citations in this section only if they are critical for understanding your purpose.

Please focus on the research you propose for the Master's year. It will not help your case if simply say that the course will be ideal preparation for the PhD program you plan to attend afterward. While we do hope that this will be the case if you go on to a PhD or further graduate study, the purpose of this essay is to express how you will use the opportunity to study in Cambridge in a way that advances your thirst for knowledge.

While your plan will necessarily be detailed, even technical, it *must* be comprehensible to an educated reader from another scientific field. The Selection Committee is made up of former Churchill Scholars from a variety of disciplines, and it is not possible to represent every specialized area of the sciences, mathematics, and engineering.

For MPhil applicants either in research programs or programs with both taught and research elements, you will need to provide details about your potential laboratory placement and include a hard copy of correspondence (a copy of email messages will suffice) that indicate a willingness of the laboratory to accept you as a student, should you be admitted to Cambridge. In order to provide this, you should make contact with the proposed laboratory director well before submitting your application for the Churchill Scholarship. This is the best way to determine the appropriate fit of interests between you and the laboratory director and whether there would be room for you at that laboratory, in advance of you writing your formal Proposed Program of Study. It is important to research possible laboratories starting in the spring of junior year so that you can contact lab directors by the early fall of senior year at the latest.

Applicants for the MASt in Pure or Applied Mathematics, Mathematical Statistics, or Astrophysics, should use this part of the application to demonstrate their close familiarity with the department's rich offerings, suggest which courses you wish to take, and describe the rationale for that selection (e.g., go in new directions, seek a new perspective on previous work, deepen your knowledge of a particular field, etc.). Unlike the MPhil applicants, you do not need to contact the department or submit evidence of correspondence.

PERSONAL STATEMENT. The Foundation does not prescribe what you should include in this statement, but please keep in mind the Foundation's selection criteria. The Statement can be an intellectual autobiography in which you describe the development of your academic interests, the importance of your research for you, someone whose work inspired you, or some other critical aspect of your work in the sciences, mathematics, or engineering. Please do not repeat information from the Proposed Program of Study. While the Personal Statement is primarily about your intellectual passions, you should feel free to discuss other work and activities that provide a fuller picture of who you are and who you want to be. It will not be helpful to use this section to praise the University of Cambridge or Churchill College, nor is it advisable for you to assert that you are an ideal candidate for the Scholarship.

While the Churchill Scholarship is not an essay writing contest, it is an inescapable truth that the ability to write clearly to specialists and non-specialists is a key part of any future career in science, mathematics, and engineering. Whether in a grant application, job application, or for entrepreneurs, a pitch to investors,

your future will provide you with ample opportunities to come across as a well-polished and engaging person. The Foundation and the Selection Committee assume that these documents are your own personal work (although it is acceptable for you to seek editorial advice), and your signature on the application testifies to this.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION. Please remember not to press SUBMIT on your electronic application until you have been officially nominated by your institution. If you mistakenly submit your application before it is ready or complete, or before you have been nominated, please contact the Foundation and the application will be unsubmitted.

The Winston Churchill Foundation of the United States is committed to a policy against discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, gender, marital or parental status, race, color, religion, national origin, or disability or any other characteristic protected by law.

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