

MacPhail Scholarships

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can musicians who are not currently MacPhail students audition for scholarships in hopes of studying at MacPhail?

A: Yes! Anyone can apply for a MacPhail Scholarship. Applicants can submit a letter of recommendation from their current instructor or if you are not currently taking lessons, you can submit a recommendation from someone who can speak of your musicianship (choir director, orchestra conductor).

Q: My student is a beginning student. Do they have a chance at obtaining a scholarship?

A: Scholarships are given to students who demonstrate performance excellence at their audition, regardless of age. Audition judges base their recommendations solely on the students' performance. While there are no scholarships designated for beginning or intermediate-level students, any student who performs well has a chance of receiving a scholarship.

Q: Are any scholarships given based on financial need?

A: Yes! MacPhail has both Scholarships for Students with Financial Need and Financial Aid. Both Financial Need Scholarships and Financial Aid are awarded through MacPhail's Financial Aid Application. If students wish to be considered for a Financial Need Scholarship, they can check the box on the application and provide a recommendation from an adult outside of their family who can speak to their commitment to music study. Applications will be reviewed by a committee and scholarships will be awarded in July. Students can receive both financial aid and a financial need scholarship.

Q: What is meant by "two contrasting pieces?"

A: We recommend that the music a student plays or sings showcases their strengths, interests, and versatility. It is also recommended that the student consults with their instructor about which music showcases their strengths. Contrasting elements could be genre, tempo, composer/arranger, style, etc.

Q: If I play more than one instrument, can I audition more than once?

A: Yes. Applicants can audition on more than one instrument; however, a student can only be awarded one scholarship in an academic year.

Q: Will I get to see the judges' comments after the auditions?

A: Yes. All applicants will have the judges' comments emailed to them.

Q: Can Instrument or Voice Lesson Scholarships be applied to class or ensemble tuition?

A: Instrument or Voice Lesson Scholarships can only be used towards Individual Instruction or Suzuki lessons. Students must enroll in Individual Instruction or Suzuki for the entire 2025-26 academic year. The scholarship award is divided equally between fall and spring semester tuition. Jazz Scholarships can be used for either individual lessons or ensembles.

Q: How competitive are the auditions?

A: This is a challenging question to answer. It is safe to say that students should be well-prepared for their auditions. Typically, awards are given to students with considerable performance experience; however, this does not mean that all scholarship recipients are advanced students. Our judges will make their determination solely based on the auditions.

Q: Do I need to audition with an accompanist?

A: All performers (with the exception of solo piano) are encouraged to audition with an accompanist. If you are unable to find someone to accompany your recording, you may also use pre-recorded piano accompaniment or a backing track. Please contact Melissa Falb at falb.melissa@macphail.org if you need a recommendation for an accompanist.

If you need assistance, or have any questions about the application process, please contact Melissa Falb, at falb.melissa@macphail.org.