Governor's STEM Scholars
Application Preview

Apply to be a 2026-2027 Governor's STEM Scholar.
Applications close at 5 PM ET on Thursday, June 11, 2026.

Before you begin, review all of the application questions and requirements here. It is suggested you save your answers in a Word document in case of internet interruption.

Beyond the written portion of the application, you will need to upload the following:
1. 60 second video statement;
2. Current school transcript;
3. Optional letter of recommendation.

Governor's STEM Scholars Eligibility Requirements
To be considered for the Governor's STEM Scholars, applicants must:
- Be a sophomore, junior, or senior in high school, or be enrolled in college or graduate school at the sophomore, junior, senior, master's, or doctoral level, as of Fall 2026;
- Be enrolled in a high school, college or university, or be certified as a home-schooled student in New Jersey;
- Have a 3.5 cumulative GPA or higher; and
- Show a strong commitment to STEM in New Jersey.

Important: Final Submission Policy
Please carefully review all application materials before submitting. Ensure that all uploaded files are final, accurate, and complete. Once your application is submitted, no late materials, corrections, or updates will be accepted for any reason. Incomplete or incorrect submissions may affect your eligibility for consideration.

Email Address*
First Name?*
Last Name?*
If you prefer to go by a name other than your first name, what would you like to be called? *(optional)*
Cell Phone*
Date of Birth?*
If your email address is attached to your current high school or university, please provide an alternative email.

Street address (including apartment number if applicable)?*
City*
State?*
Zip Code?*
In which New Jersey county do you reside?*

Now we will be asking you questions about your personal background.
What is your sex?*
What is your gender identity? *(optional)*

What is your racial and ethnic identity?*
Please print your specific ethnicities in the space below. For example, Korean, Mexican American, Navajo Nation, Samoan, Puerto Rican, Pakistani, et al. *(optional)*

Is English your first language? *(optional)*

Are you or will you be a first-generation college student? *(optional)*
A first-generation college student is defined as someone who neither of their parents graduated with a bachelor's degree or in the case of students who live with and are supported by only one parent, that parent did not complete a bachelor's degree.

What is the name of the school you are currently enrolled?*
Current school's address (Street Address, City, State, Zip)*
If different from above, what is the name of the school you will be enrolled in in Fall 2026?
If different from above, what is the address of the school you will be enrolled in in Fall 2026?

What is your primary STEM area of interest or college major?*

Current GPA?*
The Governor's STEM Scholars requires a minimum 3.5 GPA for consideration. The Governor's STEM Scholars accepts both weighted and unweighted GPAs. If your school uses an alternative grading scale, please use an online GPA calculator to convert your GPA to the 4.0 scale prior to submission.

Please list all STEM-related courses you have taken. *High school students should list their high school courses, and college or graduate students should list their college or graduate-level courses, including the year taken and final grade for each. Note: Please do not use acronyms for programs or course titles. Example: AP Biology, Junior Year (High School), A-*

Please list all extracurricular or outside-of-school STEM-related activities you have participated in during the past two years, including any research experiences. *For each activity, indicate the year(s) of participation and note any leadership roles held. Note: Please do not use acronyms for programs or course titles.*

Please list all extracurricular or outside-of-school non-STEM–related activities you have participated in during the past two years, including volunteer work, clubs or organizations, and employment. *For each activity, indicate the year(s) of participation and note any leadership roles held. Note: Please do not use acronyms for programs or course titles.*

The Governor's STEM Scholars AI Policy
Policy on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Governor's STEM Scholars Application Materials

Purpose
This policy establishes guidelines for the ethical and responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in the preparation of application materials for Governor's STEM Scholars. Our goal is to learn about you—your own ideas, critical thinking skills, and unique personal voice. In an advancing world where AI is prevalent, it is even more important now to showcase original thought and critical thinking, ideas that cannot simply be generated through AI tools. This policy helps ensure that your application is an honest reflection of your abilities and experiences.

AI tools are computer programs that can help with writing, editing, or organizing your work. Examples include language models, code generators, and similar technologies that check grammar, suggest revisions, or even create text.

Guidelines for Use
Permissible Uses:
- Disclosure and Attribution:
  - If you use AI tools while writing or editing your application, you must clearly explain how they were used.
  - Your disclosure should describe what the AI did and list which tools were used.
- Editing and Proofreading:
  - You can use AI tools to check your spelling, grammar, and style.
  - The main content and ideas must still come from you.
- Idea Organization and Brainstorming:
  - You may use AI to help organize your thoughts or generate initial ideas.
  - However, the final work should be written in your own words and reflect your personal insights.

Prohibited Uses:
- Substantial Content Generation:
  - Do not use AI to write large parts of your essays or other materials.
  - Your submission should primarily be your own writing.
- Misrepresentation:
  - Presenting AI-generated content as entirely your own without proper disclosure is not allowed.
  - Using AI to copy or change someone else's work—like books, articles, or ideas—without their permission or giving them proper credit is not allowed.
  - This could result in your application being disqualified.

Review and Evaluation:
Admissions reviewers may ask for more details about how you used AI tools.
Failure to disclose or misrepresent your use of AI may lead to further review and possible disqualification from the Governor's STEM Scholars.

I confirm that I have read the Governor's STEM Scholars AI policy.

Essay Question: You have been selected to serve on an elite team of STEM professionals tasked by the President of the United States with addressing the most urgent threat facing your generation. Describe the specific issue you are working to solve, your role and contributions on the team, and the STEM-based strategies or innovations you would recommend to the President to mitigate or eliminate this threat. *(2,000 character limit)*

Essay Tips
- Choose a topic you are genuinely passionate about, rather than what you think the review committee wants to hear or what feels most popular.
- The issue itself does not have to be STEM-based, but your proposed solutions and strategies should be grounded in STEM.
- Whenever possible, connect your response to your personal STEM interests, intended college major, or future career goals.
- We value essays that clearly demonstrate how an applicant's curiosity, academic interests, and experiences in STEM shape the way they approach real-world challenges.
- Let your authentic interests and perspective shine—your unique passions, experiences, and way of thinking are what will make your application stand out.
- This is a personal, reflective essay; formal citations or a bibliography are not required.
- Remember that the 2,000-character limit includes spaces, so plan and edit accordingly.

Optional: Challenges and Circumstances (Additional Context Essay)
This section is optional and should be completed only if there are significant personal, academic, or community circumstances—such as obstacles, disruptions, or barriers to access—that are not otherwise reflected in your application and that have meaningfully affected your educational experience or opportunities. If you choose to respond, please describe the context and reflect on how it has influenced your learning, growth, or goals. Examples may include, but are not limited to, family or health challenges, access to technology or learning environments, community disruption, financial or caregiving responsibilities, housing instability, military deployment, or other significant hardships.

If applicable, please describe the circumstances and their impact on your academic journey. (2000 character limit)

Tips for the Optional Challenges & Circumstances Essay
- This section is optional; only respond if it provides important context for your application.
- Focus on how the experience affected your education, opportunities, or personal growth.
- You may discuss challenges related to access, family responsibilities, health, community, or other circumstances.
- Be honest and reflective, but share only what you are comfortable disclosing.
- Emphasize resilience, learning, or perspective gained when appropriate.
- This space is not intended for general accomplishments. Responses that do not describe a meaningful challenge or barrier may detract from, rather than strengthen, your application.
- There is no advantage to listing hardships—use this space only if it helps the review committee better understand your journey.
- Remember that the 2,000-character limit includes spaces, so plan and edit accordingly.

Did you use AI technology in crafting or reviewing any part of your essay question response?*
If yes, what AI systems did you use in crafting or editing your essay question response?

Explain how you used AI in crafting or editing your essay response

What will be your **grade level** in the Fall of 2025?*

College Level Applicants
College-level students (sophomore through doctoral level) who are accepted into the Governor's STEM Scholars program serve as Team Leads for the Research/Engineering Design Project.
Team Leads receive a $1,000 stipend upon successful completion of all required program and project components.
Team Lead responsibilities include:
- Attending all four in-person Governor's STEM Scholars conferences, as well as additional Team Lead meetings;
- Leading and mentoring a team of high school students in the design and implementation of a research or engineering design project;
- Motivating team members to remain engaged and meet project milestones;
- Managing team workflow, including scheduling meetings, assigning responsibilities, and tracking progress;
- Communicating regularly with team members and Governor's STEM Scholars staff;
- Supporting the completion of project deliverables, such as a research report, prototype, and final presentation at the Governor's STEM Scholars Commencement; and
- Managing the project budget, if applicable.

College Students Only: Share an example of a time when you led a team or played a leadership role within a team. Describe the challenges you faced, the actions you took, and what you learned from the experience. (2,000 character limit)

College Students Only: Describe your STEM-related research experience(s). For each, briefly explain the research topic, your role and responsibilities, and any outcomes or skills gained. (2,000 character limit)

How did you hear about the Governor's STEM Scholars?*

Have you applied to the Governor's STEM Scholars in the past?*

May the Governor's STEM Scholars share your contact information with our partner organizations including colleges and universities?

Video Requirement*
Record a video of approximately 60 seconds explaining why you are interested in STEM and how participation in the Governor's STEM Scholars will help you achieve your STEM-related academic and career goals.

Video Tips
- Keep your response to about 60 seconds; longer videos may not be reviewed in their entirety.
- Stick closely to the prompt—focus on why you are interested in STEM and how the Governor's STEM Scholars program will help you achieve your goals, rather than rehashing your resume or listing activities.
- Be clear and concise.
- Share one specific reason or moment that sparked your interest in STEM.
- Explain how the program's opportunities will support your academic and career goals.
- Be authentic—focus on what genuinely excites you, not what you think the review committee wants to hear.
- You may record your video directly in the Typeform application or upload a pre-recorded video. Please review the How-To Guide before submitting to ensure your video records and uploads correctly.

Transcript Upload*
Please upload an official or school-issued transcript that includes your cumulative GPA (this is not the same as a report card or a screenshot of your online grade portal). The transcript may be from the most recently completed school year if your current-year transcript is not yet available.

If you are currently a high school freshman and do not yet have an official transcript, you may instead upload a current-year report card showing all grading periods completed to date.
File should be named: Last Name,First Name_Transcript

Letter of Recommendation (optional)
Please upload an optional letter of recommendation. File should be named: *Last Name,First Name_LetterofRec*

Applicants may only submit one optional letter of recommendation. The absence of a letter of recommendation will never count against an applicant. However, a letter that is generic, neutral, or does not strongly support the applicant may weaken an application.

Letters of recommendation should be uploaded by the applicant as part of the online application. Recommenders should provide their letter directly to the student for upload whenever possible. Blind letters sent by email will be accepted only in extenuating circumstances when a school's policy does not allow a recommender to share the letter with the student. In those cases, the letter may be emailed to info@govstemscholars.com with the student's full name and school in the subject line.

Only blind letters of recommendation received by 5 PM on Thursday, June 11 will be considered.

Certification of Application*

I hereby certify that the information in this application and the corresponding materials requested are correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that failing to be truthful may result in disqualification from the program.*

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Thanks for applying to the Governor's STEM Scholars. Please click the button below to submit your application. All applicants will be notified of their acceptance status no later than September 8, 2026.

After submitting your application, please ensure that you see a confirmation screen indicating your submission was successful.