Unbound Scholarship Manual

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1 <u>Introduction</u>

The Unbound scholarship program exists to help individuals who, because of economic circumstances, are struggling to continue their education. The program reflects Unbound's belief in others where education is the primary goal. It is founded on the principles of perseverance, leadership, and service to the community, both sponsored and beyond. In line with the spirit of Unbound, the scholarship program aims to achieve program characteristics through capacity building, mutual accountability & support, cultivating a culture of learning, goal orientation, empowerment, and worldview.

The Unbound scholarship program functions independently of the Unbound sponsorship program. Its primary goals are to support students reaching their academic potential, build role models for the sponsorship community, and cultivate local leadership in Unbound communities. It is not the intention of the Unbound scholarship program to simply provide additional financial assistance to any student, or to offer students an academic scholarship in return for their service. The program should instead be meaningful with a selective process among applicants in which students with a participatory attitude and a strong commitment to service and leadership are recognized and encouraged by these scholarships.

2 <u>Principles and Requirements</u>

The scholarship program is guided by a common set of values and administrative requirements. There is some flexibility to tailor the program to the needs of the scholars and community. However, none of the program policy and requirements may be eliminated from the program without prior written approval from the Program Operations Specialists at Unbound headquarters.

2.1 Project Eligibility and Funding

Unbound headquarters determines the amount of scholarship funds that will be offered to each project based on fund availability and assessment of each project's overall performance, including project-led scholarship program evaluations. Therefore, the amount of scholarship funds a project receives may change from year to year. Scholarship funds do not roll over and must be used within the school year. If there is a balance at the end of the school year, the project must present a plan to the Program Operations Specialists detailing the use of those funds. Unbound headquarters also reserves the right to revoke a project's scholarship funds if the project fails to maintain a high level of performance.

The primary goals of the scholarship program are to provide educational support for students and provide opportunities for them to develop their potential as community leaders, not to provide resources to the sponsorship program. Scholars may select organizations outside of Unbound in their local community or within their local Unbound program to fulfill their service commitment.

2.1.1 Minimum Requirements for the Project

The minimum requirements for a project implementing the Unbound scholarship program are:

1. Develop a program plan prior to each school year, detailing the functioning of the scholarship program for the following school year.
2. Assess program applicants and select scholars.
3. Submit the program plan to Unbound headquarters through Portal before the date agreed upon with the Program Operations Specialists (scholarship program funds will not be disbursed until all reports are received and approved)
4. Communicate program policies with participants.
5. Maintain regular contact with each scholar, including coaching and encouragement when necessary.
6. Work with each scholar to develop an individual service plan.
7. Distribute scholarship funds while maintaining adequate financial documentation.
8. Report expenses with the regular monthly Unbound financial reporting.
9. Maintain the following for each scholar: academic grade reports, individual community service plan, enrollment verification, and any other pertinent information while the scholar is in the program and for one year after they leave, or time required by local law around record keeping.
10. Submit additional program-related details to Unbound headquarters as requested.
11. Child protection policy must be reviewed by all participants.
12. All participants should be made aware of the Integra hotline.

2.2 Scholar Eligibility

Eligible scholars must be currently enrolled in an academic institution, demonstrate economic need, and have a desire to fulfill the program's service requirements.

Unbound scholarships may be awarded to currently sponsored members, previously sponsored or non-sponsored members.

The scholarship program is not meant to replace sponsorship. The scholarship fund may supplement sponsorship benefits when sponsorship funds fail to meet the needs of the scholar's educational expenses.

Nuclear family members of full-time project or subproject staff cannot receive scholarships.

Each project must develop criteria that will be used to select individuals for the Unbound scholarship program. The project must maintain a copy of these criteria, which should be available for review by Unbound representatives at any time. Projects may only give Unbound scholarships to scholars the project can adequately monitor locally or remotely.

2.2.1 Minimum Requirements for Scholars

The minimum requirements for a scholar who is awarded an Unbound scholarship are:

1. Submit an application to be considered for the program.
2. Create an individual community service plan, reviewed by Unbound project staff.
3. Provide regular reporting and verification of enrollment and performance in school, including the submission of grade cards.
4. Maintain passing grades.
5. Fulfill individual community service plan.
6. Maintain a signed consent form for each scholar.

2.2.2 Selection of Scholars

Projects should award Unbound scholarships to optimistic, aspiring students who do well academically, apply themselves diligently to their studies, and have a participatory attitude of service in their local community.

Scholars receiving an Unbound scholarship may pursue their education or training in institutions that are located within or outside the project area. Scholars pursuing their education outside the project area may perform community service in the area most convenient to them if the project can ensure sufficient monitoring.

2.2.3 Scholarship Application Form

All scholarship applicants must complete an application to be considered for the program. Projects may use the application form found in the appendix or develop another application form to meet local needs. The project may wish to add more questions concerning criteria that they will use to select scholars. Completion of a scholarship application does not guarantee acceptance into the program. Projects have discretion to determine if returning scholars need to complete a scholarship application each year.

2.2.4 Verification of enrollment & academic performance

Each scholar must provide regular reporting and verification of his/her enrollment and performance in school. Each project should, for each scholar, verify evidence of passing grades and ensure completion of community service or progress on a service project on a regular basis.

2.2.5 Removal from the program

Scholars who are struggling to comply with established policies (failing to maintain passing grades, do not fulfill the agreed upon community service commitment, or fail to meet the program requirements in any way) should receive personalized accompaniment from program staff. If non-compliance with policy persists staff should retire the scholar from the program. Withholding scholarship funds cannot be used as a strategy for correction or sanctioning.

Projects should find replacements for any scholars that are removed from the scholarship program after the academic year has already begun.

2.3 Community Service

Unbound scholarship recipients are students who have a strong desire to further their education and serve their communities. The community service requirement is an essential element of the Unbound scholarship program.

The service requirement should represent a significant and meaningful commitment for the scholar and community. The project may determine whether the impact of the proposed service plan represents a significant and meaningful commitment for each scholar.

2.3.1 Individual Community Service Plans

The scholar must develop an individual community service plan that is approved by the project. Consider how a scholar's field of study, talents and/or interests could be aligned with their individual community service plan. The plan should include specifics that are meaningful, clear, and realistic.

Service plans designed to serve through internships, apprenticeship, local community services, and other organizations are acceptable in accordance with local law around volunteering. Scholars have the choice to provide service to their Unbound community as well.

Community Service plans that will take place outside of the sponsored community should be with another confirmed organization or institution that can sufficiently supervise participants.

When serving at Unbound, scholars' time should not replace the daily responsibilities and tasks of project staff nor match the workload. While individual service plans for scholars may include support to the sponsored community or local office (especially where relevant to a scholar's area of study), the individual service plan for a scholar should not be designed to maintain local project workflows or monitor sponsored member requirements.

The fulfillment of the requirement should be monitored by progress reports and the eventual completion of the plan.

2.3.2 Monitoring of Community Service

Projects are required to monitor and record the satisfactory completion of the scholar's community service commitment. Projects may use the scholarship community service record sheet form found in the appendix or develop another form to meet local needs. If another form is developed, please send it to Unbound headquarters for review. A record of the scholar's community service plan and progress report should be kept in the subproject or project office in the scholar's file.

2.4 Scholarship Amount

Projects will be awarded a fixed amount of scholarship funds each academic year. This amount can be distributed among the number of scholars that the project determines is appropriate. A project may choose to distribute the same amount to each scholar or may vary the amount distributed depending on each scholar's need and academic level. If a scholar or scholars are not able to complete their individual service plan, please share the circumstances to request an exception from your Program Operations Specialist. Unbound headquarters will approve the allocation of funds prior to disbursal of funds.

2.4.1 Allowable Expenditures

Scholarship funds are to be used for the educational needs of the scholarship recipients and for expenses that facilitate or enhance the scholarship recipients' participation in the program. Unbound scholarship funds may be used to pay for tuition and related educational expenses such as, but not limited to, books, clothing, medication, housing, transportation, or food for participating scholars. Additionally, scholarship funds can be used to pay for technology necessary for scholars' education such as, but not limited to laptops, printers, cell phones, internet coverage, etc.

Scholarship funds may be used to pay for administrative expenses that support the execution of the scholarship program and add value to the scholars' experience. Please see the Financial Policies Manual for further information regarding the type of expenses classified as administrative expenses. All such expenditures should be included in the program plan submitted to Unbound headquarters. If project staff members have a question about the appropriateness of an expense from scholarship funds, please check with your regional team from Unbound headquarters.

Projects should develop internal policies for documenting scholars' expenditures that comply with local laws and satisfy the project's internal needs for documentation. Unbound headquarters does not require scholars to submit receipts and instead relies on proof that funds were placed in the control of the scholar to satisfy the documentation need.

2.5 Length of Scholarships

Unbound offers scholarships to projects for one academic year (typically ten months). A project can offer scholarships to a recipient for the entire academic year or for one school term at a time. Depending on available funds and the project's performance, Unbound headquarters will re-initiate the program at the beginning of each new school year.

Each participating Unbound project has the responsibility to select the scholars who will receive a scholarship for that academic year. The project may select scholars who have received an Unbound scholarship in a prior year, or it may select new scholars.

3 <u>Required Reporting</u>

3.1 Reporting before program implementation

Projects must submit the scholarship program plan for the upcoming academic year to Unbound headquarters each year for approval before awarding Unbound scholarships. The program plan details how the program will function in that project. This plan is necessary for continued funding for the next school year and will be carefully reviewed. The report should include:

- The vision of the scholarship program can describe how the project and scholars are prioritizing academic achievement and fulfilling any academic requirements necessary for graduation.

- Selection criteria for the scholarship program should include information about how the project is recruiting scholars and describing the process of selection. Criteria for the scholarship program should prioritize academic goals, engagement in the local community through an individual community service plan, and commitment to program characteristics.

- Monitoring the scholarship program is prudent for the continual improvement of services rendered. Describe plans to assess practices and local policy around scholars' selection, academic programs, local and Unbound community engagement.

- Finance section should report amounts in US currency, describe the use of the scholarship funds and benefits delivered to scholars. Explain if scholarship funds will be used for administrative purposes. Explain how the project determines the amount of scholarship funds awarded to each scholar.

Once approved, scholarship funds will be disbursed for one calendar year. Unbound headquarters will utilize the disbursement schedule from the previous year, if available, unless another schedule is requested by the project.

This report can be found under the Scholarship icon in Portal. You are welcome to work on this report throughout the year, and save your work by selecting the 'Save' button at the bottom of the form:

Once your Program Operations Specialist has requested the program plan, you can submit it to Unbound Headquarters by selecting the 'Submit to Kansas' button at the top of the form.

3.2 Reporting during program implementation

Scholarship funds should be reported in the regular monthly financial reports submitted to Unbound headquarters. See the Financial Policies Manual for further information.

3.3 Reporting after program implementation

Projects must submit the Annual Program Report and the list of scholars who participated in the scholarship program to Unbound headquarters at the end of each academic year. These annual reports must be submitted to receive scholarship funds for the next academic year.

3.3.1 Program Report

Projects must submit a summary of the scholarship program at the close of each academic year to Unbound headquarters. l.

This report can be found under the Scholarship icon in Portal. You are welcome to work on this report throughout the year, and save your work by selecting the 'Save' button at the bottom of the form:

Once your Program Operations Specialist has requested the program report, you can submit it to Unbound Headquarters by selecting the 'Submit to Kansas' button at the top of the form.

3.3.2 Building the Scholar List

A list of the scholars who participated in the scholarship program is required along with the Annual Program Report and Program Plan.

New scholars should be entered into Portal at the beginning of every new scholarship program year and updated throughout the year to reflect scholar retirements and replacements. At the end of the program year, when your Program Operations Specialist requests end of year reporting, this list can be submitted to KS from the Search Scholars page.

3.3.2.1 New Scholars

When entering new scholars into Portal, you will fill out the fields outlined in this section. For scholars who are already sponsored, some of the information may already be filled out for you. Refer to the Portal User Guide for further instructions.

School Calendar Year:

Please select the School Year that the scholar is currently participating in from the drop-down menu.

School Grade:

Select the scholar's current grade for the program year. As educational systems vary by country, select the closest equivalent if an exact match isn't listed.

Course of study:

Select the scholar's current course of study for the program year. If the scholar's exact course of study is not listed, please select the closest match. If this is not possible, select Other.

Scholarship Amount Received USD:

Enter the **total** amount that the scholar is expected to receive through the Scholarship Program during the program year in USD. (Please see section below for information about adjusting this field for a scholar who is being retired or entered as a replacement mid-program year).

Cost of School Year USD:

Enter the **total** amount the scholar needs to complete the school year. This can include expenses beyond tuition, books, enrollment fees, uniforms, transportation, etc.

Disbursement Frequency:

Enter the frequency with which scholars receive their benefits.

Community Service Title:

Though a scholar may participate in many activities throughout the program year to satisfy his/her community service requirements, this field should be a short title that summarizes the scholar's service contributions. This field can be updated throughout the year if the scholar's community service focus changes.

Community Service Description:

Project should enter the scholar's community service activities. This field can be updated throughout the year if the scholar's community service focus changes.

Please refer to the Portal User Guide workflow for entering new scholars for more information.

3.3.2.2 Mid-program year retirements and replacements

If a scholar leaves mid-program year, retire them in the same month. Before entering the "Retired On" date, update the "Scholarship Amount Received USD" field to reflect the amount received up to that point.

It's important to note that after adding and saving the "Retire On" date, you will no longer be able to make changes to the scholar's account.

Once a scholar is selected to replace the retired scholar, register the new scholar and enter the remaining scholarship amount for the year in their "Scholarship Amount Received USD" field.

4 <u>Internal Project Documentation</u>

Projects should maintain a file for each scholar with the following:

1. Application Form
2. Verification of Enrollment
3. Verification of academic performance
4. Individual Community Service Plan
5. Scholar consent form

5 <u>Appendix</u>

5.1 CONSENT FORM

Consent for Communications

Unbound and _____ (project name) would like to share stories of scholars and their families in order to educate and inform current and potential donors, and the general public.

By signing this consent, you agree to allow Unbound to share your family's story and describe your participation in the scholarship program through information, stories, photographs, video and audio recordings, in printed publications, promotional materials, on the Internet and through any media format published by Unbound or authorized for use by Unbound.

The Internet option will include posting information about and photos of scholars. However, this is not intended to serve as an online relationship building mechanism. No direct communications via Internet will be allowed between scholars and donors.

Unbound will only present information about your family in a dignified way that will respect your privacy. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your scholarship in any way.

Scholar's Name (Print): _____

Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian (If child under 18 years): _____

Date: _____

I verify that the above signed has been informed properly before signing this consent.

Name of Unbound Staff (Print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

For Unbound use only

SAMPLE
Unbound SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

5.2 APPLICATION

PROJECT: _____

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT GUARDIANS

Guardian's Name _____ Occupation _____ Age _____

Home Address _____ Monthly Income _____

How much are the scholar and his/her family contributing each month to the scholar's education (average)?
_____

What is the total number of other children in this household? _____

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE CANDIDATE

Name _____ CHID _____ Date of Birth _____ Age _____

Course of study _____

Name of school _____ Grade level _____

Please describe your academic and professional goals:

What are your skills and interests as they relate to community service?

Please describe what service means to you: What are your ideas for a community service project?

What do you hope to gain from a community service experience?

Scholarship Program Requirements

- Provide regular reporting and verification of enrollment and performance in school, including submission of grade card.
- Maintain passing grades.
- Fulfill individual community service plan.
- Submit documentation as required by project policy for all direct assistance.
- The duration of the scholarship is for one school year (10 months); renewable with Unbound headquarters approval.

Printed Name: _____ Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____ Signature: _____
<div style="display:flex">Scholarship candidate   Authorized Unbound signature</div>

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Please comment on the following:
The scholar's willingness to participate in the local communities and/or the Unbound program.
The scholar's commitment to their studies.
Does the applicant express a positive attitude? Please explain.

SAMPLE
Unbound SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
5.3 LETTER OF AGREEMENT

The Unbound scholarship program, represented by the Scholarship Committee, will give a scholarship to _____ (CHID _____), for the period of _____ to _____ in accordance with the following:

1. Unbound is committed to provide a scholarship equivalent to $_____upon receipt of all required application materials. The scholarship can be cancelled for lack of academic performance, lack of community service, falsification of grades or other documents, negative attitudes or other activities or conditions the project office deems harmful to the overall scholarship or sponsorship program.

2. The scholarship recipient is expected to maintain passing grades and will show each report card to the Unbound committee to evaluate their scholastic progress.

3. This agreement is voluntary and only applies to the receipt of academic scholarships. Under no circumstances will the scholarship recipient be subjected to the responsibilities of a labor relationship. Therefore, no rights or obligations pertaining to a labor relationship will be granted.

4. The scholarship recipient agrees to provide the following community service:

    _____

    _____

    _____

5. All the days of formation and other scholarship activities programmed by Unbound are considered part of the program; therefore, the scholarship recipient and/or his/her guardians should attend as indicated.

_____   _____
Unbound committee representative   Scholarship Recipient

Date: _____   Date: _____

SAMPLE
Unbound SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

5.4 INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITY SERVICE PLAN

Project Name: _____

Scholar's Name: _____ (CHID_____)

Institution or Organization being served: _____

Name of Service Facilitator: _____

Service to be contributed by the scholar:

How will community service be monitored?

_____   _____ _____
Signature of Scholar   Date   Signature of Service Facilitator   Date

SAMPLE
Unbound Scholarship Program
5.5 COMMUNITY SERVICE FORM

Name of Scholar: _____CHID_____

Subproject: _____Month: _____ Year: _____

Date	Time In	Time Out	Name of Organization or Community	Description of Service	Service Facilitator Signature

In what areas did the scholar perform well?

In what areas could the scholar improve?

How was the scholar's attitude while carrying out service?