Scholarship Application Guidelines
AONL 2027 Inspiring Leaders Conference

Background:

The AONL Foundation—thanks to the generosity of our donors—is proud to offer scholarships to support participation in The AONL 2027 Inspiring Leaders Conference. The AONL Inspiring Leaders Conference offers nurse leaders the opportunity to learn from nationally recognized experts, connect with peers from across the country, earn continuing education credits, explore innovative healthcare solutions, and gain actionable leadership strategies that can be applied immediately within their organizations.

Scholarship Package Details:

- Scholarship funding amount: up to $1,325 (member early bird rate) towards the cost of the program registration.
- Number of scholarships available: Up to 12
    - Priority will be given to awarding one scholarship to an applicant from each AONL region (1-9). If insufficient applications are received from one region, scholarships will be awarded to the most qualified applicants.
- Payment method: Reimbursement 30-45 days after conference attendance is confirmed.
- Recipients will be responsible for the initial payment at the time of the program registration and will be reimbursed for the early bird member price: $1,325.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Applicant must have a valid AONL membership by the scholarship deadline (January 14, 2027).
- Applicant must have organizational support for the time and resources needed to participate fully in the program.
- Applicant must demonstrate financial need.
- Current AHA, AONL, and AONL Foundation board members are not eligible.
- Scholarships administered by the AONL Foundation may only be awarded to individuals within the United States and its territories.
- Priority will be given to small, rural, critical access, or other small non-profit, government or public health care organizations along the care continuum.
- "Small" - as defined by the Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project's Bed size Categories: www.hcup-us.ahrq.gov/db/vars/hosp_bedsize/nisnote.jsp
- "Rural" - if any one of the following criteria is met:
    - Listing in Rural Health Information Hub's "Am I Rural" tool www.ruralhealthinfo.org/am-i-rural
    - Qualifies for either the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Rural Health Clinics Program or the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy's Grants Programs

    - Has a United States Department of Agriculture/Economic Research Service Rural-Urban Commuting Area (RUCA) code of 10
    - Has a United States Department of Agriculture/Economic Research Service Rural-Urban Continuum Code (RUCC) of 4 or greater
- "Critical access" - if appearing on the Flex Monitoring Team's listing: www.flexmonitoring.org/data/critical-access-hospital-locations
- Other "small non-profit, government or public health care organization along the care continuum" such as:
    - Schools (for a school nurse)
    - Long-term care organizations
    - Home health care and hospice organizations
    - Skilled nursing facilities

Evaluation:

Applications will be evaluated by members of the AONL Foundation, Scholarship Member-Led Group. The application package will consist of:

- Biographical information for the applicant
- Resume
- Application with information relevant for consideration
- Signed letter of recommendation from immediate supervisor that speaks to the following:
    - **Must indicate available financial support, if any, from the organization and need for financial assistance.**
    - Include a statement agreeing to the requirements and expectations of the scholarship.
    - Provide information on the applicant's commitment to program attendance.
    - Specify how the program will benefit the applicant's professional growth and leadership development.
    - ****: Important**Please be aware, the letters of recommendation and support from the applicant's supervisor detailing need for financial support carries significant weight in the evaluation process.**

Requirements and Expectations of AONL Foundation Scholarship Recipients:

- Must attend the AONL 2027 Inspiring Leaders Annual Conference
- Within 30 days of program completion, the Scholarship Recipient is required to submit a written report reflecting on their overall program experience and its personal, professional, and organizational impact. The report should specifically address the knowledge, skills, and insights gained; how these learnings relate to the priority area for growth identified in their application; and how they plan to apply these learnings to advance their leadership development, professional practice, and organizational effectiveness.
- Provide a professional photograph
- Allow the Foundation to use information in the report in promotional materials.
- Requirements at AONL Inspiring Leaders Conference include:
    - Support the AONL Foundation Exhibit and Ticket Booth.
    - Participate in scholarship recipient group photo.
    - Attend the AONL Foundation Annual Fundraiser and events, as schedule allows.

AONL 2027 Inspiring Leaders Conference Scholarship Schedule:

Applications Open: November 17, 2026
Scholarship Application Deadline: January 14, 2027
Recipient Notification: February 15, 2027
Program Dates: April 12-15, 2027

Application Form Outline:

1. First and last name
2. AONL Member Identification Number
3. AONL Region Number
4. Applicant's Address
5. Applicant's Email, Applicant's Backup email
6. Applicant's phone number
7. Position Title
8. Organization Name
9. Organization Address
10. Organization URL
11. Resume (attach)
12. A letter of support must be written and **signed** by the applicant's **immediate supervisor** within the organization (attach)
13. Will your organization grant you time to attend the program in full? (Yes/No/NA)
14. Amount of scholarship funds requested (up to $1,325 for conference registration at the member rate; full and partial scholarships are available)
15. Does your organization have a source of funding available that may be used for this program? (Yes/No/NA)
16. If your organization is part of a system, are there system-level funds or Foundation funds available to offset the cost of the program? (Yes/No/NA)
17. Will you be able to attend the conference without a full or partial scholarship? Please explain. (600 words maximum)*
18. Please provide a personal narrative describing your **need for financial assistance**, how this scholarship would be used to offset the cost of participation, and any sources of financial assistance you are currently utilizing (e.g., employer support, grants, loans) alongside any additional relevant information that may support your application. Your response carries significant weight in the scholarship review and selection process (400 words maximum)*
19. The 2027 AONL Inspiring Leaders Conference will explore five priority areas that reflect the evolving challenges and opportunities facing nurse leaders.
    - **Please select the ONE conference priority area that most closely aligns with your professional interests, current leadership responsibilities, or future career aspirations:***
        ☐ Community Impact: Advancing Health and Reducing Disparities
        ☐ The Human Experience of Leadership
        ☐ Building the Nursing Workforce of the Future
        ☐ Advancing Care Delivery and Workforce Readiness Through Technology, AI and Innovation

☐ Demonstrating the Value and Impact of Nursing

20. **Professional Interest:** Why is this priority area particularly meaningful or relevant to your current role, leadership challenges, or career aspirations? (400 words maximum)*
21. **Learning Goals:** What knowledge, skills, or perspectives do you hope to gain by attending conference sessions related to this priority area? (400 words maximum)*
22. **Application and Impact:** How do you envision applying what you learn to strengthen your leadership practice, support your colleagues, or positively influence nursing practice, patient care, or your organization? (400 words maximum)*

23. Do you agree to meet all requirements and expectations of the Scholarship? (Yes/No)*
24. "Do you certify that all information submitted in this scholarship application is true, complete, and accurate to the best of your knowledge?" (Yes/No)*
25. Signature:*
26. Date:*

For more information and questions, please contact:
The AONL Foundation at AONLfoundation@aha.org

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