



April 2026

Next Engineers Scholarship Program Justification Guidelines

Overview

The Next Engineers team recognizes that non-conventional programs or pathways can still lead to an engineering career. Therefore, the team allows students to receive the Next Engineers Scholarship for degree programs (or apprenticeships for UK-based students) that are not directly in an engineering school or have an engineering title, ONLY if the program meets the criteria outlined in this document.

Goals/Intentions

The purpose of granting scholarships to non-conventional engineering pathways is to provide students with greater flexibility in their journey to becoming engineers.

Process for Ineligible Program Consideration

1. Student is notified by the Next Engineers Scholarship Team or Community Partner that their program is not automatically eligible to receive the Next Engineers Scholarship.
2. The student submits a written justification (maximum 300 words) explaining how they meet the required criteria for a qualifying program, detailed in the next section. The statement must be submitted by email to NEscholarships@fhi360.org or [through the Program Justification form](#).
3. The Next Engineers Scholarship Team reviews the justification based on the rubric criteria (provided in the last section of document). *
4. The student is notified of the approval or rejection of their program for the Next Engineers Scholarship within 3 weeks.

*If the Review Committee finds that the written statement does not clarify the student's intentions or pathway well enough, the committee may ask the student to resubmit their statement, which will be reviewed, and the student will be informed about the final decision within 2 weeks.

Criteria for Approval

To receive approval for your program you must demonstrate ALL the following things through your written statement:

- **Intentionality:** You must clearly demonstrate an intention to pursue a career in one of the ten specified engineering fields listed on the last page and explain how your chosen program will support employment in that field.
- **Relevant Education and Skills Development:** You should describe how the courses within the program will help you develop the knowledge and skills required for your chosen engineering discipline. You should also explain how the program leads to the necessary credentials (e.g., certifications, diplomas, and/or degrees) required to enter your intended engineering profession.
- **Viable Pathway:** You must clearly outline the complete educational pathway from secondary school through postsecondary education and into the workforce, including any anticipated programs required along the way.
 - You can learn more about viable engineering pathways through the [Next Engineers' Career Pathways Diagram](#)
 - Extraneous steps should be avoided. For example, a student intending to become an architectural engineer should not plan to complete a bachelor's degree in architecture followed by a master's degree in



architectural engineering if a direct bachelor’s program in architectural engineering is available at their intended university.

Note: For Johannesburg-based students, the program must lead to a NQF-level 6 degree or higher in accordance with [the Next Engineers Scholarship Policy](#).

Rubric Criteria

The Review Committee will evaluate your program’s eligibility using the following rubric.

Category	1 – Clearly Demonstrates	2 – Partially Demonstrates	3 – Does Not Demonstrate	4 – N/A – Resubmission Required
Intentionality	Clearly demonstrates a well-defined intention to pursue a career in engineering and explains how the selected program leads to employment in one of the ten specified engineering fields.	Expresses interest in an engineering career, but the connection between the selected program and the intended engineering field is unclear, incomplete, or lacks specificity.	Does not clearly demonstrate an intention to pursue an engineering career or fails to connect the program to a specific engineering field.	Statement is unclear or missing key information needed to assess intent.
Relevant Education and Skills Development	Clearly explains how the program’s courses develop the knowledge and skills required for the chosen engineering discipline and identifies the credentials (e.g., certifications, diplomas, degrees) needed to enter the profession.	Mentions courses or credentials related to engineering, but the explanation of how they build relevant knowledge, skills, or qualifications is incomplete or unclear.	Does not explain how the program develops relevant engineering knowledge or skills and does not identify the credentials needed for the intended profession.	Program details are insufficient to assess educational relevance or credential pathway.
Viable Pathway	Clearly outlines a logical and feasible educational pathway from secondary school through postsecondary education to entry into the engineering workforce, with no unnecessary or redundant steps.	Pathway generally leads to the intended outcome but includes unclear steps, missing details, or potentially unnecessary stages.	Pathway does not reasonably support the stated engineering career goal or contains clear redundancies that weaken the plan.	Insufficient information provided to assess the viability of the pathway.



Engineers are the inventors and problem solvers of the world. More than twenty five major specialties are recognized in the field of engineering.

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