

2027 Elevate Iowa Tourism Scholarship Scoring Rubric

This rubric outlines how applications are evaluated for the 2027 Elevate Iowa Tourism: Education Scholarship. Applicants can use it to understand what reviewers are looking for and prepare a strong application.

Applications are evaluated across five categories worth 10 points each, for a base score of 50 points. iTIP Membership status and other scholarship funding may adjust the final score.

Evaluation Criteria : Total Base Score – 50 points

- Application Completeness – 10 points
- Conference Relevance – 10 points
- Professional Development Goals – 10 points
- Organizational Value – 10 points
- Budget & Funding Request – 10 points

Bonus & Deduction Adjustments

- iTIP Membership - +5 points
- Additional Scholarship Funding Received - -10 points

Scoring Guidelines:

- A score of **10** reflects a strong, complete response.
- A score of **5** indicates the application meets basic expectations but could be stronger.
- A score of **0** indicates significant deficiencies.
    - *Only a score of 0 in Conference Relevance automatically makes an application ineligible for funding.*

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1. Application Completeness (10 Points)

Reviewers will look for a complete application with thoughtful responses and all required supporting documents.

- **10 :** All required information and documents are provided. Responses are clear and complete.
- **5 :** Most information is provided, but some responses or supporting details lack clarity.
- **0 :** Significant information or required documentation is missing.

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2. Conference Relevance (10 Points)

The selected conference should focus on tourism education and skill development. Reviewers will consider the conference agenda and its relevance to the applicant's work in Iowa tourism. Conferences that do not meet the program's event eligibility requirements are ineligible for funding.

- **10 :** Conference has a clear tourism education focus, with programming relevant to the applicant's role.
- **5 :** Conference includes tourism-related education, but the connection to the applicant's work is limited or unclear.
- **0 :** Conference does not demonstrate a meaningful focus on tourism education or skill development. A score of 0 in this category makes the application ineligible for funding, regardless of its overall score.

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3. Professional Development Goals (10 Points)

Reviewers will evaluate the three takeaways applicants hope to gain from attending the conference. Returning attendees should explain what additional value they expect from participating again.

- **10 :** Identifies three meaningful, specific learning goals that connect to the applicant's professional development.
- **5 :** Identifies learning goals, but they are general or lack a clear connection to professional growth.
- **0 :** Learning goals are missing or do not demonstrate an educational purpose.

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4. Organizational Value (10 Points)

Applicants should explain why attending matters to both themselves and their organization.

- **10 :** Clearly explains how the conference will benefit the applicant's work and contribute to their organization's success.
- **5 :** Identifies potential benefits, but provides limited explanation of how the knowledge will be used.
- **0 :** Does not demonstrate a clear benefit to the applicant or organization.

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5. Budget & Funding Request (10 Points)
Reviewers will evaluate the requested scholarship amount, estimated budget, and organizational commitment to the required 40% match.

10 : Scholarship request is within program limits. Budget is complete, reasonable, and includes eligible expenses. Organizational match letter is complete and properly signed.
5 : Scholarship request is within program limits, but the budget contains unclear estimates or discrepancies, or the match letter is incomplete.
0 : Scholarship request exceeds program limits, the budget is missing or significantly incomplete, or the required match letter is missing.

Note: The total estimated conference budget may exceed $2,250. The scholarship request in the application cannot exceed 60% of eligible expenses, up to a maximum of $2,250.

Bonus/Deduction Adjustments:

- **+5 Points:** Applicant's organization is a current iTIP member.
- **-10 Points:** Applicant has received another scholarship for the same conference.