

Capital Explorer Fund– Frequently Asked Questions

The Economic Club of Washington, D.C.'s Capital Explorer Fund is a unique opportunity for David Rubenstein/Economic Club scholarship recipients who desire to complete an internship, research project, volunteer program, or similar opportunity that will advance the Scholar's academic and professional growth during their college education. Modeled after the Explorer Project at Washington and Jefferson College, the Capital Explorer Fund provides guidance and financial support to Scholars in order for the Scholars to complete their projects.

Who is eligible to be a Capital Explorer Fund recipient? Any student who (1) is a recipient of the David Rubenstein/Economic Club scholarship, (2) is currently enrolled in an accredited institution, (3) has satisfactorily completed a minimum of 30 credit hours or the equivalent towards their undergraduate degree may apply for the award.

Is there a GPA requirement? There is no minimum GPA requirement. However, an applicant's academic standing is taken into consideration by the review committee. Therefore, the Economic Club urges students to always strive to do their best.

What types of projects are appropriate for the Capital Explorer Fund? The projects proposed should be meaningful to the student and encourage the student's academic and professional growth. Although there are no true restrictions on the type of project the student completes, the project should challenge the student and spur the student to be independent and enterprising. This could include, but not be limited to, a research project, a volunteer program abroad, or a non-profit internship.

Does the project have to be completed in Washington, DC? No. The purpose of the Capital Explorer Fund is to enable our Scholars to explore new opportunities. These opportunities can be in Washington, DC, but they also allow students to travel around the world to experience new cultures and ways of thinking. The Economic Club advises students to be mindful of where they travel, ensuring that the safety of our students is a priority. The U.S. Department of State has made travel advisories available online, where you can sign up for text message and email alerts. See <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/>

How long should the project be? Although the Economic Club anticipates most projects will be completed during the summer when school is not in session, Scholars are welcome to submit proposals for projects taking place throughout the year. There is no minimum requirement for project length, but the Economic Club urges that applicants dedicate enough time to ensure the project is fulfilling.

What is the application process? After completing all application materials and submitting the proposal to the Economic Club, a committee of Economic Club members will review the applications and decide which proposals will receive an award and the appropriate monetary value of the award.

What application materials will I need to submit? See application for exact materials required.

1. Project Proposal & Description – This will explain to the review committee the purpose of your project including, but not limited to: length of project, where you will complete the project, with whom you will be working (internship host, educational institution, etc.), what you what you hope to achieve, and how you will present your completed project to the committee.
2. Personal Statement – This will provide background for the committee about who you are and why you hope to be a Capital Explorer Fund recipient.
3. Project Budget & Funding Request – The project budget should be an overview of all anticipated expenses to complete the project (housing, transportation, program fees, and living expenses). The funding request is the unfunded financial amount you require to complete your project.
4. Most Recent College Transcript

When should the application be submitted? Scholars must notify the Economic Club of their interest in participating in the program no later than 3 months prior to the start date of their project. We recommend that Scholars notify the Economic Club as soon as you are interested in participating in a program. It is never too early to begin planning. Scholars have the option to submit their application early for a preliminary review, allowing the Economic Club to review and provide feedback prior to the final application being submitted. While not mandatory, this step is highly recommended. Final applications must be submitted no later than 2 months prior to the start.

What if a student doesn't know if they received the internship or were accepted into a program until closer to the start date of the project? The Economic Club fully understands that students may not know if they have a secured internship or were accepted into a certain program until a time closer to the start date of their project. The Capital Explorer Fund coordinator works closely with the student to be aware of such circumstances and provide back-up options in advance so that the students are still able to participate in the Capital Explorer Fund in the event they do not participate in the project they anticipated completing.

Can I apply for the Capital Explorer Fund if I have already received a Capital Explorer Fund award? Absolutely. In fact, the Economic Club encourages our Scholars to apply as many times as they like during their college education.

How much are the awards? The awards will differ for each Scholar since each project will be different in terms of program length, where the program is being completed, and requirements to complete the project. Therefore, the budget a Scholar proposes is a vital component of the application and should be given much consideration.

How are the awards disbursed? The Economic Club will consider the circumstances of each student in regard to the disbursement of funds. Specifically, the length of project, requested award amount, and types of expenses will be considered. The student will be required to submit receipts for expenses.

What does the Scholar do at the end of the project? Once the project, program, or internship is complete, the Scholar will be required to submit a financial report and a final report that summarizes the experience of the student to the Economic Club and includes photos of participation. The Scholar may also be asked to present their project to the Economic Club's Education Committee, and they may be featured in a special newsletter to the Economic Club membership.

Are there resources for Scholars before and during the application process?

Yes. The Economic Club's Capital Explorer Fund coordinator and entire Education team will be available to answer questions and provide advice at any time. Interested Scholars should first review the information provided in the application since many questions are answered there. Scholars may also investigate other scholarship opportunities such as The Gilman Project at <https://www.gilmanscholarship.org/>.

How do I increase my chances of winning the award? There are three ways you can increase your chances as follows:

1. Demonstrate your personal investment in the project by either raising funds for a portion of your project or seeking other sources of funding
2. Demonstrate extensive planning and research of your travel and living arrangements, along with any other expenses
3. Show continued involvement in other Economic Club programs made available to you

For additional information, please contact Economic Club Capital Explorer Fund Coordinator

Email: Education@EconomicClub.org.

The Capital Explorer application can be found on our website at <https://www.economicclub.org/capital-explorer-fund>.