

## **PRINCIPAL'S REFERENCE GUIDELINES** *(Please give a copy of these guidelines to your Principal)*

A student at your school is currently applying for a Harding Miller Education Foundation Scholarship. These scholarships provide resources and support to Australian girls who have high academic potential and are currently experiencing socio-economic hardship. **To be eligible**, a student must be in year 8 in 2024 - entering year 9 in 2025 and enrolled in an Australian government/public school.

As part of the scholarship application, we are asking you to provide supporting information to allow the judges to choose the students that best meet the scholarship criteria.

Your statement is an **essential source of information** for the judges as it provides local, expert and independent verification of the claims that the student has made in her application, and it is given **considerable weight** in the process of panel deliberations. Your time and effort are greatly appreciated and will help us make the best decisions about the allocation of this valuable scholarship. Generic supporting statements will likely disadvantage applicants.

**Could you please answer the following questions on a school letterhead and then sign it?** You may provide additional information and answer in any format that suits you, but please ensure you have covered the following four questions within your response.

Please return your statement as a PDF file to the student who will then upload it to her online application.

OR

If you would prefer to send the reference directly and confidentially to the Harding Miller Education Foundation, please send it to [info@hardingmiller.org.au](mailto:info@hardingmiller.org.au) with the scholar's name clearly identified in the file name. Some principals prefer to do this especially when they are providing multiple references for girls within the same year group. Please advise the student that you will be doing this so they can indicate this in their application otherwise they will be unable to submit anything.

### **1. Does this student have high academic potential?**

*Please explain whether you think that this applicant has high academic potential or is already displaying high academic achievement. Include details on how she displays a commitment to her secondary education and whether she aspires to attend university. How does she perform/stand out relative to her peers? Please also explain how you think the scholarship will assist her to meet this potential.*

2. Is the student currently experiencing socio-economic disadvantage? Describe the type(s) of hardship she is experiencing. Does the student actively participate in school life?

*Judges will be assessing the applicant's academic potential in combination with their socio-economic disadvantage. It can be difficult for a student to understand their socio-economic situation within a broader context (which they are generally unfamiliar with). Please explain whether this student is experiencing hardship and how that might prevent her from successfully completing high school or continuing on to university.*

*A range of factors contribute to disadvantage. In our experience we generally see students who experience a combination of the following factors:*

- *Living with very low income or experiencing financial hardship*
- *Having an immigrant, asylum or refugee background (personally or parents)*
- *Identifying as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander*
- *Living with low parental or carer academic achievement*
- *Living with a disability (personally or family members)*
- *Living in out of home care*
- *Living in a geographically isolated area*
- *Suffering misfortune or destitution*
- *Living with family violence or dysfunction*

3. Does the student actively participate in school life?

*Please explain how this student displays a commitment and enthusiasm to her school life outside minimum classroom expectations. Please also provide any additional information regarding this student that you would like to provide for consideration.*

4. Do you support this student's scholarship application?

*In forming your decision, please consider whether she meets both criteria ie: she is high academic AND experiencing socio-economic hardship.*

- Do you believe that she will make the most of the scholarship resources and participate in scholarship program activities?*
- Does she have ambitions to attend university?*

**Thanks again for your time.** The judges carefully consider Principal references. In such a competitive process, they make a significant difference for the applicants.

**Applications close on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2024 (at 11.59PM Australian Eastern Standard Time)**

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have questions, concerns or would like to submit your reference to me personally.

**Lisa De Vries - Events, Enrichment & Selection Manager**

My phone number is 02 7201 9091 and my email is [lisadevries@hardingmiller.org.au](mailto:lisadevries@hardingmiller.org.au) Our website is [www.hardingmillereducationfoundation.org.au](http://www.hardingmillereducationfoundation.org.au)

**Extra Information:**

The Harding Miller Education Foundation Scholarship Program provides practical support to lift the educational and career aspirations of high-potential Australian girls who are facing socio-economic hardship. New scholarships are valued at approximately \$20,000 over the course of four years and are provided as a 'toolkit' that students can use to support their pursuit of academic excellence. Successful applicants for 2025 will receive the following support:

- High-quality laptop and help desk support
- 4G mobile broadband including 20GB internet per month
- \$2,500.00 of personal (face-to-face or online) tutoring per year
- Subscription to an online study help provider
- \$650.00 pre-paid card for school expenses per year
- Mentoring from a personal coach
- Access to a wide range of other study skills and career enrichment resources
- Attendance at an awards event to celebrate their success

Students will initially receive a two-year scholarship The Foundation intends to then support students for another two years (a total of four years) until they graduate from high school - subject to students' ongoing dedication to school and tertiary education ambitions.