



## 2026 SPRING SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION PACKET

At the core of NCEDA's and the NCEDA Foundation's mission is a commitment to professional development because continuous learning is essential at every stage of an economic development career. As the field becomes more collaborative, more visible, and increasingly technical, today's practitioners must continually sharpen their skills, expand their knowledge, and build relevant credentials.

To support this growth and strengthen the collective capacity of North Carolina's economic development community, the NCEDA Foundation is proud to offer the following scholarships that expand access to meaningful professional development opportunities:

- **Dan Stewart Basic Economic Development Course Scholarship**, which pays for tuition, plus reimbursement of all travel, lodging, meals, and ancillary expenses, to attend the one-week Basic Economic Development Course held annually at UNC Chapel Hill. Multiple scholarships available.  
**Estimated Value: \$1,600 (tuition + additional expenses)**
- **North Carolina Economic Development Academy Scholarship**, which pays for tuition plus reimbursement of all travel, lodging, meals, and ancillary expenses to attend one course offering of the North Carolina Certified Economic Developer program at ECU. Multiple scholarships available.  
**Estimated Value: \$1,200 (tuition + additional expenses)**
- **Jack Ervin Scholarship**, which pays up to \$1,000 toward tuition, plus reimbursement of travel, lodging, meals, and ancillary expenses, either at the Economic Development Institute (EDI) at Oklahoma University or one course offered by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC). One scholarship available.  
**Estimated Value: \$2,000 (tuition + additional expenses)**
- **NCEDA Presidential Leadership Scholarship, in honor of NCEDA Past Presidents**, which pays for tuition, plus reimbursement of all travel, lodging, meals, and ancillary expenses, for seasoned executives to experience training at the Advanced Economic Development Leadership training course. One scholarship available.  
**Estimated Value: \$2,800 (tuition + additional expenses)**
- **IEDC Certification Scholarship**, which pays for the exam registration fees associated with the Certified Economic Developer designation. Multiple scholarships available.  
**Estimated Value: \$850**

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## SCHOLARSHIP DETAILS

**Dan Stewart Basic Economic Development Course Scholarship:** Dan Stewart was a strong advocate for economic development as a tool to build a better North Carolina. His career at NC State University and CP&L led to his appointment as Director of the North Carolina Department of Conservation and Development in the early 1960s. The Dan Stewart Scholarship honors his legacy by covering full tuition and related expenses for the Basic Economic Development Course (BEDC) at UNC Chapel Hill. This four-day summer program is accredited by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) and is designed for early-career professionals. The course is also the first requirement for those pursuing IEDC certification or the NC Certified Economic Developer (NCCED) designation.

The BEDC focuses on core economic development tools, including attraction, expansion, marketing, finance, and management, and features instruction from academics, site selection consultants, and experienced practitioners. Participants also benefit from networking with peers from across the state and country. The 2026 BEDC will be held July 27–30 in Chapel Hill. Click [HERE](#) for more details.

**North Carolina Economic Development Academy Scholarship:** East Carolina University, in partnership with NCEDA, launched the North Carolina Certified Economic Developer (NCCED) curriculum in 2019. The program delivers rigorous, hands-on instruction focused on economic development strategies, solutions, and programs specific to North Carolina. This scholarship covers full tuition for one NCEDC course, along with all associated expenses. Courses are 1.5 days in length and are held on ECU's campus in Greenville. Click [HERE](#) for more details.

**Jack Ervin Scholarship:** Jack Ervin served as Executive Director of the Columbus County Economic Development Commission for 11 years, during which he helped locate 21 new industries, create more than 1,800 jobs, and played a key role in organizing the Columbus County Committee of 100. He also served as NCEDA President from 1988–1989.

The Jack Ervin Scholarship provides up to \$1,000 toward tuition, along with reimbursement for travel, lodging, meals, and ancillary expenses, for either the Economic Development Institute (EDI) at the University of Oklahoma or one course offered by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC). Certification options differ primarily by format:

- Economic Development Institute (EDI): Offers structured, academic-style courses with progressively advanced content. Graduates may apply to sit for the IEDC Certification Exam. One-week sessions are offered in the spring and fall at locations nationwide. Click [HERE](#) for more details on EDI.
- International Economic Development Council (IEDC): Provides courses year-round across North America, covering both core and specialized topics. Instruction emphasizes real-world experience, best practices, and practical tools applicable to local communities. Click [HERE](#) to view upcoming courses.

**Applicants must have completed two years in economic development work and must show completion of the Basic Economic Development Course to be eligible for this scholarship.**

**NCEDA Presidential Leadership Scholarship:** The NCEDA Presidential Leadership Scholarship honors the Past Presidents of NCEDA and supports a seasoned executive with significant experience in economic development to participate in the Advanced Economic Development Leadership (AEDL) program. AEDL is an experiential one-week program designed specifically for mid and senior level economic developers who want to examine contemporary issues on a deeper level. The 2026 program is scheduled for November 2-5 in Ft. Worth, TX. Click [HERE](#) for more details.

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**IEDC Certification Scholarship:** The IEDC Certification Scholarship supports professionals seeking to obtain their CEcD designation. This scholarship pays for the exam registration fees associated with the Certified Economic Developer designation. Click [HERE](#) for more details.

*Please Note: NCEDA provides scholarship funds on a reimbursement basis. To receive funds, recipients must submit a receipt from the course provider along with receipts for all eligible travel, lodging, meals, and ancillary expenses. Lodging reimbursement is limited to the group rate at the program's designated hotel.*

*For IEDC Certification, reimbursement is limited to exam registration fees only.*

## NCEDA SCHOLARSHIP CRITERIA AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

NCEDA scholarships are intended to support professional advancement by removing financial barriers to accessing professional development opportunities. The primary criteria for selection will be demonstrated financial need, with some focus on distressed areas in North Carolina, followed by a demonstrated strong desire for ongoing professional development to bolster a successful career in economic development. A third element will be the presentation of the application itself. **ALL INFORMATION SUBMITTED IS CONFIDENTIAL.** The following information may help you in developing your application:

**Financial Need:** Given the vast differences among organizations, budget structures and funding levels, it is difficult to impose a single "one size fits all" criteria to determine need. The key is articulating your case as factually and effectively as necessary to demonstrate and document financial need.

**Professional Development:** Successful applicants are typically those who demonstrate or express a long-term professional and personal interest in an economic development career. Demonstrate convincingly your career path in the profession (past, present and future) and how the program for which you are applying fits into that vision.

**Application Presentation:** Be it to clients, boards or communities, economic developers make their living making presentations. Consider this application as good practice. Is the information complete and easy to read? Is it well organized and attractively and creatively formatted? Most importantly, does it effectively tell your story? Supporting documentation or letters of recommendation are helpful.

### Other Criteria:

- Applicants must be residents of and/or work in North Carolina.
- Applicants must be members of NCEDA for duration of the program.
- Recipients must be committed to complete all course work.
- Although scholarships reimburse tuition, travel and other expenses, recipients will be responsible for any and all expenses not covered by the scholarship, if applicable.

**Submission Instructions:** Submit application package as a PDF file to [blair@nceda.org](mailto:blair@nceda.org). **Applications are due on or before 5 pm on Friday, February 27.** Please contact Blair at 888.246.2332 with any questions or if you do not receive confirmation of receipt. The 2026 NCEDA Foundation Spring scholarship recipients will be announced at the 2026 Spring Conference on Tuesday, March 10 in Greensboro.



## 2026 NCEDA FOUNDATION SPRING SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

**Applicants may apply for multiple scholarships, but each candidate may receive only one scholarship per cycle. Please indicate the scholarship(s) for which you are applying:**

**Dan Stewart Basic Economic Development Course Scholarship** (*Open to all NCEDA members.*)

**North Carolina Economic Development Academy Scholarship** (*Open to all NCEDA members.*)

**Jack Ervin IEDC Scholarship** (*Open to NCEDA members who have completed two years of economic development work and have completed the Basic Economic Development Course.*)

**NCEDA Presidential Leadership Scholarship** (*Open to NCEDA members with significant economic development experience.*)

**IEDC Certification Scholarship** (*Open to all NCEDA members seeking certification assistance.*)

### Applicant Information

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Job Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organization:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Professional Development Information

**How long in current position?** \_\_\_\_\_

**How long in EconDev?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Percentage of time spent in economic development activity:** \_\_\_\_\_

**List any economic development activities, memberships, and awards:**

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Please submit the following as separate documents:

**Cover Letter:** Describe the benefits you hope to gain from attending the course or program for which you are applying. Also include your current job responsibilities and any additional information (such as supporting documentation or letters of recommendation) that helps illustrate your need and qualifications.

**Current Resume:** Provide a detailed overview of your professional experience, education, skills, certifications, and any relevant economic development activities, memberships, or achievements.

## Financial Information

### Employer Organization Type and Description:

100% Public

100% Private Nonprofit

100% Private For-Profit

Public-Private Partnership

Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

### Economic Development Budget:

Total Program Budget: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Last FY Budget: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Current FY Budget: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Projected Next FY Budget: \$\_\_\_\_\_

### Funding Sources:

Please describe the sources of funds for your economic development program and staff.

Have you made arrangements to cover any additional expenses not included in the scholarship if applicable?

Yes

No

## Applicant Certification

By signing this application, the applicant certifies that they reside and/or work in North Carolina, are a current NCEDA member, will complete the course if selected, and have obtained approval for any additional costs associated with attendance.

**Applicant Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Supervisor Approval Signature for Course/Program Participation

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Submit application package as a PDF to [blair@nceda.org](mailto:blair@nceda.org). Contact Blair at 888.246.2332 with any questions or if you do not receive confirmation of receipt. **The application deadline is 5 pm on Friday, February 27.**