



2026 FALL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION PACKET

Professional development is at the core of NCEDA's mission, and continuing education is vital to the career success of practitioners at all levels. As the economic development process becomes more collaborative, visible and technically complex, leaders in our field must strive to keep skills, knowledge, and credentials up to date. The NCEDA Foundation is offering the following scholarships during this application period:

- **North Carolina Economic Development Academy Scholarship**, which pays up to \$450 for tuition plus reimbursement for all travel, lodging, meals, and ancillary expenses to attend one course offering of the North Carolina Certified Economic Developer program at ECU. Multiple scholarships may be offered. **Estimated Value per Scholarship: \$1,200 (tuition + additional expenses)**
- **Jack Ervin Scholarship**, which pays up to \$1,000 toward tuition, plus reimbursement for 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). Multiple scholarships may be offered. **Estimated Value: \$2,000 (tuition + additional expenses)**
- **Governor James E. Holshouser Professional Development Scholarship**, which pays up to \$1,995 per session for three sessions, plus reimbursement for all travel, lodging, meal, and ancillary expenses, either at the Economic Development Institute (EDI) at Oklahoma University, or three annual online courses offered by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC). **One** of these scholarships will be offered. The recipient can attend consecutive EDI sessions but also has up to three years to complete the sessions. **Estimated Value: \$11,000 (tuition + additional expenses over three years)**
- **NCEDA Presidential Leadership Scholarship**, *in honor of NCEDA Past Presidents*, which pays up to \$1,795 towards tuition, plus reimbursement for all travel, lodging, meal, and ancillary expenses, for seasoned executives to experience training at the Advanced Economic Development Leadership training course. **One** of these scholarships will be offered. **Estimated Value: \$2,800 (tuition + additional expenses)**
- **IEDC Certification Scholarship**, which pays up to \$850 for the exam registration fees associated with the Certified Economic Developer designation. Multiple scholarships may be offered. **Estimated Value per Scholarship: \$850**

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SCHOLARSHIP DETAILS

North Carolina Economic Development Academy Scholarship

East Carolina University, in partnership with NCEDA, unveiled the North Carolina Certified Economic Developer curriculum in 2019. Courses offer rigorous, practical instruction in solutions, strategies, and programs unique to North Carolina. This scholarship provides the full cost of tuition for one course plus all associated expenses. The 1.5-day courses are held on the ECU campus in Greenville. Three of these scholarships will be offered. Click [HERE](#) for more details.

NCEDA dispenses scholarship funds as a reimbursement pending proof of payment in the form of a direct receipt from East Carolina University and receipts for all travel, lodging, meals, and ancillary expenses. The lodging reimbursement rate may be no more than the group rate at the base hotel coordinated by the program.

Jack Ervin Scholarship

Jack Ervin was the executive director of Columbus County EDC for 11 years. During that time, Ervin located 21 new industries, helped create more than 1,800 jobs, and was instrumental in organizing the Columbus County Committee of 100. Ervin was NCEDA President in 1988–1989. The Jack Ervin scholarship provides up to \$1,000 toward tuition, plus reimbursement for 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). Certification courses offered through EDI and IEDC differ primarily in the delivery format:

- The Economic Development Institute courses are offered in a structured academic style and format with progressively advanced course content. EDI graduates may then apply to sit for the IEDC Certification Exam. Each one-week session is offered in the spring and fall at various national locations. Click [HERE](#) for more details on EDI.
- IEDC is the membership association serving the economic development profession worldwide, and IEDC courses are offered throughout the year across North America, covering both key topics and specialized issues. Content focuses on real life experiences, best practices and practical tools economic development professionals can apply in their communities. Click [HERE](#) to view upcoming courses.

NCEDA dispenses scholarship funds as a reimbursement pending proof of payment in the form of a direct receipt from IEDC and receipts for all travel, lodging, meals, and ancillary expenses. The lodging reimbursement rate may not exceed the group rate at the base hotel coordinated by the program.

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.

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Governor James E. Holshouser Professional Development Scholarship

A longtime friend to NCEDA, Governor Holshouser believed in the importance of professional development through continuing education. The late Governor Holshouser served four terms in the NC General Assembly, where he was vice chairman of the House Judiciary and Rules committees. As governor, he served on the Executive Committee of the National Governors' Conference, as chairman of the Southern Regional Education Board and the Southern Growth Policies Board. This scholarship pays up to \$1,900 per session for up to three years toward tuition, plus all travel, lodging, meals, and ancillary expenses, either at the Economic Development Institute (EDI) at Oklahoma University or three annual courses offered by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC). Certification courses offered through EDI and IEDC differ primarily in the delivery format:

- The Economic Development Institute courses are offered in a structured academic style and format with progressively advanced course content. EDI graduates may then apply to sit for the IEDC Certification Exam. Each one-week session is offered in the spring and fall at various national locations. Click [HERE](#) for more details on EDI.
- IEDC is the membership association serving the economic development profession worldwide, and IEDC courses are offered throughout the year across North America, covering both key topics and specialized issues. Content focuses on real-life experiences, best practices and practical tools that economic development professionals can apply in their communities. Click [HERE](#) to view upcoming courses.

NCEDA dispenses scholarship funds as a reimbursement pending proof of payment through a direct receipt from EDI or IEDC and receipts for all travel, lodging, meals, and ancillary expenses. The lodging reimbursement rate may not exceed the group rate at the base hotel coordinated by the program.

Applicants must have completed two years in economic development work, must show a demonstrated financial need, and must show completion of the Basic Economic Development course to be eligible.

Maynard Nexsen generously funds part of this scholarship.

NCEDA Presidential Leadership Scholarship

The NCEDA Presidential Leadership Scholarship honors the Past Presidents of NCEDA. It 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 more deeply. The 2026 program will be held November 2 – 5, 2026, in Fort Worth, Texas. Click [HERE](#) for more details.

NCEDA dispenses scholarship funds as a reimbursement pending proof of payment through a direct receipt from AEDL and receipts for all travel, lodging, meals, and ancillary expenses. The lodging reimbursement rate may not exceed the group rate at the base hotel coordinated by the program.

IEDC Certification Scholarship

The IEDC Certification Scholarship supports professionals seeking to obtain their CEcD designation. This scholarship pays up to \$850 for the exam registration fees associated with the Certified Economic Developer designation. Click [HERE](#) for more details.

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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 the need. The key is to articulate 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 to exercise 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 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 an electronic file to blair@nceda.org. **Applications are due on or before 5 pm on Friday, September 25.** Please contact Blair Kennedy at 888.246.2332 with any questions or if you do not receive confirmation of receipt. The 2026 NCEDA Fall Scholarship recipient(s) will be announced at the Fall Conference on October 20.



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Applicants may apply for more than one scholarship. However, candidates are not eligible to receive more than one scholarship in a given year. Select the scholarship(s) for which you are submitting:

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

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

Governor James E. Holshouser Professional Development 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: _____

Organization: _____

Business Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Professional Development Information

Job Title: _____

How long in current position? _____ How long in EconDev? _____

Percentage of time spent in economic development activity: _____

List any activities, memberships, awards, etc., in or related to economic development:

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Please provide the following additional information:

- Describe current duties. (attach separate sheet)
- Share previous employment history and educational information. (attach resume)
- What benefits do you hope to derive from attending the course/program of the scholarship for which you are applying? (attach separate sheet)
- State your case. Please provide additional information using documentation, letters, etc., that best describe your need. (attach separate sheet)

Financial Information

Employer Organization Type and Description (attach separate sheet if necessary)

100% Public

100% Private Nonprofit

100% Private For-Profit

Public-Private Partnership

Other (please describe) _____

Total Budget for ED Program: \$_____ Last FY Budget: \$_____

Current FY Budget: \$_____ Projected Next FY Budget: \$_____

Describe source of funds for economic development program/staff (use additional sheet if needed):

Have you made arrangements to cover additional expenses if applicable? Yes No

Applicant Certification

Applicant works in North Carolina; is a current member of NCEDA; will complete course if selected and has approval for additional costs associated with attendance.

Required Applicant Signature: _____

Signature of supervisor approving participation in the course/program for which you are applying:

Signature: _____

Organization: _____

APPLICATION DEADLINE IS 5 PM ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25.

Submit application package as an electronic file to blair@nceda.org.

Contact Blair at 888.246.2332 with any questions or if you do not receive confirmation of receipt.